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The MODERN BOY

EVERY MONDAY.
Week Ending September 24th, 1932.

No. 242.
Vol. 10.

2^D.

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Price 6^D

Issued by "THE MODERN BOY," "THE MAGNET" AND "THE RANGER"

SIZE 7" x 10"

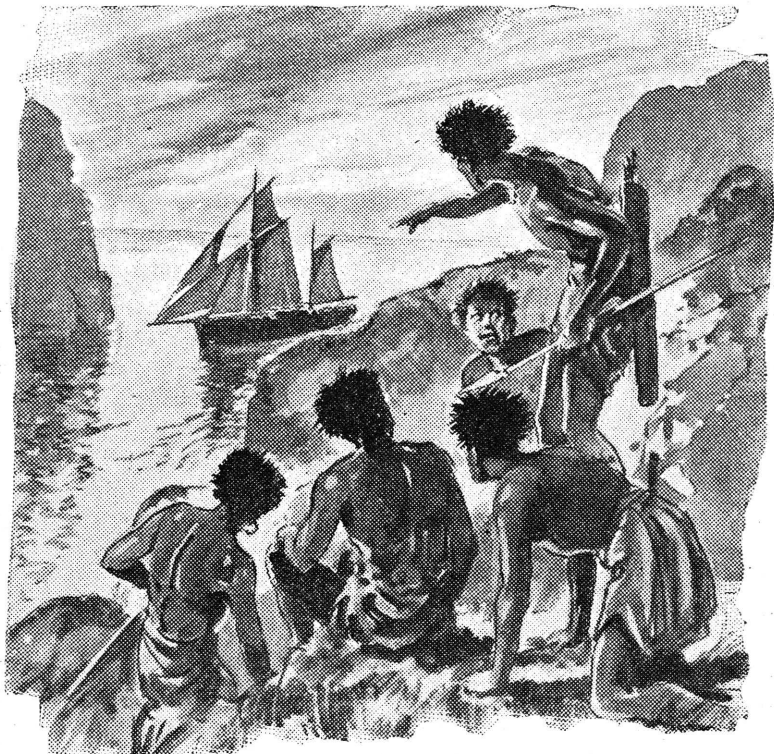
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WARRIORS of the SOUTH SEAS!

King of the Islands looked across the blue waters and saw land where no land was marked on the chart—the Island of Pearls! And now spear-armed natives were gathering there and a war-drum was sounding the alarm!



As the ketch Dawn turned towards the reef passage, natives appeared on the top of the cliff, staring down.

COMPLETE - By Charles Hamilton

The Right Track.

"IS it land?" asked Kit Hudson eagerly.

"A canoe, I think," answered King of the Islands.

"A canoe—here!" said the mate of the Dawn. "That means land nearer than the Marquesas or the Galapagos, Ken!"

Under the blazing sun, Ken King, boy trader of the Pacific, stared at a speck on the blue waters. Hundreds of miles from known land the ketch Dawn glided before a light breeze. The nearest land, so far as his charts could tell him, was the island of Hiva-Oa in the Marquesas—the island from which Ken's native crew came.

But Hiva-Oa lay many a long day's sail to the south-west, far astern of the Dawn. If the speck on the sea turned out to be a canoe, it was a proof that there was land nearer than the charts told, for the canoe must belong to some island.

And in those almost unknown waters what land could it be, if not the Island of Pearls that the shipmates of the Dawn were seeking?

Koko, the brown-skinned boatswain of the Dawn, stepped to the side of his white master. His dark, keen eyes fastened on the speck that Ken was watching.

"What you tinkee, Koko, head belong you?" asked King of the Islands.

"Tinkee feller canoe, sar!" answered the Kanaka boatswain. "Tinkee big feller canoe, all samee Solomon Island canoe, sar."

The shipmates continued to watch. And the Hiva-Oa crew of the Dawn—Tomoo and Kolulo, Lufu and Lompo—turned curious eyes in the same direction. Danny the cooky-boy, following the excitement, came out of

his galley to stare with the others, a saucepan in his hand.

All the crew of the Dawn knew that their skipper was seeking an unknown island in the waste of waters that stretched between the Marquesas and Mexico.

The speck on the sea lay almost directly in the course of the ketch. It grew larger as the white-winged Dawn glided on, and it was not long before Ken knew that he was right. It was a canoe—a long, high-prowed craft like the war canoes of the Solomons, though the Dawn was far enough from the Solomons now.

It was packed with black men in tapa loin-cloths, most of them kneeling to the paddles. But one, a tall, brawny man, stood upright, evidently watching the ketch, and the sun glistened on his many necklaces and the brass ornaments in his large black ears. The blacks had doubtless sighted the tall sails of the Dawn long before Ken picked up the canoe low on the sea, and they were heading for the ketch.

King of the Islands counted twelve men at the paddles. Though they showed no weapons, he did not doubt that knives and spears and trade-axes were ready to their hands when they wanted them.

"That settles it, Ken!" said Hudson at last. "Those niggers belong to some island, and it can only be the pearl island. We're on the right track!"

"I was sure of it," said Ken. "Well, I was almost sure!" Hudson grinned. "But we had no clue, except what you picked out of Keefe's babbling when he was delirious on board this packet. I wonder where Keefe is now?"

"A good way astern of us, I imagine," said King of the Islands. "We know that Black Furley of Lukwe has got him, and it's fairly certain that he's forced the pearler to steer for the pearl island. I think we can bank on that."

"They had a long start, but they're in a whaleboat under a lug-sail, and I reckon we've left them behind long ago. We shall beat them to the island, and I fancy Black Furley will have the surprise of his life to see us there when he comes along!"

"They're blacks in the canoe," went on Ken. "According to what we got from Keefe, the natives of his island are blacks, though as far east as this one would expect to find brown skins. There's no doubt in my mind, Kit, we're on the right track for Keefe's island, and that's where that canoe belongs!"

"I reckon so!" assented Hudson. "Black feller no good feller, sar!" said Koko. "Black feller kill-dead feller along this ship, sar, s'pose can!"

KEN'S boyish face was thoughtful. He knew nothing of the mysterious Island of Pearls, save what he had been able to gather from the delirious mutterings of the pearler he had picked up at sea—the man from the Paumotu—who was now sailing, a prisoner, with Black Furley and his crew from Lukwe.

The pearler had been kidnapped off the Dawn by Wu Fang, the Chinaman. Dandy Peter Parsons of Lukwe had stolen him from Wu Fang, and, in turn, lost him to Furley.

Before Keefe had been kidnapped, Ken had learned that the island was

Warriors of the South Seas!

peopled by savage black cannibals, who had cut off and massacred the whole pearling crew, with the exception of Keefe himself, who had barely escaped with his life. There was danger for any craft that dropped its anchor in the lagoon of the island, and there was danger in the canoe that was now heading for the ketch.

King of the Islands had hoped that he might be able to meet the natives on a peaceful footing, in which case there might be good trade to be picked up on an island where white men's ships never called. But the looks of the canoe crew showed him how faint that hope was.

Every eye in the canoe was fixed on the ketch, and it was not difficult to read the expressions on the black faces. The looting of a white man's ship meant unheard-of riches to the savage islanders. There was greed and ferocity in every black face in the long canoe.

"They're after us, Ken!" said Hudson, with a grin. "Are we giving them a wide berth?"

"We'll speak them," said King of the Islands. "If we can get on a peace footing, so much the better. The pearls belong to Keefe. But if we can get the trade of the island, Kit, it will pay for the trip, and a little over."

"Those black beggars are thinking of anything but trade!" said the Australian, with a laugh. "But we'll give them a chance. Better serve out the popguns, though!"

KOKO, at a word from the boy trader, brought up rifles and served them out to the crew. King of the Islands then shortened sail and waited for the canoe to come up.

As the canoe drew within hail, King of the Islands stepped on the teak rail, holding with one hand to a stay and waving the other to the blacks. His voice rang sharply across the water.

"You feller along canoe, you stop along sea, along me talk along you!" he ordered.

Remote as the unknown island was from all trade routes, he had no doubt that some among the natives understood the "bech-de-mer" English which is the common tongue of the South Seas. He was right. For the man standing up, evidently the chief, answered at once.

"White master no fright along this feller! This feller plenty good friend along white master!"

"I don't think!" grinned Hudson, as the canoe came on.

"Stop!" shouted Ken. "You black feller, you hear me say stop along sea. S'pose you no stop, this feller shoot along gun!"

"This feller plenty good friend, sar!" called back the chief, while the paddles flashed as swiftly as before. "This feller Tame'eto, sar, plenty good feller along white man. Big chief along Aya-ua, this feller Tame'eto. Too much good feller along white master, sar!"

The intended treachery of the

black islanders was almost childish. Even while Tame'eto was calling out friendly words, some of his followers were pulling spears from under the fibre mats in the canoe.

"Give them a warning, Kit!"
"You bet!" said Hudson. His rifle rested across the teak rail, and he pulled the trigger.

There was a yell from Tame'eto as the bullet tore through his thick, fuzzy black hair and carried away a coral comb. The tall chief sat down suddenly in the canoe, sending two or three of the paddlers sprawling. The blacks, with an uproar of excited jabbering, ceased to paddle, and the canoe rocked on the Pacific rollers six fathoms from the ketch.

Treachery!

TAME'ETO'S black hand went to his fuzzy head as he picked himself up, feeling it tenderly. But he realised at once that he was not hurt, and that the shot had been intended as a warning. For the moment, the warning was effective, and the blacks kept their distance, though they eyed the faces along the rail of the Dawn like wolves.

Tame'eto's rolling eyes gleamed with ferocity, but he controlled his savage instincts. As plainly as if he had said so, the shipmates knew that he still hoped to serve his purpose by treachery. But the trickery of the savage was not likely to deceive them.

"You stop along sea, you feller Tame'eto!" called out King of the Islands. "S'pose you stop along sea, no shootee along gun."

"Me savvy, sar!" answered the chief of Aya-ua. "This feller stop along sea, s'pose white master he likee." He muttered a few words in his own tongue to the blacks, and there was a murmur in response from the canoe crew. Then he turned a smiling face to the white men.

"You no fright along me, sar!" he said. "Me sing out along boy belong me, no come along ship—s'pose white feller no likee. Me big feller chief along Aya-ua, all feller makee like me say."

"That means we've got to look for a rush, Ken!" grinned Hudson.

"Keep your weather eye open, old man," Ken replied.

Tame'eto, with the same friendly grin on his face, spoke again.

"This feller plenty glad see white master, eye belong him. S'pose you come along island belong me, plenty too much trade. This feller likee come along ship, talkee along white master, all same good feller friend. What name you no wantee Tame'eto along ship belong you, sar?"

"You hear, ear belong you," answered King of the Islands. "This feller come along Aya-ua, along makee plenty trade, along stick tobacco, along knife, along axe, along box, along bell he ring. Plenty good thing me trade along copra, along pearl-shell, you savvy?"

"Me savvy, sar," said Tame'eto. "Me come along ship, talk good feller talk along white master."

"This feller ship taboo along black

boy," answered Ken. "Makee plenty trade along beach, along canoe."

"This feller big chief, he likee makee trade along ship!" Tame'eto grunted. "What name you no likee?"

"No can," answered Ken. "Trade along beach, along canoe, s'pose black boy good boy along this feller. S'pose black boy no good boy, shoot along gun, plenty too much kill Tame'eto, my word, plenty too much kill all feller belong Aya-ua altogether."

It was an offer of peace or war, as the black chief fully understood. King of the Islands still had a faint hope that the blacks, finding that the white masters were not to be fooled, would decide for peace. It would not be the first time that he had carried on trade with a black island, watchful every instant for treachery, prepared at a moment's notice for peaceful trade to turn to fierce fighting.

If the blacks understood that they could not loot the ship, it was to their interest to trade and exchange their island produce for the white man's cargo—tobacco and knives and axes and musical boxes, goods that seldom came the way of Aya-ua.

But there was little chance of it. The thirst for plunder and killing, for heads to smoke in his canoe-house, was too strong for Tame'eto to listen to the voice of peace. Even while King of the Islands was speaking, a paddle dipped, edging the canoe a little nearer to the ketch.

But Tame'eto still grinned a friendly grin, his untutored brain not realising that his intentions were as plain as daylight to the white men watching him from the rail.

"Me hear, ear belong me," said the chief amicably. "Me tinkee white master talk good feller talk along this black boy. This feller canoe makee along Aya-ua, feller ship belong white man follow this feller canoe, along island belong me."

The stern of the canoe turned to the Dawn, the paddles dipped, and the Aya-ua chief waved a black hand in invitation for the ship to follow the guidance of the canoe.

But for the tragic work that had to follow, Ken could have laughed at the simplicity of the black man's trickery. He knew what was going to happen, and he called out a sharp word of warning to his crew.

HARDLY had the words left his lips, when the canoe swept round and rushed at the ketch.

The white masters were not, as Tame'eto expected, taken off their guard by his pretended departure. As the canoe swept round again, there was a burst of rifle-fire along the rail of the Dawn.

The Hiva-Oa boys fired wildly, in the manner of Kanakas, splashing bullets into the sea all round the rushing canoe. But King of the Islands and his mate pitched their bullets into the canoe, and black man after man rolled over yelling under the deadly fire.

The rush was swift as the swoop of the albatross, but four of the blacks sprawled over before the high prop

of the canoe crashed on the hull of the Dawn.

Then black hands were grasping up at the rail, spears and white teeth flashed in the sunlight, and fierce war-yells drowned the groans of the fallen.

Tame'eto came up with the spring of a tiger, to fall back under the crash of a belaying-pin in the brown hand of Koko. The chief of Aya-ua went back into the rocking canoe gasping, half-stunned by a blow that would have cracked a white man's skull like an egg-shell. He sprawled there dizzily under the tramping feet of the yelling blacks.

At point-blank range the bullets smashed through black, snarling faces and brawny black chests. Not a man of the canoe gained a footing on the Dawn. Koko's belaying-pin swept back another yelling black, and he dropped between the canoe and the ketch and vanished. Danny, wielding a heavy iron saucepan, knocked back another into the sea.

Three men only of the numerous crew were still uninjured. They leaped back from the attack, and shoved off wildly with their paddles.

The canoe shot away from the ketch.

Crack! crack! crack! rang Ken's revolver. But he was not firing at

the chief, carrying away a string of cartridge-clips that hung from one of his ears. And Tame'eto's furious antics suddenly ceased. He dropped the spear, and crouched low in the canoe.

The attack had been defeated, but Ken knew that had the blacks taken him off his guard, not a man would have been left alive on board the ketch to tell the tale. Aya-ua, the pearl island, was likely to be something of a hornet's nest when the shipmates raised it.

"There goes our trade, Ken," said the mate. "We're going to hit trouble when we hit Keefe's island."

"They've had a lesson," replied King of the Islands. "Tame'eto will think twice before he attacks us again, I reckon. We're making the island, Kit, trouble or no trouble."

lug-sail, and the Lukwe boat glided on in the darkness.

Keefe, the pearler, his hand on the sheet, was the only man in the crew who was wide awake. The rest of the Lukwe gang lay sprawled about the boat sleeping, heads pillowed on arms.

With a faint creak of tackle, a murmur of the wind in the lug, the whaleboat rode the Pacific rollers under the cloak of darkness.

Keefe was thinking of the Island of Pearls, for which the Lukwe boat was heading under his guidance. Every long and weary day brought the Lukwe crew nearer and nearer to their far destination. In a few days at the most, if all went well, the palm-trees of Aya-ua would be raised on the sea-line, and the pearler would see again the uncharted island from



Koko sent the chief of the cannibals flying with a blow from a belaying-pin. Danny knocked another back into the canoe with a heavy saucepan, whilst Ken and Kit sent a hail of lead into the thick of them.

the blacks now. As soon as the retreat set in, he was only too willing to spare them, and he fired only to hurry their flight.

Tame'eto sat up dizzily, rubbing his bruised head and stuttering with rage. The three terrified blacks were paddling frantically to get away, unheeding the wounded and dead that cumbered the canoe. Of the two who had fallen into the sea, nothing was seen again, but black fins gliding over the shining water told what had become of them.

Tame'eto staggered to his feet, grasped a spear, and brandished it at the ketch, howling with fury as the canoe swept away.

"Plenty good killy that feller along gun, sar!" suggested Koko.

King of the Islands shook his head. But he pitched a bullet after

And the ketch stood on her course again, soon dropping the canoe out of sight on the sea, every eye on board watching eagerly for the first sight of land.

Run Down!

BLACK FURLEY sprawled half-asleep, his arm flung over the tiller of the Lukwe whaleboat.

Night lay on the Pacific, with hardly a star twinkling through the masses of cloud that banked the sky. Black as pitch the night seemed after the burning glare of the day. Faintly through deep darkness came a glimmering of the Pacific surges, with here and there a reflected star gleaming from the heaving waters. The wind was light, but it filled the

which long weeks before he had fled in his lugger after the massacre of his comrades by the blacks.

It had been his hope to fall in with King of the Islands and obtain the boy trader's help in lifting the pearls. But that hope was dead now. He was sailing with the Lukwe crew, to share with them, when the pearls were raised, the fortune that had cost so much in life and suffering.

Once in that long and weary trip in the Lukwe boat, the Dawn had been sighted standing to the north-east, which was the course for the pearl island. Keefe and the Lukwe crew had wondered whether Aya-ua was Ken King's goal. If so, the swift ketch would be at the island days ahead of the whaleboat.

It was a hope to the pearler, and a fear to the rest of the crew. But it was unlikely, for what clue could King of the Islands possess to the bearing of Aya-ua? But Keefe was thinking of it as he lay leaning on the heaving gunwale, his hand idle on the sheet.

Warriors of the South Seas!

He knew, from what Dandy Peter of Lukwe had told him, that it was King of the Islands who had picked him up at sea, after his escape from Wu Fang's schooner. He had not known it at the time, for he had been out of his senses. And he wondered whether in his delirium he had babbled out something that had given the boy trader a clue. If King of the Islands, by happy chance, was at Aya-ua when the Lukwe boat arrived—

A sound came to him from the sea—a sound that was not the eternal wash of the waves. He started and sat up, staring into the darkness. From the night came faint sounds, the creaking of blocks and tackle. But if it was a ship, she was burning no lights.

The crash came even as he started up. High over the boat loomed a dark shadow—a hull and bellying sails. Booming canvas was over his head, the jib of a schooner. Bowsprit and jib-boom stretched over the Lukwe boat, as the schooner's cutwater crashed into her, head on.

With startled cries, the Lukwe crew sprang up from their sleep, with the boat shivering and crashing under them—run down at sea by an unseen craft. The Pacific was washing over them as they leaped up.

WITH a roar of surprise and rage Black Furley leaped to his feet. The whaleboat, smashed by the shock, was canting over by the bows, and the stern was flung up as she went.

Furley's head almost touched the bowsprit of the schooner, and with instant swiftness, knowing that the whaleboat was going down under his feet, the Lukwe ruffian leaped and hung on to the bowsprit. He clung to it as the schooner surged on over the wrecked boat.

Swinging in the air, he was carried on, and behind him, in the wash of the schooner, cries and shrieks from the Lukwe crew rang fearfully in the night.

Burly as he was, Furley was as active as a cat. He swung a leg over the bowsprit, shouting he hardly knew what. He could hear a jabbering from the ship that had run his boat down—the jabbering cackle of excited black men.

It was a native crew on the schooner, but the skipper, surely, was white. And any white skipper would heave-to, to save men whom he had run down in the darkness. But the schooner surged on, and the wreck of

the whaleboat, and the cries of the men clinging to it, were lost.

Black Furley snarled with rage. Ruffian as he was, he would have stopped to save men from death in the sea. But the skipper of the schooner appeared to have no such thought. Alive or dead, clinging to the wrecked boat or sinking in the Pacific, the Lukwe crew were left to their fate.

"By hokey!" Black Furley growled. "The scum—the lubberly swabs!"

He alone had leaped to safety. His five comrades, and Keefe the pearler, were left astern of the schooner, lost in the black night. The cries that he had heard showed that some of them, at least, were clinging to the wreck. And the schooner that had run them down was standing on her course unheeding, leaving them to death.

Black Furley dragged himself up on the bowsprit, snarling with rage. He could hear the jabbering of the native crew, but evidently they had not seen him, and did not know that a man had leaped from the wrecked boat to the bowsprit of their vessel.

He groped for the revolver in his belt, to make sure that it was safe and ready, and then crawled along the bowsprit to the forecandle head. His teeth were set, his eyes glinting. If the skipper of this unknown craft was not the man to heave-to to save sinking sailormen, Black Furley was the man to make him, at the muzzle of a pistol.

A voice reached him as he clambered along, the voice of a native.

"My word, sar, that feller boat go along bottom sea. S'pose this hooker go about, sar, along pick up feller belong that boat."

"Feller belong boat stop along sea, you feller Pipiteto," a soft voice, not the voice of a South Sea native, answered. "No wantee along this hooker."

Black Furley crawled on the forecandle. He had a glimpse of the man who spoke—a diminutive figure in loose-flowing tunic and a big Chinese hat. He had seen the man before, and knew him—Wu Fang, the Chinese trader, who had stolen Keefe, the pearler, from King of the Islands' ship, and lost him again to Dandy Peter of Lukwe.

So this was Wu Fang's schooner on which Keefe had once been a prisoner, and the ruthless Chink, leaving to death the men he had run down in the darkness, little dreamed that among them was the man who had the secret of the pearl island.

Furley rose to his feet, the revolver in his hand now.

"You yellow scum!" he roared.

Wu Fang spun round with a yell

of surprise, and there was a jabber of amazement from the Santa Cruz boys as the black-bearded ruffian leaped from the forecandle to the deck.

"Show a Leg!"

DANDY PETER of Lukwe fancied that he was dreaming or delirious, as he lay stretched on his back on the schooner's deck, his feet tied to a heavy spar, his arms bound to his sides. Hope had long left the heart of the dandy of Lukwe. He was a helpless prisoner in the hands of Wu Fang, doomed to the torture of thirst till he should reveal the secret of the pearl island—the secret he did not know.

Burning sun and burning thirst had tormented him for long, long hours, till the night brought relief. But with the night came no slaking of his torturing thirst, and he still lay spread-eagled on the schooner's deck, sleepless, suffering, dreading the dawn and the return of the burning sun.

He had heard the crash of the boat as it was run down in the dark, and the cries of the crew left to their fate on the shadowed sea, among them the bull-voice of Black Furley. Now, again, that bull-voice was in his ears, mingled with the jabbering of the black crew.

It seemed to Peter Parsons that he must be delirious, for how could Black Furley of Lukwe be there on the deck of the Chink's schooner? He writhed in his bonds, and twisted his head to look. But he could see nothing but moving shadows in the dimness.

But he could hear the startled cackle of the Santa Cruz blacks, the screaming voice of Wu Fang and, dominating all other sounds, the fierce roar of the ruffian of Lukwe. And as he listened, his brain cleared, and he knew that, amazing as it was, it was indeed Black Furley who was there—Furley of Lukwe, his rival for the pearls of Keefe's island, but surely the man to save him from torture.

He tried to cry out, but only a hoarse gasp came from his parched, cracked throat. He could not speak, only listen, with wildly beating heart. Like the roar of an enraged bull, the voice of Black Furley thundered through the schooner.

"Bout ship, you lubberly Chink! You'll leave white men to the sharks, will you, you pig-tailed son of a slush-bucket! 'Bout ship!"

The brawny ruffian of Lukwe towered over the little Chink, who stared at him like a man in a dream, his almond eyes distended. Davy Jones rising from his locker could hardly have astounded the yellow man more than the sight of Black Furley on his deck.

"Feller Furley!" gasped Wu Fang. "Feller Furley belong Lukwe!" stammered Pipiteto.

Black Furley glared at them over his half-raised revolver.

"You hear me, ear belong you?" he roared. "'Bout ship, you heathen! By hokey, if you don't put the schooner about this minute, you're a dead Chink!"

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"Feller Furley talk plenty too much, mouth belong him!" snarled Wu Fang, his slanting eyes glittering like a snake's. "Feller schooner belong this Chinaman, no belong feller Furley."

"You've run my boat down!" belated Furley. "You'd leave my crew to drown, would you? Put the ship about, you dog, or I'll drop you on your own deck!"

The Chinaman leaped back, his yellow face working with rage.

There were fifteen or sixteen Santa Cruz blacks in the crew, and they were all on deck now. They were black men, easily daunted by a white man with a gun in his hand, and especially by the towering, savage-faced freebooter of Lukwe, but the odds were overwhelming. And even had the Chink cared to save the boat's crew, he would not have dared to let white men aboard his ship while he had another white man under torture.

It did not even occur to Black Furley to fear what the Chink and his crew might do. He was accustomed to dominating coloured men, and with a gun in his hand he would not have feared had the schooner been packed with Solomon Island cannibals.

But for the presence of Dandy Peter on board, the Chink would probably have yielded the point and avoided a conflict. Wily and cunning, and ruthless as a tiger-shark, Wu Fang was not a fighting-man if he could help it. But now he could not help it, and as he leaped back from the Lukwe ruffian's threatening face and lifted revolver, the Chink yelled to his crew, and tore out a revolver from under his loose tunic.

AND the blacks, strong in numbers, obeyed his call and swarmed at the white man, knives and belaying-pins in their hands.

Black Furley did not retreat an inch.

"Back, you scum!" he roared.

His revolver spat at the same moment. Wu Fang dodged round the mainmast and escaped the bullet, and next second Black Furley was firing into the thick of the crew.

Furley had had little doubt, or rather, none, that he would drive the Chink to do his bidding, knowing nothing of Wu Fang's secret reason for fearing white men on his ship. But he was ready for trouble—more than ready.

As the Chink screamed to his men to attack, and the blacks swarmed at him, he knew that his life was at stake. If he failed to make good, he would be tossed over the side to the sharks. But he would have laughed at the thought of fear. He had been through too many fierce fights to shrink from one more.

Three blacks went down under his fire. Then the rest were round him and upon him, yelling and slashing. Furley reversed the gun, and swept the heavy metal butt about him as he sprang into the thick of the blacks, never dreaming of retreat.

Blow after blow he struck, hurling blacks to the deck amid a fearful

STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER!

IN Australia they have a word "dinkum"—or sometimes "fair dinkum"—which means genuine, honest, or perhaps smart.

"It's 'fair dinkum'!" declares the Aussie who tends a genuine shilling which receives a suspicious scrutiny.

The expression once figured in a dramatic spy episode during the Great War. Two Australian officers in the trenches were joined by a major, apparently of the same brigade, who issued orders against their men continuing to fire on a certain enemy sector. Noting that minor details were wrong in the major's uniform, one of the Aussies remarked quietly:

"Are you fair dinkum?"

"That is so," the major promptly replied. "I am Major Fair Dinkum."

He was shot immediately!

In peace-time, too, traps abound for the fraud. The fellow who is "bogus"—to use an old War-time term—invariably gives himself away sooner or later.

"Are you fair dinkum?"

It's not a bad query for any fellow to put to himself.

The Admiral



pandemonium of yells and shrieks and howls. Then the Santa Cruz boys broke and ran, the burly ruffian of Lukwe chasing them along the deck like rabbits.

Wild howls rang from the panic-stricken blacks as they ran, twisted and dodged, four of them diving into the fore-castle, one or two down the companion, and the others clambering madly into the rigging. Even the man at the wheel deserted his post and ran below.

Wu Fang dodged into the companion, where he turned to fire at the Lukwe ruffian, a hurried shot from a shaking hand that missed by a yard. Then the Chink scuttled below.

"You scum!" roared Black Furley, storming along the deck, where three or four half-stunned blacks crouched and groaned.

He pitched bullets into the fore-castle, and the terrified blacks howled and dodged and crouched. Then as he turned to tramp aft, he stumbled over a figure spread-eagled on the deck. For a moment he supposed that it was one of the crew who had fallen, then stared in amazement at a glimmering white face. A husky voice, cracked and broken, barely audible, came in a whisper.

"Furley! Bear a hand, ship-mate!"

"By hokey!" Black Furley fairly stuttered in his amazement as he bent down and stared at the bound man. "Dandy Peter, by thunder!"

"Give me water!"

"Peter Parsons!" repeated Furley blankly. "By hokey!"

He rose and stared along the deck. For the moment he was master of it.

The only blacks in sight were clinging to the rigging, staring down at him in terror.

Laying down his revolver for a moment, Furley whipped open his sheath-knife, and cut the ropes that fastened Dandy Peter. Then he grasped the revolver again, his watchful eyes about him.

Dandy Peter made an effort to rise, groaned, and crawled on his hands and knees to the water-keg by the foremast. Black Furley watched him in wonder. He was amazed to find the sea-lawyer of Lukwe a prisoner on the Chink's schooner.

BUT only for a few minutes did his eyes linger on Dandy Peter.

He was thinking of his crew, far behind the schooner on the darkened sea. He stared up at the blacks in the rigging, and waved his revolver, shouting savagely to them.

"You feller boy, you comey along deck! You jump along order, along me, you savvy, or me knock seven bells outer your black hides!"

"You no shoot along this feller black boy, sar!" gabbled Pipiteto, from the cross-trees. "This feller good boy along you, sar."

"Show a leg, you black trash!" roared Furley. "This feller skipper along this hooker now, by hokey! My word, you no jump along order along me, you go along inside feller shark plenty too quick!"

"Yessar! Us feller good feller along you, sar!" babbled the Santa Cruz blacks.

Not a black man on the schooner had a thought of contesting further with the bull-voiced ruffian from Lukwe. In his cabin the Chink raged

Warriors of the South Seas!

alone, while the black crew tumbled up at the order of the man who had taken command of his ship.

Pipiteto took the wheel, and the black crew hastened to obey the roaring voice of the Lukwe skipper. Furley hardly wasted a thought on the Chink lurking in the cabin. He roared his orders to the black crew, and the schooner was put about, to search the sea for the wreck of the whaleboat.

"Ahoy, Shipmates!"

WU FANG'S almond eyes glittered in the light of the smoky cabin lamp as there was a footstep in the companion. The Chink had been listening to the tramping of naked feet on deck, the swing of the booms and the rattle of the blocks, the roar of Black Furley, and the scared jabbering of the blacks.

He knew that the schooner had gone about to pick up the boat's crew he had abandoned to death in the dark sea. Furley was master of the schooner, the Santa Cruz boys jumping to his orders. When he came aboard, Furley had had no thought of seizing the schooner. But he had seized it now, and when his men were got on board, he was not likely to hand it back to the Chink—not, at all events, till he touched land.

But Wu Fang was thinking less of the ruffian who had dispossessed him of his ship than of the sea-lawyer whom he had tortured, and who was now a free man. And when he heard the footstep in the companion, he guessed who was coming, and his hand sought a knife under his tunic. It was Dandy Peter who entered the cabin, his eyes glittering from his blistered face, a capstan bar in his hand.

The Chink's hand flew up, with the knife in it, and the whizzing blade missed the sea-lawyer by barely an inch, as he ducked.

The next moment the Chink was dodging frantically round the cabin, with cat-like agility, and eluding the crashing capstan bar in Dandy Peter's hand. He darted into the companion, and fled for the deck, with the sea-lawyer at his heels, panting with rage.

Black Furley was standing by the man at the wheel, searching the dark sea with his eyes. A dozen lanterns, lighted by his order, gleamed from the rigging, and one of the blacks was clanging on the ship's bell as a signal to the shipwrecked crew.

The Lukwe skipper had almost forgotten Wu Fang, when the Chinaman ran out of the companion, and dodged aft with Dandy Peter in pursuit. Furley stared at the terrified Chink, and burst into a hoarse laugh as Wu Fang doubled behind him for protection. He stepped into Dandy Peter's way and waved him back.

"Avast there!" he roared.

"Stand aside, Furley!" snarled the sea-lawyer. "You know how you

found me here! I'm getting that Chink!"

"Who's skipper of this packet?" roared Furley threateningly. "You'll jump to orders like the niggers, Parsons, or you'll go over the side. Drop that bar, or, by hokey, I'll drop you."

The ruffian's six-shooter was jammed almost in the face of Dandy Peter. For a moment, Parsons looked as if he would rush on it, and Black Furley's eyes blazed over the barrel. Then the capstan bar went with a clang to the deck.

"You swab!" snarled Dandy Peter. "You've seized the schooner—that's piracy! For your neck's sake, you want to put that Chink into the Pacific."

"No killy this pool Chinee!" wailed Wu Fang. "Handsome Captain Furley no killy this pool Chinee."

"Stand back, Parsons!" growled Furley. "I've seized this schooner to pick up my men, and I reckon I'm sailing her from now on, seeing that my boat's gone to the bottom. I reckon the Chink's got himself to thank for that. But I never was a piratical thief like you, Peter Parsons, and I'm stealing no man's ship, so belay your jawing tackle!"

"If you stood in my boots this blessed minute, you'd put me over the side, and you know it. I reckon I ain't that kind of a swab. But if you sail on this hooker, you sail under orders—and if you jib at that, I'll make the niggers tie you up again as I found you."

Parsons answered only with a snarl of rage, but he stood back. Black Furley turned to the cringing Chink.

"As for you," he growled, "you've run my craft down, and you'd have left my men to drown, durn your yellow hide. I'm borrowing your schooner to finish my cruise, and if you've got any objection to make, cough it up, and I'll leave you to Peter Parsons."

"This Chinaman likee plenty too much Cap'n Furley takee schooner," panted Wu Fang.

"Like it or lump it, that goes!" snapped Furley. "I reckon your niggers won't give me any more trouble. And if you give any trouble, you yellow-skinned heather, you go to the sharks, plenty too quick."

"No givee trouble, O Born-before-me!" gasped Wu Fang.

"You'll get your ship back when I've done with it," added Furley. "You've sunk my boat, and I've got no choice. But when we raise Lukwe again, I'm done with you and your schooner. Keep your hands off the Chink, Parsons, or you'll deal with me. I've shot three niggers since I stepped on this hooker, and I'll send you after them as soon as look at you."

With that, the Lukwe skipper gave no further heed to either Parsons or the Chink. He stared over the shadowy sea in anxious search for the whaleboat. The schooner was circling back, and the clang of the ship's bell rang far over the waters.

Furley signed to the black at the bell to be silent, and bent his ear

to listen. In the darkness, it was hardly possible to see a couple of fathoms from the schooner's side, but the ship, with the lanterns gleaming from her rigging, must have been visible to the wrecked crew if they were still afloat, and the clang of the bell must have reached them.

Furley's rugged, black-bearded face brightened as there came the faint sound of a distant call over the dark waters. He put his hands to his mouth, to make a trumpet, and roared back:

"Ahoy! Ahoy, shipmates!"

"Ahoy!" came the distant call from the sea.

Furley rapped orders to the helmsman. Again and again came the calling voices, as the schooner glided down to the wreck.

In the flare of the lanterns, the Lukwe crew were revealed at last, clinging to the wreck of the boat. Furley counted the faces that stared up from the sea—Keefe the pearler, Dick Finn, and two others. Two of the Lukwe crew had gone down, but the rest had clung to the wreckage, and were holding on, rocking in the wash of the schooner.

Ropes were thrown, and the survivors of the Lukwe crew clambered on board the Flamingo. And they were hardly on deck before Black Furley was shouting orders to the crew, and the schooner was making sail for the Island of Pearls.

The Cannibal Island!

LAND!" exclaimed the mate of the Dawn. "Keefe's island at last, Ken!"

"I reckon so!" King of the Islands' face was eager as he looked across the blue waters at the feathery palms rising from the sea.

It was land—though the land was not yet in sight, only the tops of the palm-trees.

Land in that waste of waters, where none was marked on any chart! It was the Island of Pearls—Keefe's island—or Aya-ua, as the natives called it. Perhaps, at the back of Ken's mind, there had lingered a doubt whether he had read the hidden meaning of the pearler's delirious talk, when he had been on board the ketch. But there was no doubt now.

Far away from the ketch, but growing larger and clearer every minute in the blaze of the tropical sun, rose the tall palms of the unknown island. Lost in the immensity of the Pacific, it was far from all trade routes, seldom or never seen by a white man, but raised at last by the boy trader and his comrade.

Ken looked at the feathery waving palms against the deep blue of the sky. Then his glance swept over the sea. Lonely, untenanted, the Pacific stretched on all sides. Seldom, indeed, did a sail glance on those solitary waters, or a steamer's smoke blue the horizon. The ketch and her crew seemed to have a world of water to themselves.

"It's the island, Ken!" said Hudson. "Keefe's island—no doubt about that! I reckon we're first in the field—we've beaten Black Furley."

"I reckon so: And we dropped Wu Fang and his schooner far away," answered King of the Islands. "I fancy the Chink suspected something, Kit, to make him follow us from Lukwe. But I reckon we're done with the Chink—though Furley's a different proposition.

"We shall see Furley in the offing sooner or later, and Keefe with him. It will be a surprise to him to find us here—and to Keefe, too! It may come to fighting when Furley and his crew butt in."

"Let it," said Hudson carelessly. "We'll give those Lukwe swabs all they want, and a little over."

Higher and higher rose the tall palms from the sea, as the ketch ran down to the island.

The shipmates watched with eager eyes. Few white men had ever looked on that lonely island before—none, so far as they knew, but Keefe and his pearling crew, of whom only the man from the Paumotus had got away alive. They had combed the lagoon for oysters, rotted them on the beach, and found a treasure in pearls. But the pearls were still on the island, and the heads of the pearling crew smoked in the canoe-houses of Tame'eto and his bucks.

White surf booming on coral reefs gleamed in the sun, and the boom came across the blue waters to the ketch. Across the reefs, they saw the lagoon of Aya-ua, calm as a pond, glistening in the sunshine. Round it circled the white beach, backed by tall, feathery palms, and, beyond, the deep dark bush that covered almost the whole of the land.

King of the Islands shortened sail, and circled the surf-beaten reef, looking for the passage into the lagoon. Dotted on the shining surface of the lagoon were half-a-dozen native canoes, the blacks in them engaged in fishing. As they sighted the tall sails of the ketch outside the reef, the Aya-ua natives paddled for the beach.

More and more natives appeared from the palms and from the dark openings of the bush, and staring eyes were turned on the ketch. The

gleam of spears could be seen in the sunshine, and from the distance the deep drone of a beaten drum boomed across the lagoon.

Tame'eto's canoe was still far out at sea, and the sight of the tall sails was the first intimation the islanders had that a white man's ship was in the offing. But the news was spreading fast over Aya-ua.

A break in the line of creaming surf told the location of the reef passage. King of the Islands scanned it keenly. On one side of the channel were low-stretching reefs, barely covered at low water, thick with seaweed to a height of twenty feet above the sea.

ON the uneven summit of the cliff three or four blacks could be seen, and as the ketch turned her prow towards the channel, they were joined by more from the inner beach. King of the Islands eyed them grimly as the Dawn neared the reef.

Lompo, at the helm, rolled his eyes uneasily at the Aya-ua blacks gathered on the coral cliff, staring down at the approaching vessel. To enter the lagoon, the ketch had to pass within three fathoms of the cliff on which the natives were bunched.

"Steady, Lompo!" snapped King of the Islands. "Kit, let them have it if they lift a finger!"

"Leave it to me!" said Hudson. His rifle was in his hands, his finger on the trigger.

An arrow whizzed in the air and dropped on the ketch, sticking quivering in the planks. A spear came whizzing, falling hardly a fathom short.

It was a warning of what was coming, and the ketch was gliding into closer range. Once in the reef channel, it would be fairly under the showering of spears and arrows from the cliff, and from such a fusillade hardly a man on deck could have escaped alive.

Hudson's rifle was clamped to his shoulder, and he pulled trigger. The Winchester sent a stream of bullets into the thick of the blacks.

Wild yells and howls answered, and the blacks scattered and ran from the fire. Three of them, bolder than the rest, stood fast and drove whizzing arrows at the ketch, one of which carried the hat from the head of King of the Islands. Hudson, with a grim face, streamed bullets at the savage bowmen. Two of them rolled over on the coral and did not stir again, and the third tossed his bow aside and ran.

The coral was clear of natives as the ketch glided under the cliff. Yells and howls sounded from a distance, but the Aya-ua blacks did not seek close quarters again. Hudson watched with ready rifle, but it was not needed.

There was deep water in the channel and a clear passage, and in a few minutes the prow of the Dawn was cleaving the shining waters of the lagoon. King of the Islands stood on across the lagoon, and the anchor was dropped in sixty feet of water a quarter of a mile from the beach.

On the beach the blacks swarmed, yelling and shouting, and the beating of the war-drum came with an incessant drone from the bush.

"We've raised Keefe's island, Ken," chuckled Kit. "And I reckon we've raised a hornets' nest at the same time! I'm not surprised that the Paumotus crew got wiped out now I've seen the show. But I'm surprised Keefe got away alive when the rest were kai-kaied."

"We're seeing it through, though, Kit," said King of the Islands.

"You bet!" said Hudson tersely.

But King of the Islands, as he looked with thoughtful eyes at the swarming beach, wondered whether they had reached the Island of Pearls only to leave their heads to be smoked in the wood fires in the canoe-houses of Tame'eto!

Ken is determined to get Keefe's pearls. The natives are equally determined that he shall not, so there is tremendous excitement in the next King of the Islands yarn!

FIVE SHILLINGS

will be awarded to the OWNER of the RINGED HEAD if he will send his full name and address, vouched for by T. E. Knight, in envelope marked "Claim," to the Editor, MODERN BOY

ONE GUINEA

has been awarded to T. E. KNIGHT, 43, Ilfracombe Buildings, Marshalsea Road, London, S.E.1, for this photo of Form III, St. Olave's Grammar School. The guinea winner is third from the left in the back row

