

FLYERS OF THE NORTHLAND!—The Best Boys' Story
of the Year—Inside!

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GREASED LIGHTNING

3/10/31

The Dawn's Queer Passenger . . .

By CHARLES HAMILTON

A long COMPLETE Story of Ken King and Kit Hudson and the native crew of the famous South Seas trading ketch —with One Other aboard!



The Missing Mate.

As the sun rose over the lagoon of Luta, in the South Seas, Ken King stood on the deck of his trading ketch, the Dawn, staring at the beach.

From the anchored ketch he had a wide view of the circling beach, shelving up from the shining lagoon and backed by tall palm-trees that nodded in the morning breeze. Clustered in one spot were the bungalows and warehouses of the white traders; then, at a distance, the sprawling grass-houses of the Luta natives. Dozens of canoes were beached along the rim of the lagoon. Here and there an early fisherman was pushing off.

Brown-skinned house-boys were stirring on some of the verandas, though their white masters were not yet visible. Only one white man was to be seen—a white man whose aspect was not pleasing to the eyes of the boy trader.

It was Billy Bottle, the beachcomber of Luta.

That forlorn outcast, brown as a native, and dressed like one in a dingy loin-cloth, came lurching down from the palms towards the lagoon. No doubt he had spent the night sleeping under the palm-trees.

He stopped on the beach to stare across at the ketch and scowl at the boy trader. Then he plunged into the lagoon for his bath.

King of the Islands, as Ken was known, gave the beachcomber no heed after one glance. He continued to watch the beach as the sun climbed higher and the little settlement awoke to a new day.

He was thinking of Kit Hudson, his Australian mate, who had parted from him in anger the previous day.

Billy Bottle had been the unconscious cause of the trouble between the shipmates. He had brought a bundle of old newspapers aboard, and in one of them Kit had read that his uncle, William Charters, whom he had never met, had died in Sydney, leaving a large fortune and without making a will.

The next-of-kin was the dead man's son. But the son had been reported lost at sea ten years ago, and was presumably dead. Failing the son, Kit was the next-of-kin, and in the circumstances the dead man's lawyers were asking him to report to them in Sydney and claim the fortune.

Kit had been wildly excited at the news. He had endeavoured to persuade Ken to throw up his business of South Seas trader and share his good fortune with him in the same way as they had shared the earnings of the ketch.

But this Ken had refused to do, and Kit had gone ashore in anger, intending to hire a motor-boat to take him to Fushima, there to catch the steamer for Sydney.

The native crew of the Dawn—Kaialulalonga, otherwise Koko, the giant bo'sun, Lompo, Lufu, Kolulu, Tomoo, and Danny, the cooky-boy—knew there was trouble between the white masters, and they cast puzzled looks at Ken as he stood at the rail.

The boy skipper had hoped to see Hudson once more, to shake his old shipmate's hand for the last time before he started for Sydney. Hudson had left him in anger, but surely that had passed and he would not leave his old comrade, perhaps for ever, without a parting word!

But as he failed to catch sight of him ashore, Ken wondered whether Hudson had gone during the night on the run to Fushima.

"Lower the whaleboat!" ordered Ken at last.

He had business to transact on shore, and there was cargo to be taken aboard before the Dawn could sail from Luta.

But as Ken sat in the whaleboat and Koko and Lompo pulled to the beach, he was not thinking of business. He was wondering whether he would see again the shipmate who had sailed with him through so many stormy seas.

The whaleboat grounded on the beach, and King of the Islands jumped lightly out.

The beachcomber had waded ashore, and lay in the sand, drying his limbs in the sunshine.

Wretched enough the island outcast looked, with unshaven, stubbly face and matted hair, his face bloated by intemperance. He gave the handsome boy trader a lowering look. Ken, fresh and clean and fit, the picture of health, contrasted strangely with that miserable wreck of what had once been a white man.

The contrast struck the beachcomber, and roused some feeling of a long-forgotten shame in his breast. He scowled up at the boy trader as Ken stopped to speak to him.

"Seen anything of my mate, Kit Hudson?" asked Ken.

"The swab who pitched me off the ketch into the lagoon yesterday?" muttered the beachcomber. "If I was the man I was ten years ago I'd—"

"Never mind that, Billy Bottle," said Ken. "Do you know whether he's still on Luta?"

"Find out!" grunted the beachcomber.

Ken's eyes glinted, and he took a step nearer to the wretch sprawling on the sand.

"I saw him at sundown," said Billy Bottle hastily. He made a gesture towards the palm-trees. "He came on me there, and stopped to argue, hang him! Talked about having come into some luck, through those old newspapers I brought on board yesterday, and offered to give me a chance to get back! And then—" He broke off, muttering inaudibly.

"That's true," said Ken, looking at him curiously. "Hudson saw an advertisement in one of the Sydney papers—some lawyers are advertising

The Dawn's Queer Passenger

for him; he's come into a fortune at Sydney. He might never have seen it if you hadn't turned up with that bundle of papers.

"I know he intended to do something for you, if he could, as you brought him his luck. He said he would, and Hudson's a man of his word."

"So he said—and said he was hitting Fushima in a motor-boat at dawn, and offered to take me with him and give me a fresh start at Sydney."

"And then something I said got his rag out, and he laid hands on me, hang him! If I was the man I was ten years ago—"

"I reckon you asked for it," said Ken. But he was surprised. It was not like Hudson to lose his temper easily.

The beachcomber gritted his teeth. "He made me tell him my name—my real name—a name I've kept dark ever since I've been on the beach. By hokey, if he stays on Luta I'll get him for it—get him with a coral rock!"

"Belay that!" snapped Ken. "Have you seen him since sundown last night?"

"No!" snarled the beachcomber. "Do you know if he's still on Luta?"

"I don't know, and I don't care—except that if he's still here I'll make him pay somehow!"

King of the Islands strode on up the beach, leaving the outcast of Luta muttering and scowling. He headed for Macpherson's bungalow.

Macpherson was the owner of the only motor-craft on Luta, so it would be easy to learn from him whether Kit Hudson had gone. The trader was not up yet, but his house-boy was in the veranda, and he answered Ken's questions.

"Feller motor-boat stop along place along him, sar," answered the house-boy.

"You see feller white master Hudson eye belong you?" asked Ken.

"Night before me see um, sar, eye belong me," grinned the house-boy. "He plenty walk about along beach. Plenty bad temper along that feller, sar."

Ken walked away in perplexed thought. Hudson had not gone, and he was glad of that. But what he had heard since he had landed puzzled him. He asked every native he met, and at last received news of Hudson. One of the "boys" had seen the feller white master "along palm-tree." King of the Islands followed the path that led up to the palm-grove, in the hope of finding his shipmate there.

"Plenty Trouble!"

KIT HUDSON sat at the foot of a palm-tree, leaning back against the slanting trunk, gazing towards the lagoon, where the graceful spars of the Dawn stood out against the

blue of the sky. His face was pale and worn.

He had not closed his eyes through the night. He had been thinking—long, long hours of hard and painful thinking. Now at last he seemed to have reached a decision.

Fate had dealt him a strange blow. The advertisement in the Sydney newspaper had told him of the inheritance that waited for him—twenty thousand pounds, ships, and houses, left by the uncle he had never seen, William Charters, the shipper, of Sydney!

It was a dazzling stroke of fortune. But Kit's first thought had been to share his amazing luck with his shipmate, King of the Islands. Ken's refusal, gentle as it had been, had hurt him, and he had left the ketch in anger.

Then Fate had dealt him a knock-out!

In gratitude to the beachcomber, who had by chance placed the great news in his hands, he had offered to give Billy Bottle a chance to become a decent white man again.

A chance word from the beachcomber had done the rest, and Hudson, startled and dismayed, but determined to know the truth, had forced the man to reveal his name. And his name was William Charters!

Billy Bottle, the degenerate beachcomber, was the son of the Sydney shipper, believed to have been lost at sea ten years ago!

Some rag of shame kept the man who had fallen so low from using his own name. He was known on Luta only by the derisive nickname that had been given him on the beach.

But Hudson knew now that he was the younger William Charters, son of the man who had left a fortune in Sydney—a fortune that was waiting for him—Hudson—because the old shipper's son was believed dead!

The beachcomber knew nothing of

it. He had long ceased to take any interest in the far-off country from which he came. He only desired not to be reminded of the past. He had never looked at the newspapers that had passed through his hands.

Had he done so, he would have known that a fortune was his for the claiming.

He knew nothing, and Hudson knew that the man would never know if he was left to rot on the beach of Luta when the shipper's nephew sailed away to claim the fortune!

It was a terrible temptation. The man was an outcast, a waster. Wealth only meant to him that he would sink the sooner into a dishonoured grave. To Hudson it meant the realisation of all his ambitions—a ship of his own. Through the long night Kit Hudson had wrestled with the temptation.

He knew, at the bottom of his heart, that he never could touch another man's money. For that was what it came to. Worthless wretch or not, Billy Bottle was his father's heir, though he never dreamed it. He had disgraced his father, and if he thought of the old man at all, he probably believed that old William Charters had disinherited him.

Likely enough, the old shipper would have done so had he made a will. But he had never done so. And the fortune which Hudson had believed to be his for a few dazzling hours—which he had quarrelled with Ken for refusing to share—was Billy Bottle's by rights!

After long hours of doubt and torment, wrestling through the night with the terrible temptation to sail for Sydney and claim the fortune, leaving Billy Bottle to his inevitable fate, Kit had come to a decision. He sighed with relief as a plan formed in his mind.

"That's that!" he muttered to himself.

"Ahoj, shipmate!" Hudson started as the well-known voice of King of the Islands rang through the palm-trees.

"Hudson, ahoj!" came the ringing voice again.

"Ahoj!" shouted back Kit, starting to his feet.

A minute more and Ken came through the palms. He started as he saw Hudson's worn, ravaged face. "Kit, old man!" exclaimed Ken.

"Well?" said Hudson.

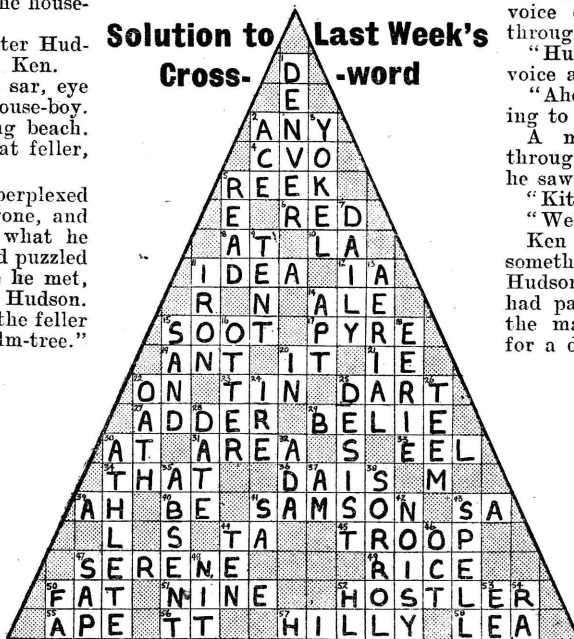
Ken coloured. He could see that something serious had happened to Hudson since yesterday when they had parted. The signs of stress in the mate's face were plain enough for a duller eye than Ken's to read.

What had happened, Ken could not begin to guess. But that his shipmate had been through black trouble he could easily see. The fortune at Sydney had not made him a happy man!

Hudson was eyeing his shipmate strangely. The blood was surging into his cheeks.

For long, weary hours he had debated in his mind what he would do. Now

Solution to Last Week's Cross-Word



that he saw King of the Islands he knew that the question had never really been in doubt. He knew what Ken would think.

Ken broke the silence:

"Kit, old man, you left me yesterday with your back up! But you're not going to part like that. You're still on Luta. That means, doesn't it, that you wanted to see your old shipmate again, and part friends?"

Hudson was silent.

"You offered me a share in your fortune, old man. It was like you—like the white man you've always been. But it couldn't be done. Surely you've thought over it, and see now that it couldn't be done?"

"Yes," muttered Hudson.

"I knew you'd see it, after thinking it out, old fellow," said Ken. "It was splendid of you to offer it—splendid! But I couldn't have taken

"Don't be an ass, old chap!" "The Dawn can make the run to Fushima," went on Kit Hudson. "Will you take me in the Dawn?"

Ken's face brightened wonderfully. "That's my old shipmate again!" he exclaimed. "You're a rich man now, Kit, but you can play at being mate of the Dawn while we run down to Fushima. I'll cut out the other calls, and pick them up afterwards—"

"You won't," said Hudson. "You won't cut out a single call. There's no hurry to raise Fushima."

"But if you miss the steamer there—"

"There'll be another later."

"But you're in a hurry to hit Sydney and bag the loot—"

"Where's the hurry?"

"Well, you seemed in a hurry yesterday," said King of the Islands, staring at him.

Hudson laughed, and explained:

"Yesterday isn't to-day. I'm in no hurry to hit Fushima. Never mind the fortune at Sydney. I've one more thing to ask, Ken."

back along Dawn, sar?" asked the brown boatswain.

"Ay, ay!" answered Ken, with a smile. And Hudson nodded.

"This Kanaka feller plenty glad, sar!" said Kaio-lalulalonga.

Whether Kit Hudson was to be a rich man or not, he fell back at once into his old place as mate of the Dawn. During the long, sunny morning he was busy with matters of cargo, but he did not seem, to Ken's eyes, his old self.

He was strangely silent, and his face was clouded. No resentment towards his shipmate lingered in his breast. He made that quite clear; but it was easy for King of the Islands to read that there was trouble on his mind.

Once, when Ken made a reference to the fortune that was awaiting him at Sydney, irritation broke out, and—

"Cut that out!" snapped Hudson.

"My dear chap—" exclaimed Ken.

Hudson coloured.

"Sorry, old man—but don't talk about it, if you don't mind."

And Ken did not mention the fortune at Sydney again. But why it was a distasteful topic to the mate of the Dawn he could only wonder.

In the afternoon the ketch was ready for sea. Ken had seen nothing of the passenger so far. What arrangement Hudson might have made with Billy Bottle he did not know.

Several times the beachcomber had been seen loafing on the sands, but he did not look towards the ketch, and Ken wondered whether he knew yet that he was to leave Luta.

"Well, we're ready to get the hook up, Kit," the boy trader said at last. "What about your passenger?"

Hudson did not reply for some moments. It seemed that his mind was swaying in doubt. Perhaps the temptation was assailing him once more to leave the outcast on Luta. Then he set his teeth.

"I'll get him aboard," he said.

King of the Islands watched the whaleboat gliding to the beach on her last trip, Hudson in the stern, Lompo and Lufu pulling. His brow was wrinkled. Something was amiss with his shipmate—something strange and troubling. He could not guess what it was, and it was clear that Hudson did not intend to tell him.

Kaio-lalulalonga followed Ken's gaze, a curious expression on his brown face.

"Plenty trouble stop along that feller white master, sar!" said Koko.

Ken did not reply. But he knew that the Kanaka was right. There



Koko, waiting with the whaleboat, saw the shipmates coming, and a happy grin spread over his brown face.

such an offer. Kit, old man, you're going to be a rich man—"

"Am I?" said Hudson.

"Well, twenty thousand pounds, ships, and houses look like riches to me," said Ken, laughing. "You're going to be rich, and sail your own ship—a steamer, like you've always wanted. I hate losing you from the Dawn, Kit, but I'm jolly glad of your good luck!"

"You'll be a rich man, in the big trade—while I'm drumming the Islands for copra in a little ketch, and it's for you to say whether you want our friendship to go on. But there'll never be any change on my side, at least."

Hudson gave him a curious look.

"You refused my offer," he said—"and you were right. I see that now. I was a fool to get my back up! But—" He paused. "I've changed my mind about taking the motor-launch from Luta, Ken. If you're not fed-up with me—"

"Heave ahead," said King of the Islands. "You know jolly well that you can't ask anything I should say 'No' to."

"Better hear it first," grinned Hudson. "I want to bring a passenger on the ketch—and the passenger's Billy Bottle."

Ken gave a jump. But his surprise lasted only a moment.

"I catch on. You want to give the poor wretch a chance, because he brought you the news of your fortune. Done! Bring him on the ketch, by all means, if he'll come."

"He'll come!" said Hudson, his jaw setting grimly.

The shipmates walked back to the beach together. Kaio-lalulalonga, waiting with the whaleboat, saw them coming, and a happy grin irradiated his brown visage. The trouble between the two feller white masters had evidently passed away.

"Feller white master Hudson comey

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was "plenty trouble" on his ship-mate's mind, and he could only wonder what it was.

Shanghaied!

BILLY BOTTLE sat up and scowled. Some kind—or unkind—soul on Luta had stood the outcast a "long drink" of his favourite poison, and the beachcomber had been sleeping off the effects in the shade of a coral rock.

He had awakened, with raw nerves and the temper of a fiend, to see the whaleboat gliding ashore from the Dawn. He scowled savagely at the boat and the white man who sat in it.

Hudson's eyes were upon him, and he muttered a word to the oarsmen.

The whaleboat did not pull for the coral quay. It pulled for the beach directly towards the sprawling out-cast.

Billy Bottle watched it with savage eyes. The white man in the boat was the man who had flung him into the lagoon for insolence; the man who had shaken him like a rat and forced him to tell the name he had long kept secret. Animosity, impotent hatred, burned in the beachcomber's eyes.

His shaking hand strayed towards a loose lump of coral. But he let it go again. Courage, as well as strength, had been sapped away by the poison that soaked the wretched man.

The boat grounded, and Hudson leaped out. He walked directly towards the sprawling man.

"Ready to go aboard?" asked Hudson. "You haven't a lot of dunnage to pack, I reckon."

"Go to—anywhere you like!"

snarled Billy Bottle. "I'm not coming on your hooker, hang you! Leave me alone!"

"I told you I'd give you a chance to make good," said Hudson quietly, "and I'm going to give you that chance, Billy Bottle."

"You're going to leave me alone!" snarled Billy Bottle. "If I've brought you luck, as you say, tip me a fiver, and let it go at that."

"I'm going to do more than that. I'm going to take you off the beach and make a white man of you!"

"And who's asked you?" yapped the beachcomber. "Keep your favours for those that want them, my bucko mate. Leave me alone!"

Hudson pointed to the boat. "Step in," he said—"and step lively!"

Billy Bottle eyed him more in amazement than rage. Why the mate of the Dawn should trouble his head about him at all was a mystery to the forlorn outcast. But now that his offers had been refused, savagely and ungratefully, Billy Bottle naturally expected Hudson to leave him to himself.

That, however, was evidently not Hudson's intention. The wretched man staggered to his feet, and backed against the rock.

"What's the game?" he snarled. "I've asked you to leave me alone! I'm asking nothing else of you. Leave me alone!"

"You're going on the Dawn," said Kit Hudson coolly.

"Hang you!" yelled the beachcomber. "You reckon that you can shanghai a man on Luta?"

"I reckon that you're going on the Dawn," said Hudson. "Step into that boat, or you'll be put."

Billy Bottle clenched his fists convulsively.

"Hands off!" he said hoarsely.

"You feller boy," ordered Hudson, glancing round at the staring Kanakas, "you take this feller; put this feller along boat plenty quick."

Lompo and Lufu were as surprised as the beachcomber. Forcible recruiting—"shanghai-ing," as it is called—was not uncommon on Pacific beaches, but never had a man been shanghai'd on King of the Islands' ketch. And the wretch crouching against the coral rock was worth no man's while. Even the shortest-handed skipper in the South Seas would never have shanghai'd Billy Bottle or taken him on board for love or money.

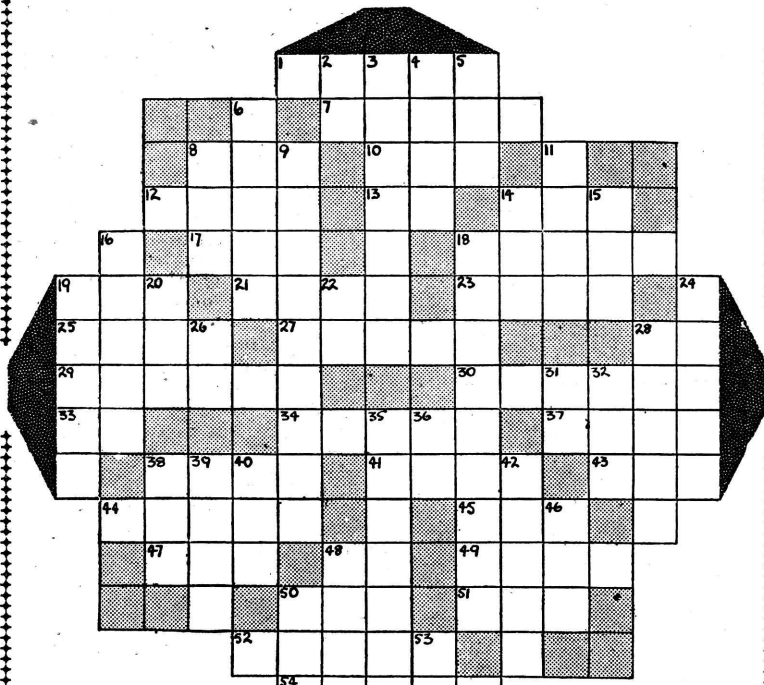
But the white master's order was enough for the Kanakas. They closed in on the crouching outcast with grinning faces.

"Hands off!" screamed Billy Bottle. The prospect of being turned into a white man again—probably by drastic measures—did not appeal to him.

In the last stage of degradation, he preferred degradation to effort. To loaf away the sunny days in dingy idleness, cadging, sinking lower and lower till his inevitable fate overtook him, was all that life had left for Billy Bottle.

To that he clung—but he clung in

This week's **GUINEA** for an original Crossword Puzzle, the work of a **MODERN BOY** reader, goes to **D. ATTWATER**, 49, Fore Street, Totnes, Devon, for this bright effort. See how quickly you can get a strangle-hold on it. No prize is offered. The solution will be published next week.

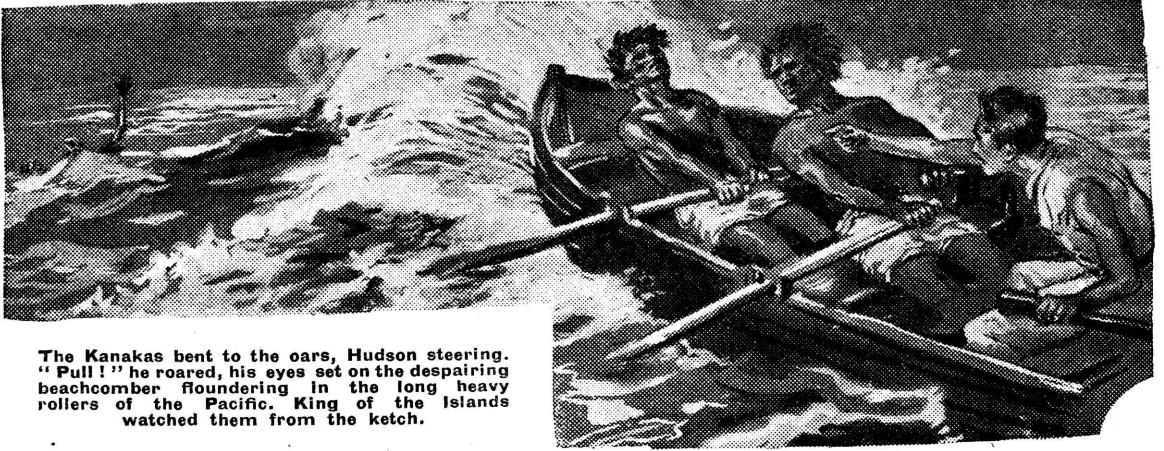


DEFINITIONS ACROSS

1. Pains. 7. Danger.
8. Celestial body. 10. Hole.
12. Mix up. 13. "Bay" beheaded. 14. Large amount. 17. Unit.
18. Drink made from apples. 19. Loiter.
21. Manner of walking. 23. Grows in marshy places. 25. Native of Arabia.
27. "— of Hearts." 28. Thank you.
29. Me. 30. Originator. 33. Added to a letter. 34. Expert. 37. Horses eat them. 38. Schoollfellows wear them.
41. Smear. 43. Look. 44. Desire.
45. Used for battering. 47. Conquered.
48. In a certain place. 49. Draws out.
50. From. 51. Place in position.
52. Swerves. 54. Made easier.

DEFINITIONS DOWN

2. Aloft. 3. Race of yachts. 4. Used for carrying dishes. 5. Drink slowly.
6. Fetch. 8. The middle of "motor".
9. First meal of the day. 11. Used for writing secret messages. 14. Prevaricate.
15. Boy's name. 16. Belonging to Mary.
18. Beings. 19. Lights on a car. 20. Gives us light. 22. Not out. 24. Tell the parts of speech in a sentence. 26. Nearly an insect. 28. Recent additions to race-courses. 31. Towards. 32. Owns.
35. Obviously, they edit. 36. Dad.
38. Supplies us with milk. 39. English river.
40. Used when writing. 42. He brings our bread. 46. Encountered. 48. Space.
50. Charge. 53. South East (abb.).



The Kanakas bent to the oars, Hudson steering. "Pull!" he roared, his eyes set on the despairing beachcomber floundering in the long heavy rollers of the Pacific. King of the Islands watched them from the ketch.

vain. As the two grinning Kanakas collared him he struggled and yelled furiously.

"You come along boat!" grinned Lompo. "White master he say come along feller boat."

"Hands off!" yelled Billy Bottle.

Hudson looked on grimly. From the ketch, King of the Islands stared blankly at the scene on the beach.

Natives gathered round, staring and laughing. Several white-traders looked on from their verandas in astonishment and amusement. Nobody had a helping hand for the beachcomber.

If any skipper was foolish enough to shanghai Billy Bottle, there was not a white man on Luta who would not be glad to see the last of that disgrace to his race and colour.

The beachcomber developed unexpected strength, fighting like a wildcat as he was dragged down the beach. But the two Kanakas got him to the boat, lifted him, and tossed him in like a sack of copra.

He sprawled in the boat, and Hudson stepped in.

"You feller boy washy-washy along ketch," he said, and sat down. The grinning Kanakas pushed out the oars.

Billy Bottle sat up, gasping, as the whaleboat shot towards the Dawn. He glared at Hudson like a madman, raving futile threats.

The mate of the Dawn gave him a grim look.

"Silence, you!" he snapped. "You feller Lompo, s'pose that feller talkee, you knock seven bells outer that feller along oar belong you."

"Yes, sar!" chuckled Lompo. And as the beachcomber continued to rave Lompo gave him a swipe with the oar that stretched him in the bottom of the boat.

After that, Billy Bottle said nothing, and the whaleboat shot on towards the ketch. When the boat bumped on the hull of the Dawn, King of the Islands stared down into it with amazed eyes.

"Kit!" he gasped.

"I've got my passenger," announced Hudson calmly.

"But you can't shanghai a man, Kit!"

"You've given me leave to bring

this man on the ketch. I'm holding you to your word!" Hudson replied.

Billy Bottle glared up at the astonished face looking over the rail.

"Put me ashore!" he howled. "Captain King, you're not going to shanghai a man? I'm no use on your packet, and you know it! Put me ashore!"

"You're no use, and no ornament," said King of the Islands, "but it's a chance for you to get off the beach, Billy Bottle."

"Who's asking for a chance? Leave me alone! Tell that mate of yours to put me ashore!" yelled the beachcomber.

Ken stared at his mate in perplexity.

"Kit, old man, the fellow's free to choose—"

"He isn't!" said Hudson.

"But—but—but—" stammered the boy trader.

"I've got my reasons! If that skunk is capable of being turned into a white man again, I'm going to do the job. Are you going back on your word, Ken King?"

King of the Islands drew a deep breath.

"No!" he said. "Bring him on board."

Billy Bottle clung to the thwarts as the Kanakas seized him, but he was torn away from his hold and pitched on the deck of the Dawn, where he sprawled, panting.

The whaleboat was swung up to the davits. Ken rapped out an order, and the anchor swung up from its coral bed. The boy trader's face was very grave.

That his mate's intentions towards the outcast of Luta were good he had no doubt, but Hudson's present methods did not appeal to King of the Islands in the least. He could not understand; Hudson seemed to have changed into another man. But he had given his word, and he held to it. Billy Bottle, willing or unwilling, was booked for a passage on the Dawn.

King of the Islands gave the beachcomber no further attention. All his care was needed for the reef passage. The Dawn glided out of the lagoon towards the open sea, followed

by many curious eyes on the beach of Luta.

"Leave This to Me!"

THE Dawn made the passage through the reef swiftly. Already she was out of the lagoon, and the Kanakas were shaking out more sail to pick up the wind outside the reef.

Billy Bottle stared up at the white canvas bellying overhead, and at the vast Pacific rolling blue and boundless before the sharp prow of the Dawn. He stared back at the reef, with the surf creaming over it, and the lagoon and the beach beyond, a desperate light in his eyes.

He was booked for a long voyage, and he did not need telling that no man would be allowed to eat the bread of idleness on board King of the Islands' ketch! There was a spark of spirit lingering somewhere in the carcass of the beachcomber still. He had once been a white Australian, and had held up his head among white men. He had not wholly forgotten it.

What spirit he had, what courage, was roused now. His bleared eyes stared across the widening space of sea that separated him from the beach where he had loafed for long years. That beach was home to the wretch. His grasp closed convulsively on the teak rail, and he hesitated, watching the widening space between the island and the Dawn. And then suddenly he leaped. Splash!

There was a yell from Kaiolulalonga.

"That white feller he walk about along sea!"

King of the Islands and Kit Hudson stared round, their eyes on the swimmer.

Billy Bottle was striking out for the reef, swimming desperately. He had been a good swimmer in his time, but when he made that desperate leap from the ketch he had not counted on the effect of years of bad living.

Hudson's face set grimly. The swimmer would never reach the beach—would never even reach the reef. The nearest rock that jutted from the sea was a cable's length beyond his utmost efforts. The mate of the Dawn saw it at a glance. For

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one instant he hesitated. Was that hopeless wretch worth saving?

He flung the thought from him and leaped towards the boat.

King of the Islands' voice rang out in sharp orders. The ketch hove to and the whaleboat splashed down. Tomoo and Kolulu bent to the oars, Hudson steering. The mate's face was white.

"Pull!" he roared. "Washy-washy, you feller Boy! You washy-washy too much quick altogether!"

The Kanakas rowed hard. King of the Islands watched them from the ketch, his face dark with anxiety.

Billy Bottle was already in difficulties. There was no strength in his flabby muscles, no stamina in his body. The long, heavy rollers of the Pacific, rolling on towards the reef, swamped over him, dazing and stunning him. He fought on, but again and again the heavy rollers passed over his head.

He had calculated, cunningly enough, that the skipper of the Dawn would not be willing to lose the wind for the sake of recapturing a worthless man, shanghaied for no discoverable reason.

He had had little doubt that King of the Islands would keep on his course, and leave him to swim ashore. And when he leaped from the Dawn he had had no doubt that he would be able to make the shore.

Now he knew that he would not—that he would be far from the outer reef when the rollers overwhelmed him. When he reached the reef, it would be only to be tossed ashore like a lump of driftwood, cast up by the sea like the other flotsam and jetsam of the Pacific. If King of the Islands had kept on his course, he was a dead man!

His despairing glance swept over the curling sea. He was in the grasp of death, and despair was in his eyes. But they lighted with hope again as he saw the ketch hove to. King of the Islands had not kept on his course!

"Ahoy!" shouted Hudson. The whaleboat was racing towards the beachcomber, the Kanakas sweating at the oars.

Billy Bottle's dizzy eyes turned on Hudson. He was exhausted, and less than half-way to the reef. A roller passed over his head, and he disappeared from sight.

"Pull, you swabs—pull!" roared Hudson. The Kanakas strained at the oars, and the mate stood up in the boat, his eyes searching the rolling waters for the sinking man.

The beachcomber's head came up again. He was struggling to keep afloat till the boat could save him. His life hung now on the speed of the whaleboat.

"Ahoy!" shouted Hudson. He waved his hand. "Stick to it, you scum—stick to it!"

The boat rushed down on the struggling man. Hudson reached over and grasped the tousled head of hair. Billy Bottle, gasping and exhausted, was dragged into the boat. He sank down, half conscious, in a pool of water.

Hudson gave him a grim, savage look. His grasp had drawn back from death the man who stood between him and a fortune!

The whaleboat glided back to the Dawn. Hudson looked up with a sardonic grin at the anxious face of King of the Islands.

"Is he alive?" asked Ken.

"Ay, ay—worse luck!" snapped Hudson. "Koko, bear a hand along this feller scum."

The half-fainting beachcomber was dragged on board. He lay on the

deck, breathing in gulps, scarcely conscious of his surroundings, while the boat was swung up and the ketch put before the wind again.

Ken's face was set. He came over to Hudson, who stood staring down at the gasping beachcomber with an expression on his face that the boy trader could not understand.

"Kit, old man," said King of the Islands quietly, "I don't get you! I can't make this out!"

Hudson made no answer. Ken touched his arm.

"Kit, the man's a worthless rotter, but he has a man's rights. Why not let him go his own way?"

"You'd lose the wind to put back to Luta and land that scum?" asked Hudson.

"Yes, old man. Say the word—"

Hudson shook his head.

"But what's the game, Kit? You've no right—"

"I have a right!" said Hudson. "Not only a right, but a duty. Never mind what it is, Ken. You've given me your word, and you've got to trust me. If there's a rag of decency left in that wreck, I'm going to make a white man of him. If not—"

He paused.

"If not—what?"

"I don't know!" Hudson said. "But I'm going to do my best with the brute. I've saved his wretched life, and I'm a fool for my pains! But I'm going through with it. Ken, you've got to leave this to me."

Ken opened his lips—and closed them again. At the most it would be a three weeks' run to Fushima, after all the calls the ketch had to make at intervening islands. Then he was to lose his shipmate—perhaps for ever.

No dispute should arise between them again—Ken was determined on that. He could not understand Hudson. That night on Luta seemed to have made another man of him. But his shipmate was his shipmate, and the beachcomber of Luta counted for nothing in comparison. Ken turned away without speaking again.

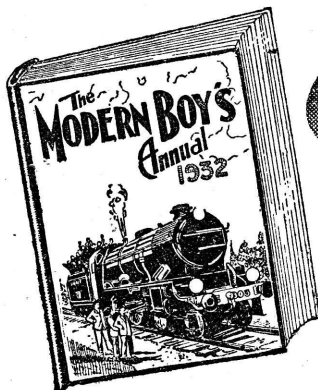
No Idlers Wanted!

LUTA sank into the sunset. The endless Pacific rolled round the gliding ketch, with no sight of land. The Dawn bowled swiftly before the trade-wind, leaving a white wake in the blue astern. King of the Islands, standing by the binnacle, had an eye on his spars and an eye on the sea, and he paid no heed to the shanghaied beachcomber.

Lompo, at the wheel, had his eye on his skipper or on the binnacle card, and he disregarded the man from Luta. But the rest of the little ship's company of the Dawn displayed a keen interest in Billy Bottle. Even Danny, the cooky-boy, looked out of his galley to grin at the unwilling passenger.

He was left for Kit Hudson to deal with. And the mate of the Dawn dealt with him as grimly and as unsparingly as any "bucko" mate of a Yankee tramp ever dealt with a shanghaied man.

A Tearing Broadside!



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Tomoo, at an order from the mate, brought a bucket of water, and Billy Bottle was ordered to wash. He refused, and at a sign from Hudson Tomoo and Kolulu seized him, and forcibly scrubbed him.

It was a rough wash, but a thorough one, and the dingy outcast looked all the better for it. Then he was ordered to change into a suit of calico shorts and shirt. A white man in a loin-cloth was not wanted on the Dawn! By that time Billy Bottle was sufficiently subdued to obey orders. He changed as directed, with a glare of concentrated evil at the mate.

"Now you look more like a white man!" snapped Hudson.

"Hang you! Let me get a chance at you with a belaying-pin!" hissed the beachcomber.

"Koko!" snapped Hudson. "Give that man a dozen along lawyer-cane!"

"Plenty good, sar!"

King of the Islands turned his back on the scene. It was the mate's business, and he left it to the mate.

Billy Bottle, his sunken eyes blazing, teeth set, loose lips drawn back in a snarl like a wild animal's, glared round wildly for a weapon. He caught up the bucket from the deck and swung it over his head.

The bucket went down with a crash as Koko knocked it away. The next moment the brawny boatswain's grasp closed on the beachcomber, and Billy Bottle crumpled.

With a single mighty hand the Kanaka boatswain held the man down, bent over the coamings of the hatchway. With the other hand he wielded a thick lawyer-cane.

The Hiva-Oa crew looked on, grin-

ning. Hudson looked on with a stern, set face.

Billy Bottle howled and struggled, but in vain, in the mighty grasp of Kaio-lalulalonga. The lashes of the lawyer-cane came down thick and fast.

Koko counted five, and five again, and then two. Then he looked inquiringly at the mate of the Dawn.

"Cast him loose," said Hudson; and Koko released the beachcomber.

The man staggered away, and reeled, panting, against the mast, maddened rage in his eyes as he glared at Hudson. But the cool contempt in the face of the mate seemed to quell him.

"Now you'll turn to, Billy Bottle!" said Hudson. "No idlers are wanted on this ship!"

"Did I ask to come on this packet?" hissed the beachcomber.

Hudson did not trouble to answer that question.

"You were a white man once," he said. "You're going to be a white man again! Chew on that, you scum! You'll turn to and earn your keep!"

"Koko, put that man to work. S'pose he no work, you knock seven bells outer him along lawyer-cane!"

"S'pose that feller no jump to order," Kaio-lalulalonga grinned, "me knock seven bells and a dog-watch outer him, sar!"

With that, the mate of the Dawn turned his back on the outcast, leaving him to the boatswain.

Scraping the deck was the first task Kaio-lalulalonga found for Billy Bottle. It was hard and hot work, and it was long years since the beachcomber's flabby muscles had been stretched in honest toil. But the lawyer-cane was ready, and Billy

Bottle turned to, if not with a will, at least with vigour. He was learning his lesson!

Neither the skipper nor the mate of the Dawn gave him any heed now. But Koko kept an eye on him, and when the wretch slacked and idled the lawyer-cane came into play.

For some time there were savage howls from Billy Bottle. Then he settled down to steady work, evidently having had enough of the lawyer-cane.

The sun sank lower in the west, and night dropped on the Pacific. Under the gleam of the Southern Cross the ketch glided swiftly on.

At nightfall Billy Bottle was given a sleeping-mat on deck, and he lay in the shadows, breathing hard, but not sleeping.

Kit Hudson went down for his watch below. King of the Islands, pacing the little after-deck, glanced every now and then forward where the beachcomber lay. The man could not sleep. It was not only that the unaccustomed labour had racked his flabby carcass with aches; his whole being was crying out for the stimulants to which he had been used.

Ken could pity him while he despised him. He knew what the wretch was feeling like.

Billy Bottle crawled aft at last. All the truculence and defiance was gone from him now. He was aching for a drink, like a thirsty traveller in the desert. At that moment he would have blessed even the mate of the Dawn in return for a bottle of rum.

"Skipper," muttered Billy Bottle hoarsely—"skipper, jest one drink—jest one—if it's only a nip! It'll save my life, skipper!"

(Continued on the next page.)

From TIENTSIN to MODERN BOY By DOUGLAS ARMSTRONG

ALL the way from Tientsin, which is one of the so-called Treaty Ports of China, with an important European settlement, to Fleetway House, in London City, comes a letter from a MODERN BOY reader bearing the unfamiliar-looking stamps reproduced here. They belong to the present Chinese series produced by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing at Peking, but are shortly to be replaced by a new issue printed by a famous British firm—which has caused a lot of indignation among the employees of the Chinese Government establishment, who say they are perfectly capable of carrying out the work. And judging by the stamps on Stuart Enright's letter, their claim is well founded.

The 10 cents value, printed in willow-pattern blue, shows a snub-nosed sailing junk on the waters of the Pei-ho River, on the bank of which Tientsin actually stands. In the background is a railway train crossing a bridge, thus contrasting old and new methods of communication. The two 20 cents stamps show a coolie cutting rice in the shadow of the famous Temple of Heaven at Peking, the former Imperial capital.

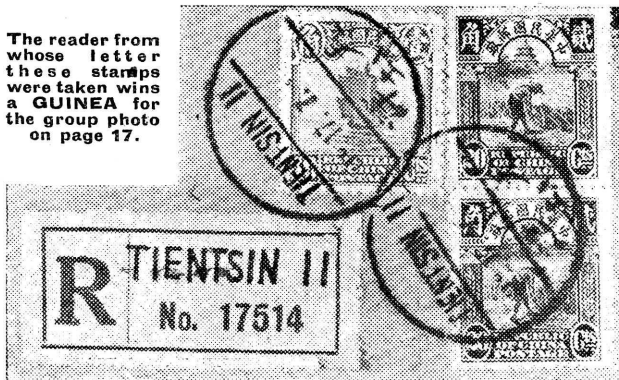
When these designs were introduced eighteen years ago, following the revolution and the establishment of a republic in China, they were first of all produced in London, but within two years an up-to-date plant for engraving and printing both stamps and banknotes had been set up by the new government, and from that time all Chinese stamps have been manufactured on the spot.

Minute differences in the details of engraving, enable stamp collectors to distinguish between those printed in London and in Peking, but they are of too technical a character to be entered into here.

At the present time two separate series of new postage stamps are being prepared in England by different firms of engravers to the order of the Nationalist Government of China. The first is a general issue to replace that now in daily use. The second is intended to commemorate the successful counter-revolution of 1928-29 by means of portraits of the celebrated Dr. Sun Yat Sen and other revolutionary leaders.

Chinese stamps generally, with their curious and fascinating dragons, fishes, junks, and similar characteristic symbols, are very popular with collectors, and some of the earlier varieties are decidedly scarce.

The reader from whose letter these stamps were taken wins a GUINEA for the group photo on page 17.



The Dawn's Queer Passenger

The miserable wretch trembled with eagerness. King of the Islands shook his head.

"Nothing of the kind on this hooker, Billy Bottle," he said. "I can't give you what you want, even if I wanted to."

The wretched man groaned.

"Stick it out, man!" said Ken. "I know what you're feeling like—I've seen poor wretches like it before. But it'll pass. You'll feel better to-morrow, and better still the next day. Every day you miss your poison you'll be cleaner and healthier. In a few days you'll not miss it any longer. Bite on it, and stick it out!"

A growl answered him, and the beachcomber crawled back to his sleeping-mat, to huddle there, un-sleeping, tortured by a thirst water could not quench. And thoughts of revenge ran riot in his breast.

Ken paced the deck thoughtfully. Hudson was giving the man hard measure, but it was for his good. If he was to be saved, it was the only way to do it. Hard work, discipline, and no drink was the way of salvation for the beachcomber.

It was a thorny path for him to tread, but there was hope for him if he trod it, and, willy-nilly, Hudson had resolved to make him tread it. But why? What was the beachcomber of Luta to Hudson? Ken puzzled over that in vain.

He could not guess that Kit Hudson, if he was to lose the fortune that had come to him, was determined that he would not hand it over to a drunken wretch, to sink that wretch deeper into degradation.

Ken did not know that the same blood ran in the veins of the beachcomber and the mate of the Dawn. Hudson's motives were a mystery to him.

The mate of the Dawn came on deck at eight bells. He gave the

beachcomber a careless glance in passing, and shrugged his shoulders as he caught the glitter of baleful eyes. King of the Islands spoke to his mate in a low voice:

"We make Oloo to-morrow, Kit. If you're tired of reforming Billy Bottle you can let him slide at Oloo. One beach is as good as another to the rotter."

"You're leaving Billy Bottle to me, Ken!" Hudson ejaculated.

"Ay, ay! Keep an eye open during your watch," said Ken. "If Billy Bottle can get at you with a capstan bar, old man, I shall lose my mate before we raise Fushima, and before you raise that fortune at Sydney!"

"I know my man!" Hudson laughed grimly.

King of the Islands went down to the state-room in an uneasy frame of mind. The beachcomber's presence on his ship was unwelcome to him in every way. But he had given Hudson his word, and his word was his bond.

Kaio-lalulalonga was taking his trick at the wheel, and he glanced curiously from time to time at the mate of the Dawn. The mate was silent, and the grim look never left his face.

He was thinking, and his thoughts were not pleasant. Fortune was in his hands—fortune that the honour and good faith of a white man compelled him to hand over to another. But only to a white man, Hudson told himself savagely; not to a waster who combed the Pacific beaches.

A shadow moved in the shadows. Koko's voice rang out warningly.

"Look out, sar, eye belong you!" he yelled.

Hudson started. He had forgotten Ken's warning in his moody abstraction—forgotten the desperate wretch who lurked on the deck in the gloom. He swung round as a capstan bar smashed downward, barely dodging the blow.

The blow missed his head; but grazed his shoulder, and a sharp cry of pain left Hudson's lips. The beachcomber leaped back, snarling.

The capstan bar shot up for another desperate blow—but it was never dealt.

Springing forward, Hudson smashed his clenched fist full in the savage face. Billy Bottle spun heels over head along the deck, the capstan bar clattering away noisily over the teak planks. The beachcomber sprawled, groaning.

But anger and the torment of raging thirst that consumed him forced the man to get to his feet again and square up to the mate.

Disdaining to guard himself, the beachcomber rushed at Hudson, his arms flailing like the sails of a wind-mill. Had he stopped to think, he would have realised that he stood no earthly chance against the fit and active young mate.

But now he was incapable of thinking. Through a red mist of passion he could see Hudson, and all that mattered in the world was to get at that cool figure, to smash his fists into the calm face, and batter

it—that was all that mattered. He charged in blindly and recklessly.

Hudson had no wish to hurt Billy Bottle. He realised what the man was going through—the torture the beachcomber was suffering from the thirst to which he had become a slave.

Kit was glad that Billy Bottle had sufficient manhood left in him to put up his fists. To Hudson, also, it was a sign that the beachcomber was not beyond all hope of redemption.

As Billy Bottle rushed in, Hudson resolved to play with him as a cat plays with a mouse—to bring home to him what a poor specimen of a white man he really was.

To give the fellow the good hiding he so richly deserved would probably kill what little spirit he had left in him. But to play with him, teach him how futile it was for him to venture to attack him—Hudson—with his bare fists, might help fan that feeble flicker of spirit into a blaze.

Coolly Kit countered the flailing blows that Billy Bottle rained at him, now and again landing a stinger on the man's body when he showed signs of flagging.

"You poor fish!" Hudson sneered.

"You couldn't fight a rabbit!"

"Come on!" he invited, as Billy Bottle showed signs of petering out. "I'm here to be hit—if you can do it!" He thrust forward his face invitingly, the sneering smile fanning the beachcomber's rage and urging him to further desperate efforts.

Gasping for breath, Billy Bottle rushed into the attack again, expending his fast-failing strength in futile blows. Always the mate eluded him.

Seeing that the man was now almost spent, Kit warded off one more shower of feeble blows, then sent Billy Bottle sprawling to the deck, where he lay sobbing for breath, utterly spent.

He hadn't an ounce of fight left in him, but as he looked at Hudson, with vindictive eyes, he vowed to get even with the mate before many days had passed.

Hudson stepped towards him, staring down at the wretch with cold scorn.

"Try that game again, Billy Bottle, and you go into irons!" he said.

He turned his back on the man, and gave him no further heed. The beachcomber crawled back to his mat.

When King of the Islands came on deck for the morning watch the rising sun silvered the wide waters of the Pacific. Far across the glimmering waters the palm-trees of Oloo were rising from the waves.

Billy Bottle, roused up by the boat-swain, was scraping paint. But his eyes turned longingly on the palm-tops that rose from the Pacific. Kaio-lalulalonga noted that longing look.

"That feller tinkee run along beach along Oloo!" remarked the boat-swain.

Kit Hudson smiled grimly. He was not yet done with the man he had shanghaied!

(Follow up this adventurous cruise in next week's MODERN BOY—there are startling developments for the chums of the South Seas to face!)

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