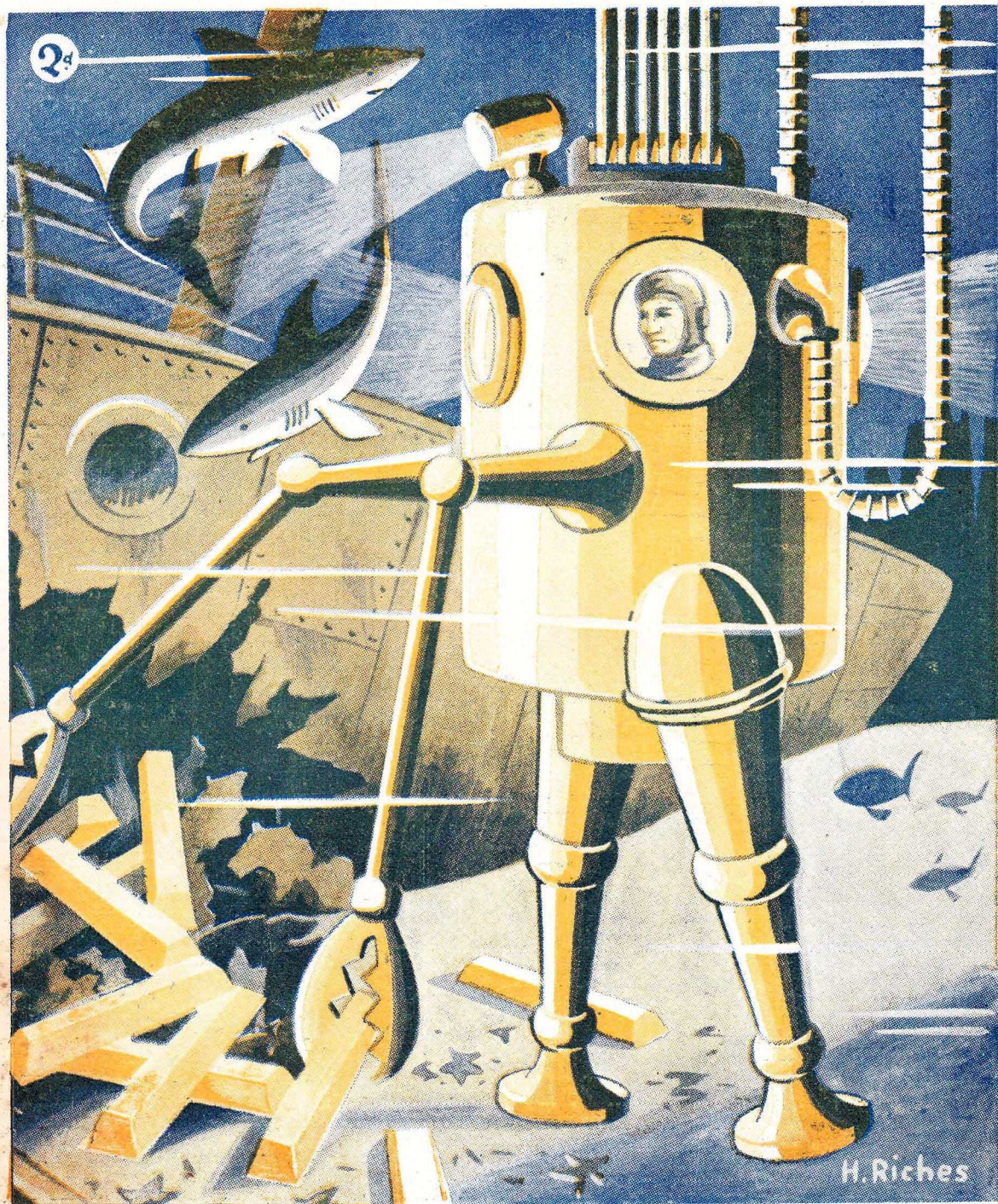


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THE ONE-MAN SUBMARINE! See page 4.

COMPLETE
IN THIS
ISSUE.

Ken King's ORDEAL

By
Charles Hamilton



Alone in the vast Pacific, the boy trader of the South Seas well known throughout those adventurous wastes as King of the Islands—is faced with a great and unknown peril! A thrillingly successful yarn!

Kit Hudson, standing in the canoe, swept the waste of waters with his binoculars . . . The search for his comrade was hopeless!

Flotsam!

KEN KING dashed the water from his eyes with the back of his hand as he trod water, and stared across the starry sea.

Over the vast Pacific stretched the dark blue vault of the sky, spangled with stars. The water round Ken mirrored the glittering stars and the drifts of fleecy cloud. Every movement that he made broke up the reflections into thousands of glistening fragments. He was alone on the sea, swimming for his life.

It seemed like some terrible dream to the boy trader of the Pacific. Only minutes had passed since he had been standing on the deck of his ketch Dawn, unconscious of danger, waiting for eight bells, when Kit Hudson, his mate and partner, would come on deck and relieve his watch.

Then had come the sudden treacherous attack of the sea-raiders—a black crew led by white men disguised as blacks. The fierce struggle in the grasp of many hands, and the whirling plunge over the Dawn's rail, deep, deep into the dark waters, had followed.

Treading water, King of the Islands, as Ken was called, scanned the sea for the ketch. The Dawn

had been hove to a mile from the breaking surf of Oua, to wait for sunrise before running the reef into the lagoon. But Ken King realised that even while he had been fighting, some of the raiders had shaken out canvas on the Dawn. She was moving before the wind when he plunged over the rail. Now he could see her—a fleeting shadow in the starlight—far on the starry waters.

He set his teeth and swam. It was useless, hopeless, to swim after the ketch; but for the moment he did not reflect. His shipmates were there—Kit Hudson, and the faithful Kanaka bos'un, Kaio-lalulalonga, and the crew of five Hiva-Oa boys—in the hands of the nameless, unknown sea-thieves. For long, long minutes he swam desperately, but the sail that glanced shadowy in the starlight passed from his sight—the ketch was gone!

He ceased his efforts and tried to puzzle out what was happening on board the Dawn. She was in the hands of the gang of cargo-thieves—to be looted of her cargo, and abandoned. He knew that much. They were taking her to some convenient spot for looting the cargo. After that she would be left with her spars crippled and her boat stove in, to

give the crew of raiders ample time to escape. That was what had happened to another schooner at Kolo. Hudson, if Hudson lived, would not be able to return and search for him. The Dawn would be left rolling like a helpless log on the sea.

In his bitter anxiety for his ship and his comrade, Ken hardly thought, for the time, of his own position, as he mechanically kept himself afloat. But life was dear, and to the west, a black mass against the stars, lay Oua. There lay his only chance of life.

Ken turned in the direction of the distant island and swam. He knew Oua; and knew that a strong current set past the southern shore, where a long spur of coral reef ran out into the sea. He could feel the current now, drifting him towards the island. It would sweep him past Oua if he missed the reef.

Kicking off his shoes under the water, he swam on with a steady stroke. Every ounce of his strength, every atom of his energy and his courage would be needed to save him from sinking to death in the ocean. At the best it would be touch and go.

Taller and blacker Oua loomed against the stars. The current was sweeping him westward, well to the south of the island. He bore to the right, fighting against the drift of the sea.

If he struck the reef that ran out southward from the island, he was saved. But the current whirled round it to the south, and the current

was strong—a mighty force, overwhelming to the stoutest swimmer. Nearer and nearer loomed the tall coconut-palms of Oua, black against the stars—nearer, but more and more to the north, as the current sucked him away in spite of all his efforts.

Something struck against him. A shudder ran through all his limbs at the thought of sharks. But it was not a shark—it was the floating trunk of a palm, uprooted in some storm, tossing on the sea. He caught at it and held on. Strong and sturdy as he was, the struggle was exhausting him. He was glad to rest with his hand on the drift-wood.

Over the shadowy sea a line of white gleamed—the surf that was breaking in masses of spray on Oua. But the extreme end of that white line was well to the north of him; the current was sweeping him westward, to miss the extremity of the reef by a hundred yards or more.

Gathering all his strength, he let go of the trunk and struck diagonally across the current. Closer and closer he drew to the tossing line of foam but all the time the current drove him to the west. The roar of the surf was in his ears. He was level with the extremity of the reef now, where a coral rock gleamed through the whitening spray. One more effort. He was past, and the roar of the surf was behind him. He had missed the reef by a dozen feet, and the current was sweeping him on to the west—into the boundless ocean, where there was no known land for hundreds of miles!

King of the Islands relaxed his efforts, sinking with despair, and the murmuring waters closed over his head. But as he choked in the grip of the sea, the instinct of life woke again, fierce as ever. He came to the surface, swimming feebly. He breathed in deeply the cool air of the night.

His despairing eyes swept the sea. The black mass of Oua lay east of him now—east and by north—and the roar of the surf was dying away from his hearing. His hand struck something hard—it was the palm-trunk. He clutched it, and dragged his chest across it, and rested. It was useless to prolong the struggle—only death awaited him in the waste of waters. But the instinct to live was strong. Resting on the tossing trunk, the boy trader floated on and on, and Oua sank out of sight in the mist of the stars. Minutes, hours passed, while he lay across the floating palm, half-conscious. The stars paled. From the east came a faint,

rosy flush. The new day was at hand.

Like a ball of gold the sun leaped up from the horizon, and it was day. Sunlight streamed on the glistening waters. Ken raised his weary head, and with salt-rimmed eyes swept the expanse of ocean. Sea and sky—sky and sea! Space illimitable, and himself a tiny dot floating in the midst of blue immensity. And he knew that he was lost!



KEN KING—King of the Islands, boy owner and skipper of the ketch Dawn.

ing with it, whether he knew not. That he was many long miles from land was all he knew. He had taken off his shirt and twisted it turban-like over his head to protect him from the almost vertical rays of the sun. The heat burned his skin, crusted with the salt of the sea. Thirst ached in his parched throat.

Over the illimitable blue there rose into sight what might have been taken for a winging gull, but what the boy trader knew to be a top-sail. Hope that was almost dead stirred in his heart. Higher and higher rose the tall canvas to the view. It was a brig, under full sail, standing to the west.

Ken watched it with aching eyes. It was more than a mile away, and he had no means of reaching its course before it passed. In the clear air it was distinct to his eyes, like a toy ship in the distance, but to the eyes of those on board a floating speck on the sea would not be visible. The sight of the sail had brought him hope, but the hope was brief. The brig would pass on unseeing. It was passing on.

He stood up on the plunging palm-trunk, balancing himself with a sailorman's skill, and waved. But he knew that it was useless. He could not be seen. As he stared with

despairing eyes at the passing ship something familiar in its aspect struck him.

"The Mary Belle!"

He knew the brig now. It was the mysterious 'Frisco brig he had seen landing 'copra at Faloo; the brig with a German captain, a Yankee chief mate, a French second mate, and a crew of blacks; the brig he had vaguely suspected of being the nameless raider.

If it was the raider it was fleeing from the scene of its latest piracy, with the Dawn's cargo packed below hatches. But what he had suspected at Faloo was, after all, only suspicion. There might be help on board the Mary Belle for him if they but saw him. Standing on the rocking, plunging trunk, he waved his shirt above his head, hoping and praying that it would be seen. But the brig passed on, sinking into the blue of the western horizon.

He threw himself down on the floating palm and wearily twisted the shirt over his head again to ward off the burning rays. Friend or foe, the 'Frisco brig was gone.

The aching hours slowly passed. The thirst that burned in the boy trader's throat was bitter as death. Of hunger he was not conscious; it was the thirst that tormented him. Hours—years it seemed—passed before the sun dipped to the west, and the fiercest heat of the tropic day was over. With the fall of night came relief from the blaze of heat and the blinding light. But the torment of thirst was more bitter than ever.

Many times during the night, floating and drifting under the stars, Ken lost consciousness. He slept fitfully, with the wash of the sea in his ears. But, sleeping or waking, he held on instinctively to the log that saved him from sinking.

From a sleep, or, rather, from a torpor, he was suddenly startled by a shock that shook the floating trunk and almost threw him from his hold. He stared round him in the glimmer of the stars. Something had struck the log, and in a moment more he knew what it was as a black fin glanced from the water within a few yards of him.

A thrill of horror ran through the boy trader. It was the snout of a swooping shark that had struck the log, and the brute had missed him perhaps by inches. Even as he stared at it with dilated eyes the fin disappeared, and he caught the gleam of white as the shark turned over again, swooping down a second time.

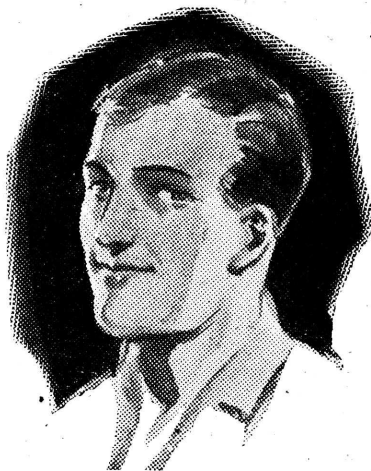
Hunger and thirst, fatigue and suffering were forgotten then. The boy trader swung himself across the

The Passing Ship.

"A SAIL!" King of the Islands panted the words from blistered lips.

The noontide sun burned on the Pacific, and scarce a cloud dimmed the azure vault that curved over the ocean from horizon to horizon.

The boy trader sat astride the palm-trunk, his legs in the water. It was drifting, and he was drift-



KIT HUDSON, the young Australian mate of Ken King's trading ketch, and Ken's great pal.

swooping shark that had struck the log, and the brute had missed him perhaps by inches. Even as he stared at it with dilated eyes the fin disappeared, and he caught the gleam of white as the shark turned over again, swooping down a second time.

Hunger and thirst, fatigue and suffering were forgotten then. The boy trader swung himself across the

Ken King's Ordeal!

thick trunk, leaving it between himself and the shark.

Again the trunk shook as the hideous snout struck it. But Ken was out of reach of the shearing jaws. Floating in the water up to his neck, one hand resting on the end of the log, Ken watched the demon of the deep. The shark retreated and swam in a widening circle.

That death shadowed him, that he was lost on the boundless sea, without hope of rescue, and that he could never survive another day of exposure and suffering, Ken knew. But he gave no thought to it. All his faculties were bent to the fight with the shark. He had no weapon but a clasp-knife—useless against such an enemy. He watched, waiting for the shark to close in.

In long circles the shark swam, but the circles narrowed at last. Ken was strangely cool. At any second now the rush of the fiendish fish might come, but it should not find him unprepared.

When it came the boy trader dived, shooting into the dim depths, swimming down like a Kanaka pearl-diver. He felt rather than knew that the hideous thing passed over him. He remained under water till his lungs were almost bursting, and then he shot up to the surface. He came up close by the log, and the shark was a dozen yards away.

Again the giant fish circled. Again round, and Ken watched with steady eyes, ready for the circle to narrow and for the inevitable rush. It came suddenly. He dived, and again the shark passed over him. When he came to the surface he was at a little distance from the rolling palm-trunk. He stared round for the shark, but the brute was not to be seen.

Ken swam to the palm and caught hold. Resting on the log, he watched the glistening waters intently, breathlessly. But the shark did not reappear. Either the brute had tired of the strange contest or the scent of some other prey had drawn him from the spot.

Ken dragged himself on to the log again, and for a long time he remained awake, his flesh creeping at the thought of the shearing jaws he had so narrowly escaped. But weariness overcame him, and he slept.

When his eyes opened again it was to see the sunrise. Another day had dawned on the Pacific, and Ken's weary eyes turned from point to point of a cloudless horizon. No land, no sail, no hope! Another burning day, and he knew that it must be his last. His brain was dizzy, the sea singing strange lullabies in his throbbing ears. The memory of his ship, of his shipmates, was dim in his mind now, like the memory of something that he had known long ago. Weak, exhausted, too far gone to feel the pangs of hunger and thirst, he lay across the floating log, scarcely stirring as the sun, climbing to the zenith, poured down its burning rays upon him.

No Hope!

STANDING in the canoe, Kit Hudson swept the waste of waters with his binoculars. Only the curling waves, the darting flying-fish, met his sight. The search for his comrade was hopeless. The mate of the Dawn knew that it was hopeless, but he would not abandon it.

A dozen golden-skinned Oua natives paddled the long canoe. Koko handled the lugsail. Kit Hudson watched the waters with binoculars.

He was weary, his eyes ached from scanning the sea in the brilliant sunlight, but he would not give in.

Thirty-six hours had passed since his skipper had been tossed overboard from the ketch. Yet Hudson clung to the hope that he still lived.

After the crew of sea-thieves had left the Dawn, Hudson had been anxious to begin the search for his lost comrade without losing a moment. But the ketch had been left crippled, with hacked spars, cut ropes, and gashed canvas. Hudson's chief hope was that Ken might have succeeded in swimming to Oua, and landed on the island.

But it was long before the Dawn could be got under way, under a rag of canvas, and then had followed hours of weary tacking against an adverse wind, to beat back to Oua. It was not till a new day had dawned that the dismantled ketch crept into the lagoon. A day and a night had passed since Ken had been flung into the sea, and Hudson learned that nothing was known of him on the island—he had not landed.

There was no hope. Kaio-lalulalonga mourned his little white master as one dead. But the Cornstalk would not give in. To refit the ketch for sea was the work of many days, so Hudson had hired a canoe and crew and started on his hopeless quest.

The canoe glided over the blue waters where the Dawn had been on the night of the attack, and from that spot followed the drift of the current towards the Oua reef. Many times a dark object floating on the water had startled the mate with hope and fear. But every time it proved to be only some mass of driftwood, some broken spar or floating trunk.

"Little white master he no stop any more altogether," said Kaio-lalulalonga sadly.

Hudson lowered the glasses and rubbed his aching eyes.

"Alive or dead, we're going to find him," he said between his teeth.

Koko, as the bo'sun was called, shook his head despondently.

"Look here," growled Hudson, "the skipper was in this current—he would try to make Oua. He's the best swimmer in the islands. He had a chance of making that Oua reef."

"He no stop along Oua," answered Kaio-lalulalonga.

"He must have missed the reef," said Hudson; "but—"

One day, two day!" said Koko. "No swim along sea, sar! No can!"

Hudson waved his hand towards a drifting log that tossed on the waves a cable's-length from the canoe.

"This current brings along all sorts of flotsam and jetsam, to throw on the reef," he said. "King of the Islands may have found something to keep him afloat."

"Plaps he go along sea, along log," said Koko. "Allee same, he deader, sar. Eye belong us feller no see little white master any more."

Hudson knew that it was only too likely. If King of the Islands had, as he hoped, clung to some floating mass of driftwood, he had been swept away into the boundless Pacific—a speck on the vast waters.

Under a burning sun, assailed by hunger and thirst, perhaps by the monsters of the deep, what hope was there that the boy trader yet survived? Little, or none! But so long as the remotest fragment of hope remained, the mate of the Dawn would not give in.

Far to the west of Oua, out of sight of the island, the canoe swept, searching the boundless sea.

Through the long, hot hours Kit Hudson watched the glittering waters with aching eyes and heavy heart. Not till the sun was setting and shadows creeping over the Pacific did the Australian allow his weary crew to turn back.

Hudson sat with a grim, scowling brow as the canoe headed for Oua at last, the paddles flashing in the light of the stars.

The search had been useless. He had expected it to be of little use, but he would not leave a chance untried. Even yet he would not abandon hope.

"Aie—aie!" muttered Koko. He sat in the canoe like a bronze statue of sorrow.

"We're beaten!" growled Hudson. "But we're not done yet. We've got to make Oua now, but we're going to refit the Dawn and carry on the search. There's a chance—there's always a chance! King of the Islands may have been picked up—a trader—a native canoe—anything! I'm not giving up hope while there's a rag of hope left. Pull yourself together, Koko! If Ken King is living, we're going to find him!"

"He no stop any more!" said the Kanaka disconsolately.

"And if he's gone, we're going to find the sea-lawyers who put him overboard," said Hudson, eyes gleaming. "There's that left, Koko."

Kaio-lalulalonga's black eyes glittered, and his hand went to the knife in his belt.

"Us feller findum, cuttee off head belong them!" he said. "Now white master talk good feller talk, mouth belong him. Cuttee off head, smoke feller head along fire, all same Malaita boy."

The Kanaka was brooding on thoughts of vengeance. But in the white man's heart hope still lingered. Kit Hudson could not and would not believe that he had lost his comrade for ever.

Flung to Land!

THE roar of surf on a coral reef brought no movement, no sign of life from the still figure that lay sprawled across the floating

palm-trunk. The sun was in the west; the sea crimson with its level rays.

On the unresting waters tossed the floating log, with the haggard figure sprawled across it, clinging on instinctively, though consciousness was gone. Scorched by the sun, burning with thirst, King of the Islands had fallen into a deep lethargy.

The roar of surf would have brought hope to his heart, for it told of land, had he been able to hear. But his head was sunk on the tossing log, his eyes were closed, his ears unheeding. He was deaf to that sound of hope.

Yet, had he but known it, the current was drifting him to a low reef where the sea broke in masses of spray. Beyond the reef lay the shining waters of a lagoon, circled by a

dazzling beach and tall palms that waved in the breeze. Beyond the palms rose a dark, wooded hill. On the beach crawled lizards and land-crabs, cockatoos screamed in the woods, over the lagoon sailed a man-o'-war bird.

It was a tiny isle of the Pacific—one of the thousand unknown, uninhabited islets of the great ocean. Had Ken raised his head, he would have seen the promise of life—the green trees loaded with fruit, the gleaming stream that rippled and cascaded down the hill to the lagoon. But his head was sunk on the log and did not stir.

Closer and closer the log drifted, swinging and swaying now in the agitated water.

The clinging fingers tightened their grasp, as if of their own voli-

tion, as the log rolled and pitched. Then there came a sudden crash, and the boy trader was flung violently from his hold.

The shock awakened him from the stupor into which he had been sunk for hours. His eyes opened wildly, and he found that he was swimming, with white spray dashing round him, falling on him in showers.

The log was gone, tossed away in the surf. But under his feet King of the Islands felt the rock. The waves washed him from the rock, and he swam; and the effort of the struggle helped to clear his dazed mind.

"Land!" That word buzzed in his brain. Land! Life and hope! His clouded brain cleared, something like

(Continued on the next page.)

FIVE MINUTE FLIGHTS

LONDON AMSTERDAM BERLIN
BRUSSELS COLOGNE
PARIS
BASLE

Through Europe by Air

This Week:—AMSTERDAM, seen from the cabin of a great Imperial Airways Liner.

As you look down on Amsterdam, Holland's commercial capital and largest city, it somehow reminds you of a half-section of a spider's web, both in shape and colour. For the river Amstel and the canals divide the city into about a hundred small islands, connected by some three hundred bridges, and it all runs in a series of semi-circles.

The chief impressions of Amsterdam are canals, forests of masts and funnels, and winding narrow streets, with the quaintest red-brick gabled

buildings. But, above all, you will remember the canals!

The city has been literally snatched from the water, for the site is fen country, and the whole place practically rests on piles, driven down forty or fifty feet to a firm subsoil. And then, some fifty years ago, three artificial islands were built in the Ij, or "Y," that inlet of the Zuyder Zee on which Amsterdam stands. To-day they hold the big Central Railway Station and numerous quays.

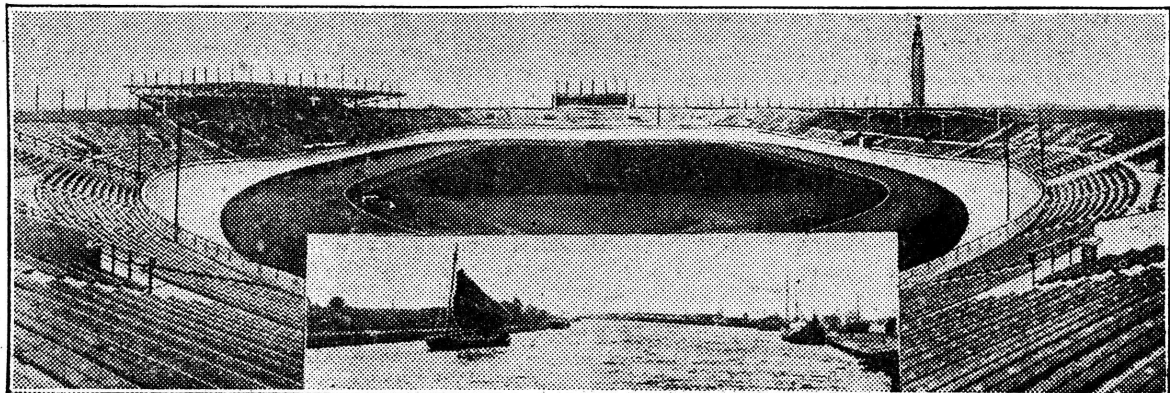
The Dam, a huge public square, is the centre-point of the "spider's

web," and round it lie all the quaint old parts of the city. From here outwards there are three main, semi-circular canals, each nearly three miles long. And they are very beautiful, too, each side lined with a broad carriage-way, a row of trees, and handsome houses, in Amsterdam's famous gabled fashion. The old city ramparts have been levelled out and made into tree-lined promenades, all spotlessly clean, in typical Dutch style.

Industrially, Amsterdam is world-famous for its diamond-polishing, a trade which to-day employs thousands of workers. But apart from that she has a huge shipbuilding, engineering, and chemical trade, so that, in addition to being quaint and old-world, the city boasts many fine modern factories. Yet, in contrast, outside the town you can still see scores of windmills used for industrial purposes.

One of the best zoological gardens in the world and a wonderful collection of old Dutch masters, housed in the National Museum, are two more features. Those famous pictures were recently transported at great cost and trouble to our own National Gallery, in London.

One of Amsterdam's best buildings is the "Stadhuis" (Townhouse), a most imposing structure, used as a royal palace when the Dutch Royal Family stay in the city. It is built on 13,659 piles!



Looking down on the huge Stadium at Amsterdam, from our Air-Liner. The picture inserted shows part of the Canal at Sloten, near Amsterdam, used for boat-racing.

Ken King's Ordeal!

strength revived in his worn and weary limbs.

The waves were washing him over a half-sunken coral reef. In rough weather he would have been dashed to death on the hard coral. But the sea was calm; only the resistance of the reef to the rolling swell of the ocean caused the surf to break and roar. The waters rolled and tumbled him over the reef like a plaything.

Sometimes he swam; sometimes he struggled, with his feet on sunken rock, till he floated in the calm waters of the lagoon, and dragged himself to the beach.

He sank down in soft sand, hot from the sun, and for long minutes he lay gasping.

But he sat up at last. He was on land—and the burning thirst that parched his throat could be slaked. His dizzy eyes swept the scene round him.

The stream that cascaded down the hill, and poured into the lagoon, caught his eyes, flashing in the sun. But it was too far away for him to reach it, in his present state. Nearer at hand were the palms, under which lay many fallen nuts. The boy trader crawled up the beach towards the trees.

There was no sign of human habitation on the island. The ring that enclosed the lagoon was unbroken; there was no passage to admit the smallest vessel, larger than a boat. But whether the island was inhabited or not, whether a crowd of savages might swoop down upon him, he recked nothing then. All the consciousness that was left to him was concentrated upon slaking his thirst.

With painful efforts he crawled up the hot sand, and sank down under the tall, nodding palms, with fallen nuts within his reach. He clutched a young nut, fumbled with his rasp-knife, and got the blade open at last. He hacked the nut, and put it to his lips. The cool, sweet milk of the drinking-nut was like nectar.

He emptied the nut and threw it aside. There was light in his eyes now, renewed strength in his limbs. He picked up another nut, pierced it, and leaned back against a palm, letting the milk trickle down his throat.

Then, for a long time, he lay still. His weary limbs were at rest, the parching thirst was relieved, the fronds of the palm shut off the blaze of the sun. It was like paradise to lie and rest, without motion, without thought.

The rim of the sun was behind the hill and shadows were over the lagoon before he stirred again.

King of the Islands dragged himself to his feet. Now that the aching thirst no longer tortured him, he was

conscious of hunger. Food and drink were close at hand. He cut open a nut and slowly ate the rich white meat from the interior. The meal revived him and the boy trader was more like his old self after he had eaten.

A strange and haggard figure he made, as he stood there staring about him, with bare feet, crumpled duck trousers, and the silk shirt twisted about his head. The salt of the sea was crusted on him and grimed in his thick hair. But he was alive and on land!

Where was he? Somewhere west or north-west of Ona he must be, but how many miles, how many scores of miles, he had drifted on the log he could not even guess. More than one changeable current had caught him and drifted him, sometimes sluggish, sometimes rapid. All he could know was that he was thrown upon one of the uncounted nameless islets of the vast Pacific.

That the island was uninhabited was a relief, for the moment at least. Friendly natives would have helped him; but a crew of savage Melanesian head-hunters would have completed the work that the sea and the sun had left unfinished. King of the Islands was glad to see that there was no sign of a native habitation.

The sun sank lower behind the hill. The short tropical twilight was at hand, and it would not last long. It was necessary to find a shelter for the night, and King of the Islands lost no time.

High above high-water mark, he scooped out a resting-place in the warm sand, and gathered palm-leaves for a bed. Only a glimmer of daylight remained when he had finished.

In glittering array, the stars came out in the dark blue vault overhead, glittering down on the still lagoon, on the never-resting spray and foam that leaped on the reef.

With the murmur of the surf in his ears, King of the Islands lay down to sleep.

He slept soundly; the sleep of utter exhaustion. Through the hours of darkness he slept on, dreaming—of the Dawn and his faithful comrades, now so far from him; of the lawless crew with blackened faces who had boarded and raided the ketch.

His dream changed, and a sense of danger was mingled with it, of danger pressing and close. He awoke suddenly, with a start, the perspiration on his forehead.

From the reef came the sullen murmur of the breaking surf. But some other sound was in his ears—the sound, as it seemed, of a stealthy footstep. He started to his feet, with an involuntary cry.

Something stirred and moved in the black shadows around him—some shadowy form that fitted and vanished. He caught, or fancied that he caught, an instant's glimpse of rolling, flashing

eyes. He sprang forward; but the figure—if figure it was—was gone. King of the Islands stood, with beating heart, staring about him in the darkness.

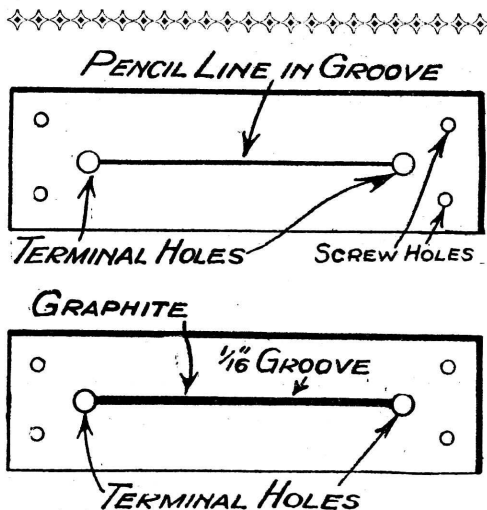
He was not afraid, but the suddenness of it all had shaken his nerves; nerves that were already unsteady after his grueling experience in the sea.

Had it been all a dream? Or was the island, after all, inhabited, and had some unknown savage found him, and peered at him, as he slept?

He listened intently. But there was no sound—nothing but the murmur of the sea on the coral reef.

What had startled him from slumber? A wild pig, perhaps, wandering from the bush! For long minutes he stood and listened. There was no sound to alarm him, and he sank down again at last into his bed of palm-leaves and slept. His eyes

(Continued on page 22.)



HOW TO MAKE A VARIABLE GRID LEAK.

In the upper of these two sketches you see a fixed grid leak. The lower sketch shows a fixed resistance. Our Wireless Expert tells you how to make these, in his chat on the opposite page.



But that, for the moment, was not a pressing matter. What mattered was food and the preserving of the life that had been so narrowly saved.

Shading his eyes with his hand, he looked about him, scanning the reef, the lagoon, the shelving beach, and the wooded hill beyond. Save for the crawling land-crabs, there was no sign of life. No sign of a grass hut or of a native. One glance, to his sailorman's eye, told that the lagoon was not navigable.

No ship had ever entered it from the sea—at the most a boat or a native canoe might have run the circling reef. No trader, therefore, ever came to the island—there was no hope of being taken off by a white man's ship. Only a skipper in extremity for want of water was likely to anchor off the island, and send a boat through the dangerous reefs where the surf broke and the spray leaped incessantly.

Ken King's Ordeal!

(Continued from page 20.)

did not open again until the morning sun was blazing down on the island.

The Hidden Foe!

"MY sainted Sam!" King of the Islands stood and stared at the mark in the soft sand, almost at his feet.

In the blaze of the morning sunshine, the boy trader turned out of his palm-leaf bed, refreshed by slumber, feeling once more life and health bounding in his veins. Round him the island lay calm and peaceful, silent save for the calling of the birds and the murmur of the surf that never ceased.

The brilliant blue of the sea, the white line of the reef, the green of the lagoon struck the eye with a violence of colour. Instinctively the boy trader's eyes sought the sea first of all, in search of the sail that was his only hope. But the vast ocean rolled a deserted waste to the horizon.

And then Ken, as he was about to walk down to the lagoon for a plunge in the still waters, caught sight of the footprint in the sand hardly a yard from the hollow where he had slept on the bed of palm-leaves.

He started and bent to scan the print. There was no mistake—it was not one of his own tracks, made the previous night. His own footprints lay clearly enough defined in the soft sand—shapely prints of a sinewy but not a large foot. Another track was marked in the sand as clearly as his own—the track of a larger, heavier foot—and here and there the mark of it partly obliterated his own.

It was not a wild pig from the bush that had wandered by his camp in the night. It was a human visitor.

Ken examined the footprint carefully, his heart beating. The island was not, after all, totally uninhabited.

No tribe of natives dwelt there—he was certain of that. But on the lone island was at least one man beside himself—a native, as he judged by the bare splayed track. With his eyes on the sand he followed the trail of the footprints, and they led him down to the edge of the lagoon. There they ceased, and he knew that the unknown visitor of the night had taken to the water, either by swimming or in a canoe.

He scanned the lagoon. No canoe was to be seen on its shining surface—nothing living save a few water-fowl.

Who was the mysterious visitor of the night? Some castaway like himself—some native sailor surviving from a wreck? He shook his head at the thought. A castaway would have made himself known—would have been only too glad to find a companion in misfortune. The stealthy visitor of the night had crept silently on his camp and darted away into the darkness when he awakened.

What would have happened had he not awakened at some slight sound of that stealthy approach? A slight shiver passed through the boy trader as he realised that in all likelihood the wings of the Angel of Death had passed over him in the dark hours.

He was not alone on the island. But the other—or others—evidently intended to remain out of his sight. Natives, friendly or unfriendly, would have revealed their presence. The incident only convinced him of what he had been sure of before—that no tribe of islanders lived there.

It was an uninhabited island—so far as natives were concerned. But someone was there—someone who had watched him and spied on him in the night, and gone—and was now keeping at a distance, watching him, perhaps, from the bush on the hill.

Ken's gaze swept the still, quiet scene. It was a disconcerting thought that keen eyes might be watching him—the eyes of some hidden enemy! He could see nothing to indicate a human presence—nothing save the track that ran in the sand—a silent witness that he was not alone.

There was no fear in the heart of the boy trader. But he realised his danger and was on his guard. He had no weapon but a clasp-knife with which to defend himself. The man who had spied on him in the night had fled when he started up out of slumber, which did not look as if much was to be feared from him.

But there might be others—and even if the unknown feared to attack him openly there might be a whizzing spear from the bush—a shot from the hill. The unknown of the night must be an enemy or he would not have approached so stealthily, or fled so precipitately. King of the Islands understood that clearly.

And yet, after the first startling shock, he was conscious of a sense of relief. In the deep silence and solitude of a desert island even the presence of an enemy was not wholly unwelcome.

Long he stood there, by the edge of the lagoon, watching and listening—but all was lifeless and still. But for the track that remained in the sand he could have sworn that he was alone, hundreds of miles from any other human being.

The unknown had come across the lagoon—the tracks coming and going to the water's edge told that. Across the lagoon, almost facing him as he stood, was the waterfall cascading down the wooded hill, gleaming here and there in the sunlight through bush and palm and blazing hibiscus. If others were on the island they would be camped where there was fresh water—that was certain. His enemies—if they were enemies—were on the opposite side of the lagoon, therefore a good half a mile from him. He would have ample warning of their approach.

Realising this, the boy trader plunged into the lagoon and bathed. He came out dripping and refreshed from the cool water. He dried himself in the sun which, early as it was, was blazing down on the island, giving promise of a burning tropical

day to come. He gathered palm-leaves and plaited himself a hat, in the native fashion, and its shade was welcome to him.

Then he gathered coconuts for his breakfast, eating the rich white meat of the ripe nuts, washing it down with the milk. There was other food in sight—wild yams and bread-fruit trees—but as yet he had no fire for cooking.

His matches were soaked with seawater and useless. But King of the Islands knew how to make fire in the native way when it was needed.

Of that, however, he was not thinking now. How long he might remain on that unknown island—whether he might ever leave it—he could not tell. To find some suitable spot for his camp and to build himself a shelter was necessary first—and his camp must be pitched in a safer spot than the night before, where no creeping enemy could come upon him as he slept.

With his knife he cut a stout lawyer-cane from the bush and shaped it into a cudgel. Then he started along the shore of the lagoon to make the circuit of the little island. The lagoon was little more than two miles in circumference.

On the east side, where the boy trader had been cast up by the sea, there was nothing but low-lying reefs, beaten by the surf; on the west side was the hill, wooded to the summit, broken here and there by deep ravines, down one of which the stream rippled and flashed.

Of what extent the island might be beyond the hill Ken could not tell. Somewhere by the rippling stream, he had little doubt, was the camp of the other—or others—who occupied the desert island. That he might be seeking danger by exploring was very likely, but he did not hesitate. At any moment they might seek him out, if they chose, and he could not elude them. If there was to be a hostile meeting it might as well come soon as late. And the fresh water, gleaming in the sun, drew him like a magnet.

He kept close to the lagoon as he advanced, keeping the width of the beach between him and the trees and bush.

The shelving sand was unbroken by any trace of a footprint. That was another proof that the unknown visitor of the night had come across the lagoon, and it indicated that the denizen of the island seldom or never visited the eastern shore.

There was nothing to draw him there; food and water were in abundance on the western side of the lagoon. Ken could guess that eyes had seen him moving on the shore after his landing, and that in the night the unknown had crossed the lagoon to spy out the newcomer, coming unexpectedly perhaps on his bed sunk in the sand.

He moved along the circling shore, his eyes watchful as those of an osprey. A half-circle of about a mile and he reached the little stream that tumbled down the hill and poured into the lagoon. It had cut a path

(Continued on page 24.)

Ken King's Ordeal!

(Continued from page 22.)

across the sand, not more than a foot deep and three or four feet wide.

Ken bent to the water, filled a coconut-shell, and drank. The water, clear and cool, was delicious. Danger or no danger, he intended to pitch his camp within reach of the fresh water.

After drinking his fill he stood by the murmuring rivulet and looked up the beach into the shadowy ravine whence the stream emerged. The sense of being watched was strong upon him. He knew that he must be watched—that from some hiding-place hostile eyes were upon him. But there was no sign of life—no sound.

On the beach and on the wooded hillside that rose beyond it, so far as he could see, there was no sign of a habitation. Yet the man of the island must be camped within reach of the fresh water—that was as certain as anything could be.

He guessed that the habitation would be in the ravine, where the stream tumbled, hidden among the rocks and trees that barred his view and among which the stream wound and cascaded.

The ravine rose steeply, rugged rock on rock. It was a mere fissure in the hill, a dozen yards wide at the opening, narrowing back in the hill. The stream fell from rock to rock in a series of glittering cascades.

King of the Islands stared into the ravine from where he stood on the beach, but he did not approach it. He was anxious to learn with whom he had to deal, and to deal with him if the unknown proved indeed to be an enemy. But to clamber up the rugged ravine, with an enemy before him, hidden from sight, was too foolhardy.

And it came into his mind, too, that as he stood there, with the sunlight on him, distinct against the deep green of the lagoon, he afforded an easy mark for the man of the island, if the unknown had firearms and sought his life.

A green parrot rose suddenly, whirring, from a clump of screw-pines in the ravine. Something had startled the bird. There was a stirring in the screw-pines that was not caused by the wind. The clump was fifty yards from where King of the Islands stood, but the warning was not lost on him.

He leaped away from the little stream and dropped on his knees on the sand.

Something whizzed and splashed into the waters of the lagoon. The report of a rifle followed, and a little white puff of smoke came from the screw-pines. The bullet had whistled across the spot where the boy trader had been standing only an instant before. The report echoed and rang like thunder in the silence of the island.

King of the Islands leaped up and tore away along the beach. In a few seconds he was out of range of a shot from the ravine, shut off by its rocky sides.

He halted, his eyes gleaming, his teeth set, and threw himself behind a knoll of sand, the lawyer-cane gripped in his hand. The man of the island could not fire again without emerging from the ravine to the open beach. The boy trader waited and watched—eager to see his enemy, the wretch who had so ruthlessly fired on him from cover. If he came out into the open—

But he did not come.

The report of the rifle-shot died away, with a thousand whirring echoes, and there was silence again—silence deep and unbroken. The startled waterfowl, that had risen screaming at the sound, settled back on the lagoon—silence as of death—and King of the Islands might almost have fancied, as he waited and watched with tense, taut nerves, that it was all a dream and that he was alone on the solitary island hemmed in by the boundless blue of the Pacific!

(Who is this mysterious enemy Ken has stumbled upon? And why is he seeking the boy trader's life? Next Monday's MODERN BOY contains the answer to these riddles. To be sure of reading it, you must Order Your Copy in Advance. Do It Now!)

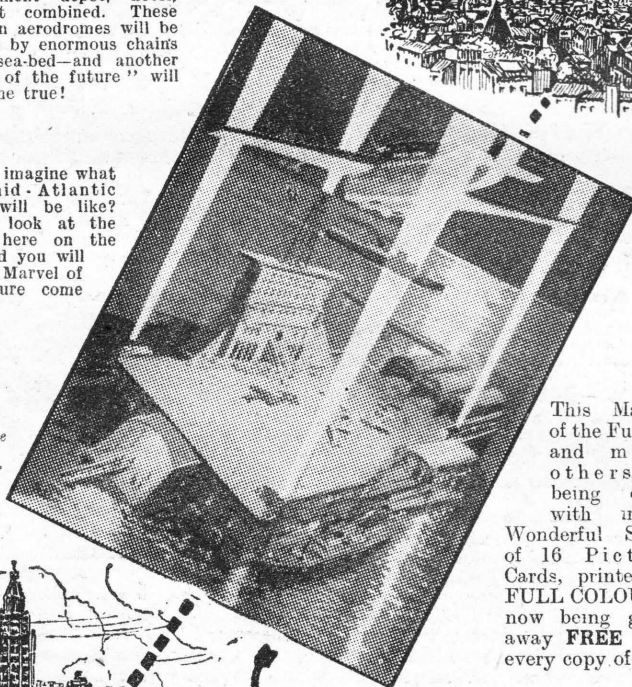
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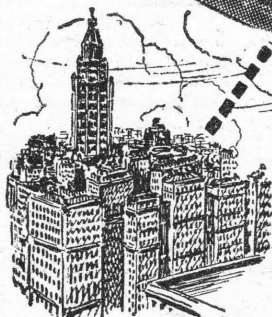
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