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The MODERN BOY

EVERY MONDAY.
Week Ending September 10th, 1932.

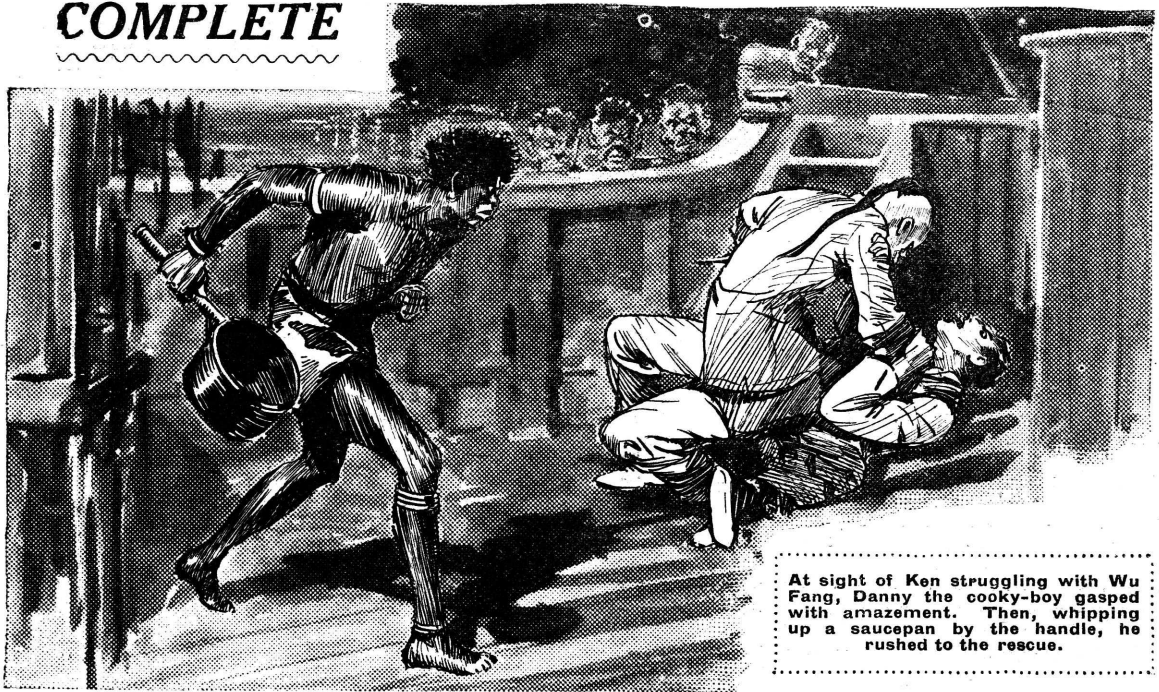
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The Best Six Shillingsworth on the Market!  See page 32

COMPLETE



At sight of Ken struggling with Wu Fang, Danny the cooky-boy gasped with amazement. Then, whipping up a saucepan by the handle, he rushed to the rescue.

Ben Keefe's Secret

Somewhere in the wastes of the Pacific Ocean lies an uncharted island where a fortune in pearls is waiting to be picked up. Desperate villains have kidnapped the only man who knows the secret of where the treasure lies, but Ken King, boy trader of the South Seas, is hot on their trail!

By CHARLES HAMILTON

"White Master No Stop!"

SUFFERING cats!" ejaculated Kit Hudson, the Australian mate of the Dawn.

On board Ken King's ketch, the Dawn, every eye was fixed on the same object—a cutter that drifted on the Pacific under the blazing sunshine, the sport of the wind. Foresail and mainsail were set, but there was no man at the tiller, though three black Lukwe boys could be seen sprawling on the deck, asleep. When the wind filled the canvas the cutter swept through the water, only to yaw wildly and rock wallowing in the waves.

King of the Islands knew the cutter well. He knew that it was Peter Parsons' Sea-Cat from Lukwe. But it was clear that Dandy Peter was not on board. No white man was in control, and the black crew, left to their own devices, were acting with all the happy irresponsibility of the South Sea Islander. They slept and snored, while the cutter whirled before the wind, or wallowed in the Pacific rollers, in danger of the masts being blown out of her, or even of

turning turtle if the wind should freshen.

Cluttering the deck round the snoring blacks were all sorts of articles, evidently cargo that had been broken out by the Lukwe boys when their master's eye was withdrawn. Food and drink—captain's stores from Dandy Peter's own cabin—lay about. Jacky, Kiki, and Talito had been feasting before they slept, apparently having the time of their lives.

Something strange and startling had happened on board the Sea-Cat, that was clear. King of the Islands wondered whether Dandy Peter's crew had risen on him and killed him. Peter Parsons was the best hated skipper in the Islands, and there was no doubt that the Lukwe crew would have turned on him had they dared.

But the boy trader shook his head. The blacks would not have dared to turn on Dandy Peter. And there had been another white man on board—Keefe, the pearler, the Lukwe skipper's prisoner. Ken had been chasing the Sea-Cat, intent on rescuing Keefe, but no sign of him

was to be seen on the cutter. The two white men were gone—how, and why, was a mystery.

Swiftly the Dawn ran down to the drifting cutter. King of the Islands rapped out an order, and the whale-boat dropped from the davits. Leaving the ketch hove-to, with Kit Hudson in charge, the boy trader stepped into the boat, and Koko, the bo'sun, and Lompo pulled to the cutter. The Lukwe boys were still snoring when Koko made fast, and King of the Islands stepped on board, followed by the brown boatswain.

"This Kanaka no savvy!" said Koko. "Feller Parsons he no stop, sàr! He no go along boat—feller boat stop along cutter! Tinkce feller Parsons go along sea."

Jacky, the boat-steerer, lay on his back on a pile of coloured calicos, his eyes shut and his mouth open, snoring. A lunge from the boy trader's foot in his black, bare ribs awakened him, and Jacky started up in surprise. He blinked at Ken, rubbed his sleepy eyes, and blinked again.

"Get up, you!" snapped Ken.

Ben Keefe's Secret

Jacky picked himself up. Kiki and Talito, awakened by Koko's foot, scrambled up also. They stood blinking in uneasiness and alarm at King of the Islands.

"What name?" snapped Ken. "What place feller Cap'n Parsons he stop?"

"That feller stop along sea, sar!" answered Jacky.

"You've put your skipper over the side?" exclaimed Ken. "You feller boy, you makee Cap'n Parsons walk about along sea?"

"No, sar!" exclaimed Jacky, in a great hurry. "Us feller plenty too much fright along Cap'n Parsons, sar. Feller pearler, name belong him Keefe, makee Cap'n Parsons walk about along sea, sar."

KEN had wondered what might have happened on board the sea-lawyer's cutter since Dandy Peter had escaped his pursuit by running the Ou'a reef. He was not wholly surprised to hear that the pearler had turned on his kidnapper. But he was surprised to learn that the wary sea-lawyer had been caught napping.

"Cap'n Parsons he stop along sea, sar!" said Talito. "He dead feller, sar! Plenty too much dead feller altogether, sar! Cap'n Parsons no stop, this feller cutter belong us feller, sar."

"What place feller pearler he stop?"

There was no answer to that question. The three Lukwe boys exchanged uneasy glances, and were silent.

"My word, you Lukwe boy plenty too much bad feller!" Ken exclaimed. "S'pose you kill-dead that feller Keefe, you kill-dead along rope along neck belong you."

"No kill-dead that feller, sar!" gasped Jacky in alarm. "No kill-dead any white feller, sar! Too much good boy."

"Where is he?" rapped Ken.

Again the Lukwe boys hesitated. King of the Islands dropped his hand to the butt of his revolver, his eyes glinting at the blacks.

"You hear, ear belong you?" he said sternly. "This feller friend along that feller pearler. This feller follow Cap'n Parsons, along find that feller pearler. You savvy? S'pose you bad feller along that feller pearler, you go finish altogether."

There was a howl of terror from the Lukwe boys as the barrel of the revolver glinted in the sunlight.

"You no shoot this feller boy along gun, sar!" howled Jacky. "That feller pearler he stop, sar! Plenty too much he stop!"

"He stop along island, sar!" panted Kiki.

"Stop along Long Palm, sar!" said Talito. "Us feller no want that white feller along cutter, sar, along cutter belong us feller."

"Long Palm?" repeated Ken. He knew the isolated rock, almost the only land in the wide waste of waters between Lukwe and O'ua. "You've marooned him?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, sar!" mumbled Jacky. "That feller make Cap'n Parsons go along

sea, along night. Us feller tinkee cutter belong us feller. No want feller pearler. Makee that feller stop along Long Palm."

Jacky and his comrades drew together in a trembling bunch, watching King of the Islands with scared eyes.

"You tinkee Cap'n Parsons he dead feller?" asked Ken.

"Me tinkee, sar," answered Jacky. "He stop along sea, sar. Feller pearler he no dead feller, sar. He stop along Long Palm."

King of the Islands questioned the three Lukwe boys closely, and with their terrified eyes on the revolver, Jacky and Kiki and Talito babbled out all they knew. Whether Dandy Peter had perished in the sea or escaped with his life, it was impossible to guess.

But it was clear that, their skipper being gone, the Lukwe boys had taken possession of the cutter, and got rid of Keefe by marooning him on the lonely rock. The man was still living, and Ken could save him now. It was with that object that he had pursued Dandy Peter.

"You feller boy takee this cutter along Lukwe plenty quick," said Ken at last.

He went back to the whaleboat, and the Kanakas pulled for the Dawn.

Jacky and his comrades watched his departure in great relief. Whether they would obey his order to take the cutter back to Lukwe was rather doubtful, once he was out of sight.

But Ken had no time to waste on the Sea-Cat. He was anxious to lose not a second in running down to Long Palm to rescue the castaway. The whaleboat was swung up, and Ken set a course for the lonely rock without a moment's delay. Then he explained to Kit Hudson how matters stood, as the Dawn glided swiftly through the water.

"We shall raise Long Palm before sundown," he said, "and we shall find the pearler there. We're in luck, after all, Kit."

"And Dandy Peter?" said the mate of the Dawn.

"From what the niggers say, Parsons was threatening him with torture, trying to force him to set a course for his pearl island, when Keefe turned on him and took him by surprise," he said. "If Dandy Peter has gone to the bottom of the Pacific, there won't be many to mourn for him. But I should not be surprised to see him again."

King of the Islands little dreamed how soon he was to see the Lukwe skipper again, or of the surprise that awaited him when the ketch ran down to the solitary rock where the tall palm waved over the blue Pacific.

The Wrong Man.

THE shadow of the tall palm lay like a black bar across the little beach at the foot of the tall rock. In the shadow of the palm, seeking shelter from the burning sun, Dandy Peter, of Lukwe, stood and watched the sea. Long hours had passed since Black Furley and his gang had sailed away in their boat, taking Keefe with them, and leaving Dandy Peter marooned in his place.

Long since the lug-sail had dipped below the sea-line and only the endless waste of shining waters met the weary eyes of the sea-lawyer.

Once in a month, perhaps, some skipper, short of water, ran down to Long Palm, to fill his casks at the spring that bubbled from the rock. But it was possible that many months might pass before a sail showed over the horizon. In the silence, broken only by the mournful crying of sea-birds over the high rock, and the faint wash of the waves on the sand—in the solitude, that hung like a heavy weight on the marooned sea-lawyer—every hour seemed an age.

When the sun sank westward in a blaze of purple and gold, it seemed incredible to Peter Parsons that only hours had passed since the lug-sail had danced away over the waters, and left him to desolation.

He had eaten a meal of coconuts fallen from the great palm, and quenched his thirst at the spring. There was food and water to support life, while he waited and watched for a sail. He stood in the shadow of the palm watching with haggard eyes. Even a native canoe, crowded with cannibal blacks, would have been welcome to his sight. Anything that would break the deadly monotony of sea and sky!

YET he was not thinking only of rescue. His thoughts ran to his cutter, left at the mercy of the black crew—all he had in the world lost to him even if he escaped from the lonely rock. And then his thoughts ran to Black Furley and his crew, and the pearler who was now in the hands of the Lukwe gang.

The unknown pearl island had led him, like a will-of-the-wisp, to his ruin. He had robbed Wu Fang, the Chink, of the man who knew the secret of the pearl island; now Dandy Peter had been robbed in his turn of his guide to a fortune. And while he watched for a sail from that desolate rock, Black Furley would be raising the pearl island, with Keefe for his guide.

He threw himself down at the foot of the palm at last, and closed his weary, aching eyes. It was useless to watch the sea for the sail that would not come.

Deeper sank the glowing sun in the gorgeous west. The sea-lawyer, weary to the bone, slept the deep sleep of exhaustion.

And while he slept, a speck danced against the glare of the sunset, drawing nearer and nearer to the lonely rock, till it shaped itself into a sail. Had the sea-lawyer's eyes been open, he would have seen a handsome ketch coming down under full sail before the wind. But he slept on.

He did not know that the ketch hove to a cable's length from the rock, and that a whaleboat dropped to the water. It was the rattle of oars in the rowlocks that startled him out of slumber at last. He sat up, leaning on the slanting palm, shaded his eyes with his hand, and stared blankly. Then he started to his feet, with a cry: "A ship!"

The next moment he recognised

King of the Islands' ketch. And in the boat that was pulling to the little beach sat King of the Islands himself, with his Kanakas at the oars.

"King of the Islands!" breathed Dandy Peter huskily. It was his enemy who had found him.

The boy trader waved his hand to the haggard figure under the palm. But the sea-lawyer saw the surprise that dawned in the face of the boy trader of Lalinge as he recognised the man on the rock. It was not Dandy Peter that Ken King had expected to find there.

THE whaleboat grounded on the sand, and King of the Islands sprang ashore.

He came tramping up the beach to the tall palm, his eyes fixed on the Lukwe skipper, his revolver in his hand.

Parsons grinned sourly. Ken King was his enemy—or, rather, he was Ken's enemy. But he knew that that would not count with the whitest skipper in the Pacific. Ken King would save him from the lonely rock. He knew that. His hatred of the boy trader had never burned more fiercely, but his heart was light. It was rescue—escape—and another chance for the pearls.

"You won't want your gun, King

"What course did they set—back to Lukwe?"

"Not likely, with you combing these waters for the pearler. I reckon they're making the pearl island by this time, and Keefe is setting a course with a knife to his throat!" said Dandy Peter, between his teeth.

King of the Islands stood silent. It was a bitter disappointment to the boy trader. Only a few hours too late, but it might as well have been days or weeks. The man with a secret was in lawless hands, and the vast Pacific had swallowed him. But he watched the sea-lawyer doubtfully. Without speaking again, he turned and called to the Kanakas waiting at the boat.

"You feller Koko, Lompo, you look along island, eye belong you, look-see feller pearler he stop."

"You reckon I've got him hidden away?" sneered Parsons. "Look for him all you like, you won't find him on Long Palm."

Leaving the sea-lawyer where he stood, Ken joined the Kanakas in searching the island. But the search was brief—there was little space to cover—and he had to believe that the Lukwe skipper had told him the truth. Parsons watched him with a sneering grin as he came back.

half-dozen ruffians lay about smoking, their eyes on the copper-faced man who sat leaning against a rock in the centre of the circle.

They had landed on Faloo at a distance from the native villages, and from the bungalow of Gideon Gee, the only white man on the island. There was a dogged look on the coppery face of Keefe, the pearler from the Paumotus, and grim and threatening looks on the faces of the rest.

Black Furley's eyes glittered at the pearler as he unrolled the chart. Ruffian as he was, bully and sea-thief, Furley was not a man to be feared like Peter Parsons, the dandy of Lukwe. But he was not a man to take no for an answer when his cupidity was roused. The man from the Paumotus, as he looked round at the circle of grim, surly faces, knew that his life hung on a thread.

"I reckon we're getting down to brass-tacks now, Keefe," said Furley, his savage voice rumbling in his thick black beard. "Here's the chart, and I reckon you're giving us a course."

"We're in this together, ship-mate," said Dick Finn to Keefe. "Share and share alike—and that's better than Peter Parsons would have given you."

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of the Islands," he jeered. "I'm unarmed. I reckon I'm glad to see you."

Ken put away the revolver as he came to a halt, staring at the haggard face of the castaway.

"You, Dandy Peter!" he said. "I reckoned you might have pulled through. They say that those who are born to be hanged cannot be drowned. Where's Keefe?"

"You're too late!" sneered Dandy Peter.

"Listen to me, you scum," said Ken. "Four hours ago I raised your cutter on the Pacific, and got from your boys that they had marooned the pearler here. I want Keefe. Where is he?"

"Where I reckon you'll never find him," sneered the sea-lawyer of Lukwe.

"If you've harmed him——"

"When he knows the secret of the richest pearl island in the Pacific," laughed Parsons. "Do you think I found him here and knocked him on the head?"

"How did you get here?" snapped Ken.

"Black Furley's boat picked me up," snarled Dandy Peter. "They ran down to this rock for water. They've got Keefe and left me here in his place. Black Furley and his gang aren't the men to share a prize; but you're taking me off, I reckon?"

"You're taking me off?" There was a shade of anxiety in Peter Parsons' haggard face. "You're not leaving a white man to this, King of the Islands?"

"You deserve it, and more," snapped the boy trader. "But I reckon I can't leave you to it. I shall run down to Lukwe to pick up news, if I can, of Black Furley, and I'll give you a passage, scoundrel as you are. Get into the boat."

Kit Hudson, leaning on the rail of the Dawn, watched the boat pulling back, staring in amazement at Dandy Peter. Parsons gave the Australian a scowl as he came up the side. There was no gratitude in his heart for his rescue, and he made no pretence of any. It was an enemy whom King of the Islands had saved from the desolate rock, and who sailed in the Dawn when she spread her tall canvas on the course for distant Lukwe.

On the Chart.

BLACK FURLEY, pearl-poacher, kidnapper, and sea-thief, unrolled a tattered chart and spread it on the coral rock. His whaleboat, with the lug-sail down, lay moored to a shelf of coral within the reef of Faloo. The Lukwe gang were camped on the beach, and the

"That darned sea-lawyer would have got the location of your pearl island out of you with a sting-ray tail to your back and sunk you in the Pacific with a lump of coral at your heels when he'd got it clear," growled Black Furley. "You know that?"

The pearler nodded. He was in rough and ruthless hands, but it was a change for the better from the dandy of Lukwe.

"Well, we ain't handling you like that," went on Furley. "We're white men and treating you white. We're after the pearls, but I reckon you know you can trust us to keep a bargain."

"Share and share alike it's to be," added Furley. "What you got to grumble at in that? You can't raise the pearls on your own. From what you've said, you sailed with a crew in a lugger when you found the island, and you'd have had to share with them if the niggers hadn't got them. What's the matter with sailing with this crew?"

"You've got a big secret—but what's it worth to you without a ship and without a bean? You can't raise the island alone, and if you did the niggers would kai-kai you as they did your ship-mates. I reckon you ought to jump at the chance of sailing with us." Black Furley was keeping his temper, though there

Ben Keefe's Secret

was a savage growling note of menace in his deep voice. "Mebbe you'd rather raise King of the Islands' ketch and sail with that young swab. But you ain't got the chance. Anyhow, you'd have to share with him and his mate. You're sharing with us, and seeing that we've got you in our hands we're treating you white."

The pearler lifted his eyes, stared across the reef to the sea and then along the beach to the trader's bungalow in the far distance. Black Furley watched him, laughing scoffingly.

"FORGET it," he said. "There's blacks on Faloo that'd kai-kai you as soon as look at you if you got away in the bush. And that half-caste thief Gideon Gee wouldn't lift a finger for you. We've landed here because of that. We've got to get stores for the trip, and we can get them from that Portugee and no questions asked. You savvy?"

"You got away in your lugger with a fistful of pearls, when that Chink, Wu Fang, picked you up," went on Furley. "You've lost your lugger and lost your pearls. But there's plenty more on the island. I reckon you ought to be glad to get a crew to sail with to lift them—a crew that'll treat you white and see you get your share."

There was a nodding of heads in the circle of sprawling ruffians.

"I'll make you an offer," said the pearler at last. "Run me to a beach where I can pick up King of the Islands—"

"Cut that out!" snarled the black-bearded pearl-poacher. "King of the Islands doesn't take a hand in this game. You're sailing with this crew to raise the pearl island."

Keefe shut his teeth hard.

"We'll draw up the agreement, fair and square, according to rule," said Dick Finn. "Seven equal shares when the pearls are raised. You stand in with the rest, shipmate."

"Ain't that good enough, you swab?" growled another of the Lukwe gang. "Did Peter Parsons offer you anything as good?"

"No," muttered Keefe. "He threatened me with Malaita tortures—"

"That's his sort," growled Black Furley. "You won't get that from this crew, whether you open your mouth or keep it shut. You know that."

"I know!"

"Open up, then, darn you! We picked you off Long Palm, where I reckon you might have waited half a year to see a sail. But if you don't open up you'll be left where you won't see a sail in half a century." Black Furley struck his clenched fist into the palm of his left hand with a crack like a pistol-shot.

"You get me? Open up and come in with this crew or we'll maroon you on the loneliest rock in the Pacific. Then you can think of your pearl island while you're combing the rocks for shell-fish, year in and year out. I reckon this crew ain't low-down swabs like Peter Parsons, but you won't get off easy. Treat us white and we'll treat you white. Now

then!" The Lukwe gang waited for the pearler's answer.

Long minutes passed before the man from the Paumotus spoke. There was a sort of rough justice, a kind of ruffianly honesty in the Lukwe gang of pearl-poachers. It was not the crew he would have chosen to sail with, and seven shares in the pearls meant that he would lose a fortune. But lawless ruffians as they were, they were the men to treat him "white," as they expressed it, if he joined them and became one of themselves. There was little choice for the man from the Paumotus, and he made up his mind at last.

His hope had been fixed on King of the Islands. But if the boy trader was still seeking him, what chance had he of finding him? Little or none, and none at all if Furley carried out his threat of marooning him on some unknown reef. He drew a deep breath and nodded his head.

The Lukwe crew exchanged glances of satisfaction. Black Furley's scowling face cleared.

"I'm in your hands," muttered Keefe. "I'll stand in with this crew unless King of the Islands shows up in the offing. I reckon there's little enough chance of it. But maroon me or not, I tell you plain that if King of the Islands shows up I throw this crew over and keep my secret."

"I reckon we can let it go at that," said Furley. "You won't see King of the Islands in a hurry, my bud. He's a hundred miles from Faloo and gone back to his trade, I reckon. Set us a course for the pearl island and we'll take the chance of Ken King."

"That's agreed, then," said Keefe quietly. "I'm joining this crew on that condition. If we don't sight King of the Islands before the pearls are raised I'm standing in with you."

"Good enough," said Dick Finn, and there was a general nodding of heads. No man in the rough crew expected to sight Ken King's ketch, and the condition did not trouble them in the least.

Black Furley, with eager eyes, spread out the tattered chart on a flat surface of coral. The Lukwe crew gathered round.

"You got the bearings of the island and you can mark it on the chart?" said Finn.

"Our skipper took the bearings," answered Keefe. "I can put my finger on the spot to a cable's length." And slowly, with obvious reluctance, the pearler ran his finger over the tattered chart. Every eye was fixed on it as it stopped. Furley gave him a suspicious glare.

"You ain't fooling us?" he muttered threateningly. "There's no land marked for hundreds of miles—"

"It's an unknown island," said Keefe. "I doubt if a white man ever set foot there before our lugger was blown there in a squall. Most of the niggers had never seen a white skin before—only a few of them, who had been to other islands. You'll be taking your lives in your hands—the bush swarms with cannibals."

"I reckon all the cannibals in the

Pacific won't scare this crew away from a pearl-bed," chuckled Black Furley. "It's a long run for a whaleboat, but we got to make it. We can pick up stores at the islands."

"You want a ship—"

"We've traded in that boat ever since the Japs got my lugger for pearl-poaching in their waters," growled Furley. "We're raising your island in that boat, Keefe, and there's enough of us to handle the niggers if they give trouble."

"You'll be taking long chances—"

"I've been taking long chances all my life," grinned Furley. "I reckon I'll take another, shipmate." He rose from the coral rock and rolled up the chart. "If you've got the bearings right, we'll make that island; and if King of the Islands crosses our path, I reckon we'll handle him as easy as the niggers. See that our new chum don't wander away, boys, while I see Gideon Gee about the stores."

"You bet!" grinned Dick Finn.

The black-bearded ruffian tramped away along the beach for the trader's bungalow.

Gideon Gee, the half-caste Portugee, was on his veranda, watching the camp on the beach through a pair of field-glasses. But he put the glasses away as Black Furley started in his direction.

Gideon was curious about the crew that had landed on Faloo, but he asked no questions when Furley arrived at his bungalow. It was his way of business to ask no questions. With a smiling face, the half-caste traded stores with Furley, and his black boys carried the goods along the beach to the camp of the Lukwe crew.

It was at sunrise the following morning that the whaleboat ran out beyond the reef, and the lug-sail danced away before the trade wind to vanish into the east. Wu Fang had failed, and Dandy Peter had failed, but Black Furley and his gang were steering a course for the mysterious island of pearls with the man who knew the secret at the tiller.

And every face in the crowded whaleboat was keen and eager. Keenest and most eager of all were the eyes of the pearler from the Paumotus, watching the sea, and hoping against hope to see the sails of King of the Islands rise from the boundless blue.

"We've Lost Our Man!"

"THERE'S the Flamingo!" exclaimed Kit Hudson.

King of the Islands fixed his eyes on the schooner that lay at anchor in the lagoon of Lukwe as the Dawn came in through the reef. It was the schooner of Wu Fang, the Chinese trader, and on her deck he could see the black faces of the Santa Cruz crew, and the diminutive figure of Wu Fang himself.

"Wu Fang—here!" exclaimed Ken. "The Chink's a sticker!" Hudson chuckled. "He's after Dandy Peter and the pearler. He can have Dandy Peter, but he'll have to hunt for the pearler."

Under the glowing sunset, the ketch ran into the lagoon and dropped her anchor. From the schooner, Wu Fang watched. Peter Parsons grinned savagely as he glanced at the Chink. If Wu Fang had followed him to Lukwe in the hope of recapturing the man with the secret, he was too late.

The Chinaman remained on his deck, his impassive yellow face expressionless, but his slanting eyes glittered like a snake's as he watched the ketch.

King of the Islands gave him little heed, and the boat was lowered to take the boy trader ashore. He was at Lukwe to pick up news, if he could, of Black Furley and his crew. He signed to Dandy Peter to step into the boat, anxious to see the last of the sea-lawyer.

Dandy Peter's brow was black as the boat pulled to the beach. His life had been saved, but he had come back to Lukwe with little more than the tattered clothes he stood in—his

tioned nearly every man on the beach. Furley never came back to Lukwe—nothing's been heard of him here since he pulled out for O'ua."

"That tears it," said Hudson. "We've lost our man, Ken. We've done all we can for Keefe. Furley's the man to make him talk, and ten to one they're steering for the pearl island now. We can't comb the Pacific from the Gilberts to the Galapagos looking for him."

"No!" There was a deep shade of thought on the boy trader's brow. "Ten to one, as you say, they're steering for Keefe's island. If only we could get the bearings of that island!"

"There's a clue in what the man was muttering when he was delirious on board the Dawn, after we picked him up at sea. You remember—"

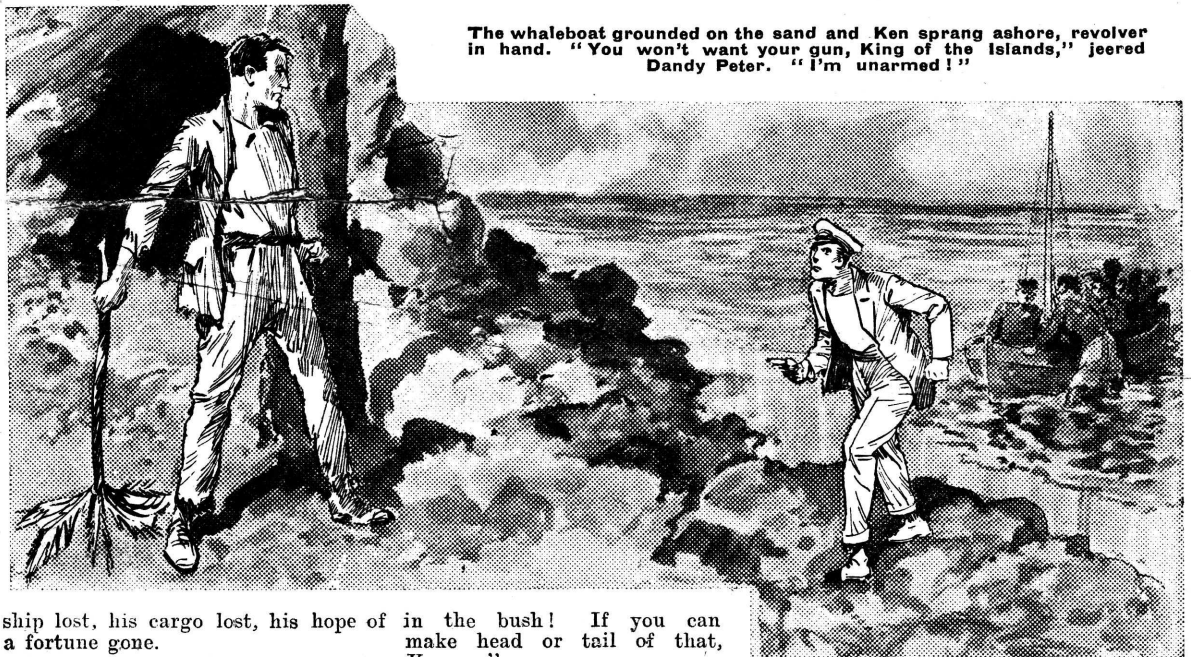
"Every word," Hudson grinned. "Twenty on the line—a cable's length on the beach, and five fathoms in the bush! Bags of pearls—and niggers

"No!" Ken laughed. "But—" He wrinkled his boyish brow. "I can't figure it out, Kit, and that's a fact! But I'm convinced that Keefe was babbling out the bearings of his island when he was delirious—if one could only work it out and find the clue. I'm going to try to worry it out somehow. The clue's there, and if we could raise the island, Kit, we might save the man yet—and perhaps do a good stroke of trade at the same time. But it beats me as yet."

Kit Hudson went in the boat for a run ashore, and the Kanaka crew went with him on shore leave. The ketch was to pull out of the lagoon at sunrise.

Once more King of the Islands had been beaten in his hunt for the lost pearler, and there was now no hope of finding the man unless he could solve the riddle of the bearings of the pearl island.

As he sat in a deckchair looking towards the beach, Ken was thinking



The whaleboat grounded on the sand and Ken sprang ashore, revolver in hand. "You won't want your gun, King of the Islands," jeered Dandy Peter. "I'm unarmed!"

ship lost, his cargo lost, his hope of a fortune gone.

Sooner or later the Sea-Cat might be recovered, but it was doubtful, and at the moment the dandy of Lukwe was almost down to combing the beach. It ought to have been a lesson to him, that honesty was the best policy, but lessons of that sort were lost on Peter Parsons.

He sat silent and scowling in the boat, and when it reached the shore, he tramped up the sand without a word of thanks or farewell to his rescuer, and up the coral path to his bungalow. He did not know, and would not have heeded had he known, that the slant eyes of the Chinaman on the schooner watched him as he went.

Darkness had fallen on Lukwe and the stars were shining on the lagoon, when Ken returned to the ketch.

Kit Hudson met him with an inquiring look.

"No news of Furley," said Ken, in answer to that look. "I've ques-

in the bush! If you can make head or tail of that, Ken—"

"Twenty on the line!" said King of the Islands. "That's the sentence that's stuck in my mind, Kit! He repeated it a hundred times or more! Is that the position of the island, Kit?"

"If it is, it will want some finding. Sailormen call the Equator the 'line,' and that may be what he meant."

"I think that was what he meant," said Ken. "And if his island was on the Equator itself, that gives us the latitude."

"It's a sporting chance. But it leaves you twenty-five thousand miles to choose from for longitude."

"Twenty degrees—east or west."

"My dear fellow, twenty degrees west is in the middle of the Atlantic—far enough from these seas. Twenty degrees east is in the middle of Africa—no islands there!" Hudson laughed. "You don't fancy that Keefe found his pearl island in the Atlantic or in Africa?"

of the muttered words of the delirious pearler. He was convinced they would give him the clue to the island, if he could but get hold of it.

Lights were gleaming from the line of bungalows ashore. As the night grew older, they went out, one by one. But from the dusky beach came a sound of music from native instruments, where a swarm of Lukwe blacks were dancing under the stars, the Kanaka crew of the Dawn with them. Dimly in the starlight, Ken could see the crowd of moving figures, and the twang of barbarous music came clearly across the lagoon to his ears. He was alone on the ketch, save for Danny the cooky-boy, who was snoring in his galley. From moment to moment the canoe of some night fishermen glided past in the dusk of the stars, and there was the faint splash of a paddle.

Deep in thought, Ken gave no heed to his surroundings. If he heard a

Ben Keefe's Secret

faint splash under the quarter of the anchored ketch, he did not heed it. He did not know that a boat had glided silently under the quarter, and that black hands were holding on. His face was turned to the shore, and it was from the other side that the silent boat glided.

The black hands of Santa Cruz boys held on, and a diminutive figure rose slowly over the rail behind the boy trader. A little yellow face, with slanting, glittering eyes, looked across the shadowed deck.

Wu Fang made no sound. Slowly, stealthily, the Chinaman raised himself higher and higher, till his knee was on the rail.

Under his loose tunic, his yellow hand grasped the haft of a knife. But he did not draw the weapon. The back of the deckchair was between him and the boy trader, only the white top of the boy trader's cap showing over it. There was no chance of throwing the knife, in the way of the South Sea native. Wu Fang released the weapon.

For some moments he remained still, his knee on the rail. Then, with infinite caution, he climbed over and lowered himself without a sound to the deck. And his soft slippers made no sound as he crept across the teak planks towards the deckchair in which King of the Islands sat, unconscious of danger.

Behind the chair the Chink paused, and now the knife was in his yellow hand. The life of the boy trader of Lalinge hung by a thread!

The Cooky-Boy's Saucepan.

"My sainted Sam!" It was almost a shout from King of the Islands. He started up from the chair.

The riddle that had baffled, puzzled, almost beaten him, was a riddle no longer. He had believed that the

clue to the pearl island was to be found in the delirious mutterings of the pearler—in the words, oft repeated, "Twenty on the line." He had been sure of it, yet to make sense of the words had been beyond him. And now, like a flash, the answer came, and he wondered that he had not thought of it sooner. He knew that he could stick a pin in the chart on the spot where the unknown island lay—the island where Ben Keefe had found a fortune in pearls, where the pearls still lay hidden, waiting to be lifted.

No wonder it was an unknown island. Who would have looked for land in that waste of waters far from all known land? No wonder the island had never been discovered, that its wealth in pearls had never been suspected. But King of the Islands knew now. He was convinced that he knew, and he was eager for Hudson to return to tell him. The riddle had been solved, the problem was a problem no longer. Twenty on the line! The words that had seemed so mysterious, told their own secret, and he was amazed that he had not divined it before. In great excitement, his eyes blazing, King of the Islands fairly bounded from the chair.

"My sainted Sam! And I never guessed—" He broke off with a startled cry. Even as he leaped from the chair in the excitement of his discovery, there was a flash of bare steel in the starlight, and the Chinaman's blow missed him by hardly more than an inch.

There was a thud as the keen blade, missing the boy trader, struck into the basket-work of the chair, and quivered there.

For an instant King of the Islands stood spellbound, staring at the yellow, enraged face of Wu Fang. Not a sound had warned him. He had been utterly unconscious of danger. It was his sudden movement that had saved his life.

"Wu Fang!" gasped Ken. "The Chink!"

He had not given a thought to the Chinaman. He had forgotten the schooner that rode at anchor a cable's length from the ketch. He stared at the little yellow demon as he might have stared at a ghost.

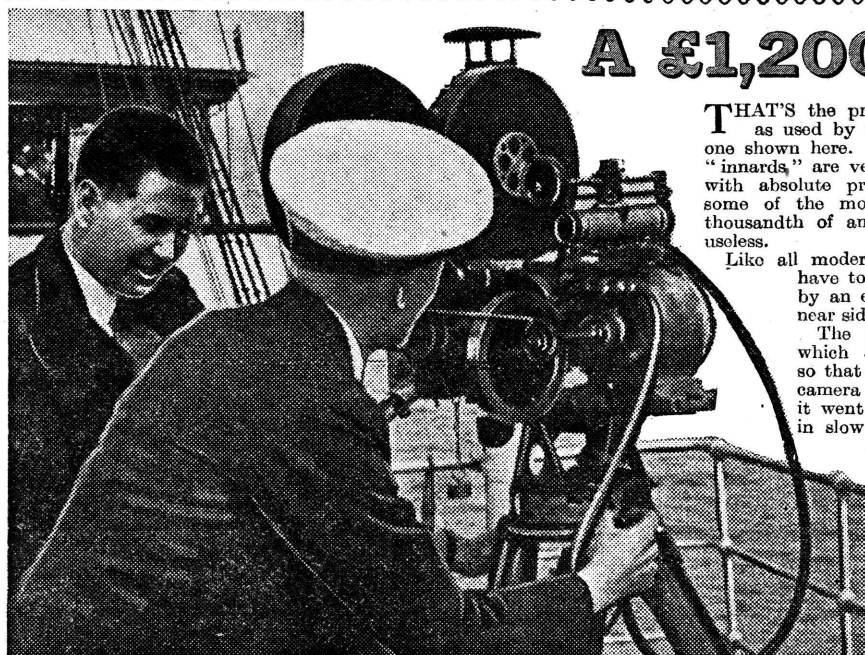
THE keen knife had sunk inches into the chair, so great was the force of the blow. Wu Fang had to exert his strength to drag it out again. But he tore it loose, and, with a snarl of fury, sprang at King of the Islands.

Ken leaped back, dodging the slash of the keen steel, which slit his drill jacket in its passage. The Chink came at him like a cat, his slanting eyes ablaze, his teeth gleaming in a savage snarl. But as the knife slashed again, King of the Islands caught the yellow wrist and turned the blow aside. A second more, and he was grasping the little Chink, and they were struggling, breast to breast.

Spitting like a cat, Wu Fang strove to drag his knife-hand loose. But Ken's grasp was on his wrist like steel. He knew that if that grasp relaxed, he was a dead man, and the Chink hissed with pain as his bones almost cracked in that iron grip. Ken's left hand held the knife away, ~~batting the Chink's force attempts to stab him, and his right arm was round the slight figure, grasping, while the Chink's left hand tore at him like a claw. Locked in a desperate struggle, they staggered to and fro on the deck.~~

King of the Islands was strong and sturdy, and he almost towered over the little Chink. But Wu Fang was wiry and strong, and he struggled with desperate energy. He seemed like an eel in the grasp of the boy trader, squirming and wriggling in his grasp, dragging frantically at his knife-hand to free it.

To and fro they reeled, the savage



A £1,200 Camera

THAT'S the price of an up-to-date film camera as used by news-reel cameramen, such as the one shown here. They cost so much because their "innards" are very complicated and have to work with absolute precision at very high speeds. If some of the more delicate parts were one ten-thousandth of an inch out, the camera would be useless.

Like all modern film cameras, this one doesn't have to be cranked by hand—it is driven by an electric motor. There it is on the near side of the camera.

The motor is fitted with a governor which automatically adjusts the speed, so that it is impossible for it to drive the camera at any but the correct speed. If it went too fast the subject would move in slow motion on the screen, and if it

went too slowly, whatever was filmed would simply gallop along.

You remember those old news films in which everyone appeared to walk at a terrific pace? They were taken slowly by a cameraman who couldn't give his film the correct exposure at normal speed. Nowadays, more sensitive film is used and gets over that difficulty.

Chink striving to stab, the boy traeger holding off the knife, which tore his clothes, and grazed his skin again and again.

From the Santa Cruz boys in the boat came a startled cackle. Black faces rose into view over the teak rail, staring at the struggle on the deck. There were four blacks in the schooner's boat, overwhelming odds if they had joined in the conflict. But they cackled with excitement, and stared with rolling eyes, without coming up over the rail, fearful of attacking a "white master" on a white master's ship, anchored within sight of the houses of other white masters. From the Chinaman, as he struggled, came a hoarse panting yell to the black seamen.

"YOU feller boy, you comey, you comey plenty too quick!" yelled Wu Fang. The little yellow demon had planned to carry out his deadly vengeance silently, giving no alarm, and he had been within an ace of success. But silence and stealth could not serve him now, and he yelled furiously to the Santa Cruz boys to help him. But the blacks, jabbering at the rail, still hesitated.

In the gallery forward, the deep snore of Danny the cooky-boy had ceased to rumble. Danny, knuckling his sleepy eyes, stared out on the starlit deck, drowsily wondering what was going on. His eyes almost started from his head at the sight of King of the Islands struggling with the cat-like Chink, and the four staring faces over the rail.

"My word!" stuttered Danny.

For a moment or two he stared, his fuzzy brain slow to take in what was happening. Then he reached into the galley, grasped a saucepan by the handle, and came padding along the deck.

"Danny!" shouted King of the Islands.

"This feller comey, sar," panted Danny. He whirled up the heavy saucepan by the handle as he rushed on the scene.

It was only just in time. The Santa Cruz blacks were coming over the rail, and King of the Islands had his hands full with the Chinaman, who struggled and tore and clawed like a maddened cat.

Crash! The cooky-boy struck at the Chinaman's head a blow that would have cracked Wu Fang's skull like an egg-shell had it landed there. But it missed the Chink's head as he writhed and twisted, and crashed on his right shoulder.

Wu Fang gave a scream of agony, and his arm fell numbed, his fingers relaxing, and the knife clattering to the deck.

"Now, you seum!" panted King of the Islands. He released the Chinaman's wrist, and grasped the struggling Chink with both muscular hands. Wu Fang crumpled up helplessly in his powerful grasp.

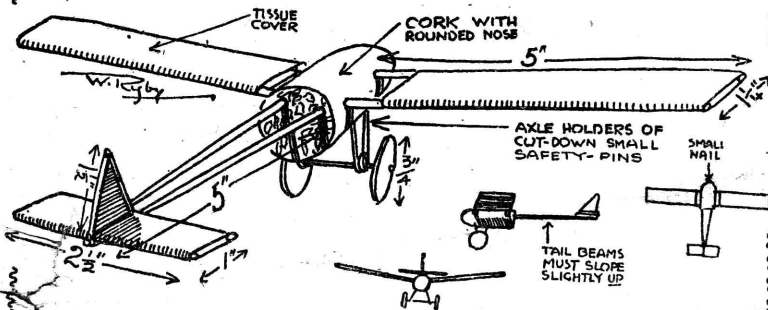
Exerting all his strength, King of the Islands swept the diminutive Chinaman from his feet into the air. With a swing of his sinewy arms he flung him, like a sack of copra, at

Model Plane Chat

The Expert who conducts this regular feature will keep you up to date in all Model Aeroplane matters, and will answer Free, through the Post, any Air queries that any reader cares to send to the Editor

HERE'S a model glider you can make from materials you will find about the house. All you need is a round cork about two or three inches long and free from flaws or cracks, a few lengths of split cane one-tenth of an inch wide, cut from a garden cane, a sheet of grease-paper or tissue-paper, two small safety-pins, a piece of cardboard, a tiny nail, and some gum or glue.

Shave and sandpaper the cork to a rounded point at one end, and at the other end make two small holes half an inch apart and near the edge. In these holes glue two pieces of split cane so that they project 5 inches and meet one another at their ends. These are the tail beams. Then glue four more pieces of split cane into holes $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches apart in the side of the cork to form wing frames, as shown in the diagram.



With small pieces of split cane make the frameworks for the rudder and tail-planes, and glue and bind them to the ends of the tail beams. Cover the main-planes, rudder, and tail-planes with grease-paper or tissue-paper by spreading the paper smoothly on to the frameworks and gluing smoothly.

Two small safety-pins form the undercarriage. Cut the safety-pins in half across the middle, discard the portions containing the sharp ends. Stick the remaining portions into the underside of the cork, as shown in the diagram. A matchstick slipped through the holes in the cut-down safety-pins forms the axle, to the ends of which landing wheels cut from cardboard are glued.

That completes the glider, but you will have to stick a small nail into the nose of the cork to act as a nose-weight. At the same time slightly bend up the tail beams so that the tail-planes are a trifle above the level of the main-planes.

Launch the glider gently forwards. If it stalls, add another nail as extra nose-weight. Should it nose-dive, bend up the tail beams a little higher.

You'll find this little glider a splendid flyer. It is an ideal machine for indoor flights since its cork nose will stand no end of collisions with walls and furniture!

the jabbering blacks clambering over the rail.

There was a yell of affright from the Santa Cruz boys. The hurtling Chink crashed on them, knocking two of them clean off the rail into the boat below, and falling after them. The other two blacks, as the boy trader sprang towards them with flashing eyes, leaped after their comrades into the boat. One of them yelled as Danny's saucepan cracked on the back of his head as he leaped.

A BLACK hand shoved frantically at the hull of the Dawn, and the boat rocked away on the lagoon. Wu Fang lay in the bottom, groaning with the pain of his injured shoulder, his slanting eyes burning up at the boy trader looking over the rail. The blacks groped in terrified haste for the oars.

"Danny! You bring feller gun belong me, along cabin he stop!" shouted King of the Islands.

Danny ran below for the revolver.

There was a howl from the blacks in the boat. They grasped the oars, slammed them into the rowlocks, and pulled wildly to escape before the "feller gun" was in the hand of the white master, whose fierce face stared at them over the rail of the Dawn. The boat rocked away towards the anchored schooner, from which excited black faces were watching in the glimmer of the stars.

The cooky-boy came running back from the cabin, and Ken snatched the revolver from his hand. His eyes blazed over it as he threw it up to fire.

Crack! Crack! Wild yells from the rocking boat answered the shots. The Santa Cruz boys pulled with frantic haste as the bullets whizzed among their woolly heads. Twice a bullet struck the boat within inches of Wu Fang. Ken heard the Chink screaming to the blacks to pull, and the boat shot away into the dimness of the

Ben Keele's Secret

lagoon. In their terror, the Santa Cruz boys pulled past the anchored schooner, and hooked on to the farther side, sheltered from the fire of the angry white master.

Ken stared towards the Flamingo, a dim shape in the dusk, with gleaming eyes. The Chink had got back to his ship, but the boy trader was not done with him yet.

He crossed the deck, and looked

across the water to the beach. The shots would have been heard ashore, and he had no doubt that they would bring Hudson and the crew back to the ketch in haste. All was dark on the beach of Lukwe, and the last light had been extinguished in the traders' bungalows. But under the palm-trees the figures of the native dancers could still be seen, and the strains of savage music came floating out across the lagoon.

By the coral quay, where the Dawn's

boat was moored, Ken picked up moving figures in the dusk, and he knew that Hudson and his Kanakas were coming. And when they came, Wu Fang and his crew would not be long in hearing from King of the Islands!

It's up and away now, off at the Dawn's best speed to the spot where Ken reckons the uncharted island to be, with Adventure hot-foot on the ketch's trail.

Just My Foolin'

By THE OLD BOY

I HAVE just come across a very difficult puzzle. This was a hidden word puzzle, and a regular brain-teaser. Here it is:



*My first is in cat, but not in dog;
My second's in mist, but not in fog;
My third is in mile, but not in foot;
My fourth is in shoe, but not in boot;*

*My whole a judge will sometimes give,
It is life's swiftest fugitive.*

After sitting up into the small hours of the morning with a borrowed wet towel round my head, I deduced that the word was TIME. It was not very difficult to find a letter which was in cat, but not in dog. If the puzzle had said:

My first is in cat, and also in dog,

it would, perhaps, have been made a little harder. I do not expect my readers to solve such a difficult puzzle as this, so I have made out an easy one for you. I expect you will see the solution of this at a glance.

*My first is in invidiously,
But not in proletariat;
My second is in hideously,
But not in commissariat;
My third's in emporetical,
But not in vitrifiable;
My fourth's in quodlibetical,
But not in undeniable;
My fifth's in hyperborean,
But not in osteopathy;
My sixth, in terpsichorean,
Is not in cerebrography;
My whole means "preternormal creatures,
With the most repulsive features."
I wouldn't meet one for a quid—
I'd not believe it if I did.*

The answer, as you will perceive at once, is—— But, no! I will not insult your intelligence by pointing it out. If you really can't find it, I'll put it in this column next week.

THERE has been a lot of fuss made about a fellow who walked across the River Thames on floating shoes. That's nothing! I wager he couldn't have walked above the water merely wearing ordinary leather shoes. I have done it. Yes—and I haven't made a great song about it! I accomplished the feat two days ago. The sun was shining brightly as I arrived at Westminster Bridge for the attempt. A few friends and relatives were present to see me off and give me a word of encouragement.

With their shouts ringing in my ears, I set foot upon the bridge, and walked slowly across. During this fearful journey I was supported only by the bridge itself, and if the bridge had given way, I should have fallen clean into the river. Nothing could have saved me!

Although somewhat hampered by the buses, trams, and motor-lorries which kept speeding past me, I set my teeth and stuck doggedly to the task. I won through triumphantly.

My friends and relatives rushed across the bridge and congratulated me, and by way of reward, allowed me to stand them all a slap-up feed at a handy restaurant.

BERNARD GAY, of Gurnard Bay,
*Thought he'd sail the sea one day
In his home-made, very own made
Brig-rigged model barque;
The sea was calm, the weather good,
And Bernard smiled and thought he would
Have a bright time until night-time,
Then sail home at dark.*

Bernard Gay, of Gurnard Bay,
*Climbed aboard and sailed away
In his hand-made, simply grand made
Brig-rigged barguentine;
Then the skies began to frown,
The clouds came up, the sun went down,
And all the small waves changed to tall waves,
As the wind blew keen.*

Bernard Gay, of Gurnard Bay,
*Looked about him with dismay
In his short-reefed, very tart-reefed
Brig-rigged model sloop;
As his boat was sinking fast,
He saw some wreckage floating past,
So he sprung to, and he clung to,
Some old chicken coop.*

*The lesson of this story note—
When you make a model boat,
See your seams are, and your beams are,
Watertight and clean.
Or you will your folly pay,
Like Bernard Gay, of Gurnard Bay,
In his light-built but not tight-built,
Brig-rigged barguentine.*

MY young friend, Gibbon minor, at St. Simian's College appeals to all boys to join his new Bolshevik army. He writes: "Dere Comrade,—I have come to the konklusion that the Britisch boysky has been grownd down under the heelsky of orthority too long. I have just been reeding how the Russians freed themselves of the tyrants and brootal ortocratrz of their countryovitch, and I am turning Russian from now on.

"I want volluntears to join my new Red Armyovitch, and wipe masters and prefects off the face of the erth. Neckst time I am horled before the Head for a flogginsky, I am going to hurl defiance in his teethovitch. I shall brake his birch across my kneesky, and say, 'Yahsky! I refuse to submit to yore beestly tyranny any longer. Go an eat cokeovitch! Buzzoffsky!"

"Who will join me in this moovment to revolution our ortokratik skoolz? All comrades willing to join are asked to send a subbscription of One Poundovitch (£ovitch 1) to me at St. Simian's College.

Sined, A. P. E. GIBBON (minor)."
Don't all speak at once, you fellows!

WELL, you fellows, I must leave you now. A friend of mine, Mr. Sandy MacHaggis, who owns a theatre, has just given me a free ticket to see his new play. I am going down to see what's wrong with it. Mind you behave yourselves till next week. Au reservoir!