

6 SUPER PICTURE-STAMPS FREE This Week!

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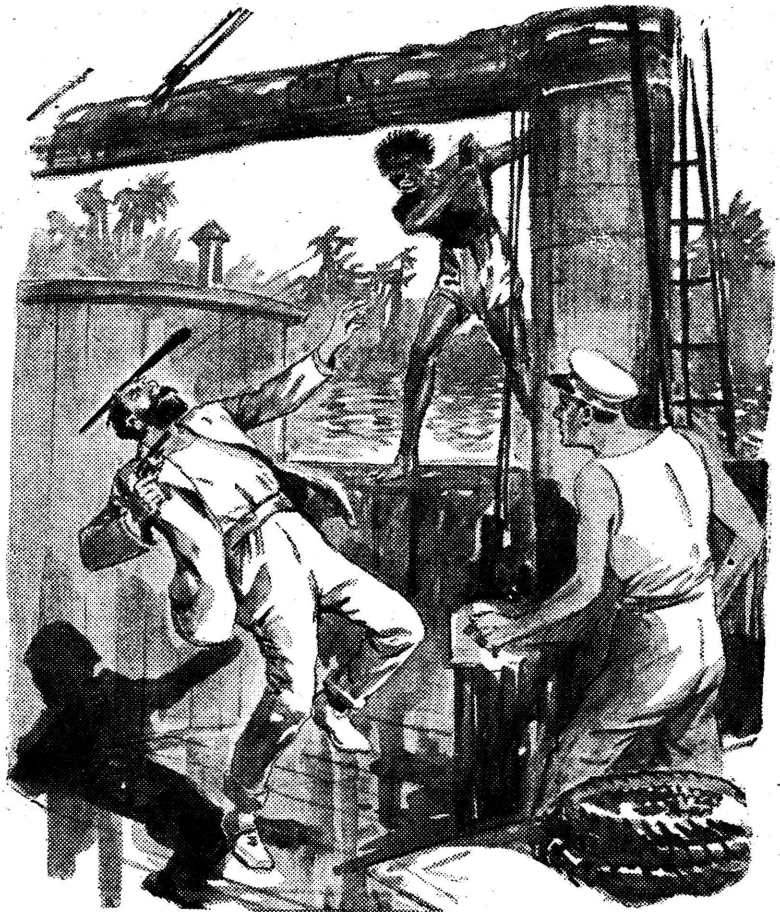
THE FLYING BOY!—See pages 16-17

A KING OF THE ISLANDS
*Story—packed with all the
 Adventurous Glamour of the
 tropic South Seas. . . .*

The BEACH of TERROR!

By
Charles Hamilton

COMPLETE



A belaying-pin whizzed through the air from the hand of Koko and landed on the side of Black Furley's head. In an instant, Ken King leaped on him.

Tame'eto's Triumph!

KEN KING, boy trader of the South Seas, and owner of the ketch Dawn, stood on the teak rail of his ship, holding on to a rope and staring towards the shore of the lagoon of the cannibal island of Aya-ua.

On the deck stood Kit Hudson, his young Australian mate. Lining the rails were the Dawn's native crew of Hiva-Oa boys—Koko the gigantic bo'sun, Lompo and Lufu, Kolulo and Tomoo, and Danny the cooky-boy.

On that part of the shore at which King of the Islands was staring, the sandy coral-powdered beach extended for a cable's length before it was shut off by the high, thick bush. But for a few prostrate natives on the beach, Ken could see nothing but the bush and a large baobab tree growing out of it. But the bush was swaying.

The swaying marked the passage of Tame'eto, chief of one of the cannibal tribes inhabiting the island, and some of his men. They had just vanished from sight, dragging with them a white man whom Ken and his crew had recognised as Dandy Peter Parsons of Lukwe. Bitter enemy as Parsons was, Ken had striven hard to save him, ordering all his crew to open fire on the blacks.

The sight of Parsons on the beach of Aya-ua had amazed Ken. He had not dreamed the man was within hundreds of miles of this lonely isle, perhaps the loneliest in all the Pacific. It was uncharted, and Ken had come there in the hope of saving a pearler named Keefe, or the cache of pearls Keefe had hidden on the island during a previous trip, in which all Keefe's crew had been massacred by the cannibals.

Ken had picked Keefe up at sea

in an open boat, ill and delirious after his terrible experience. Keefe had been kidnapped from the Dawn by Wu Fang a Chinaman, who had heard of his cache of pearls and hoped to extract the secret of their hiding-place from the pearler.

But other South Sea ruffians had heard of the pearls, and Dandy Peter had stolen the pearler from Wu Fang, only to lose him to Black Furley of Lukwe and his crew. Ken had hunted high and low for Furley and, failing to find him, had sought for and found a clue to the location of the island in Keefe's delirious babblings.

Ken stepped down from the rail at last. His eyes met Hudson's, and the Australian said:

"It's the finish for Dandy Peter!"

"He's a white man, Kit!" said Ken, in a low voice. "A disgrace to his colour—but a white man! A white man in the hands of those demons!"

"We've done our best—more than Peter Parsons would have done for us, Ken," replied Hudson. "But how did he get here?" he added. "He seems to have been alone—there's no boat or canoe even! There must be a ship outside the reef, Ken, but why should Parsons have landed alone?"

"It beats me," said Ken. "He must have got ashore before dawn, or we should have seen him. He's found his way to the Island of Pearls—Keefe's island!"

King of the Islands stared towards the bush again. The wounded savages had crawled away and disappeared. Two lay on the beach who would never stir again. But there was little doubt that from the jungle ever fierce eyes were watching. There were only two white men and six natives on board the ketch. There were more than a hundred of the cannibals. To land and make an attempt to rescue Parsons seemed little short of madness.

IN a pitched battle with the savages on the lagoon, King of the Islands had defeated them with heavy loss, and destroyed their fleet of war canoes. But bush-fighting was quite another matter.

"Feller Tame'eto comey!" exclaimed Koko. From the bush a brawny, black figure stepped into view. It was Tame'eto, clad in a tapa loincloth and coral necklaces, with brass cartridge clips gleaming in his ears.

He stood and looked at the ketch. Even at that distance the shipmates could read the derisive grin of triumph on his face.

"We'll speak to the brute!" said Ken. He rapped out an order to the Kanakas, and the anchor was swung up from the coral bed of the lagoon. Under foresail and jib, the ketch glided towards the distant beach.

Tame'eto stood like a black statue,

The Beach of Terror

watching. His eyes were keen for the sight of a lifted rifle, which would have made him leap back into cover. Three or four more black faces peered from the bush behind him.

Within hail of the beach, the ketch hove to, and Ken waved his hand to the savage chief, palm outward, in sign of peace.

But Tame'eto did not advance. Treacherous himself, he feared a trick. He remained where he was, ready to leap back into cover at a sign of a firearm. Where he had appeared bush swept close to the lagoon, and he was within hail.

"You feller big chief Tame'eto, you listen, ear belong you, along what me say!" shouted Ken.

"Me listen, ear belong me!" came back Tame'eto's powerful voice. "What thing you talk along this big feller chief?"

"Me talk good talk along you," said Ken. "White man stop along you feller. Me give plenty shell-money, plenty stick tobacco, plenty trade-box along bell he ring, along you send white feller along ship belong me."

"This big chief no send white feller along ship belong you, my word!" Tame'eto answered. "White feller friend along you, me savvy! That white feller go along cooking-oven belong me. Head belong him smoke along wood-fire! Feast day he come, that white feller makee kai-kai along Tame'eto."

There was no doubt that the savage chief supposed that his prisoner was one of the crew of the Dawn, who had rashly landed alone. He was rejoicing in his revenge on the skipper who had defeated him and destroyed his war-fleet.

"White feller no friend along me," said Ken. "He no belong along this ship! That feller enemy along me."

"You givee shell-money, stick tobacco, trade-box along bell he ring, along enemy along you!" Tame'eto showed all his teeth in a derisive grin. "This big feller chief no believe! You talk good talk along this feller Tame'eto."

"The brute's not likely to believe that we should ransom an enemy," said Hudson. "He thinks that Parsons is one of us, and he won't give him up for love or money."

"One feller along you, stop along me!" grinned Tame'eto. "Bimeby, all feller along you stop along me, my word! All feller belong that ship go along cooking-oven, along feast day he come! You hear this feller big chief, ear belong you?"

"Nothing doing, Ken!" said the mate of the Dawn.

Ken had hoped to appeal to the greed of the island chief. But vengeance predominated over greed in the savage breast of Tame'eto.

"S'pose you wantee white feller, you comey along beach!" shouted Tame'eto derisively. "Me likee you comey along beach, plenty too much! You plenty too much fright along Tame'eto!"

Ken smiled. That taunt from the savage was not likely to draw him under the spears and hatchets of the cannibals swarming in the bush.

Tame'eto snapped his fingers contemptuously at the white men on the ketch.

"You poor white trash, you plenty 'fraid along this feller Tame'eto!" he bawled. "My word, you altogether too much fright!"

Kit Hudson's eyes glinted, and he threw his rifle to his shoulder. With a bound Tame'eto vanished into the bush.

"We can do nothing, Kit!" King of the Islands said. "But there's a chance for Parsons yet! He must have come here in a ship, and the ship must be outside the reef! The men aboard are enemies, but they may join forces to save him."

"Feller schooner comey along lagoon, sar!" exclaimed Koko.

The eyes of the shipmates turned on the distant reef passage. Coming in from the Pacific was a schooner—a craft well known to their eyes.

"It's the Flamingo!" shouted Hudson. "Wu Fang's ship!"

"Wu Fang's ship here!" said Ken. "With Black Furley of Lukwe at the helm!"

In amazement the shipmates stared at the schooner as it glided in at the reef passage of Aya-ua, and dropped anchor in the lagoon.

Hand to Hand.

THE Dawn, by hokey!" growled Black Furley, scowling across the shining lagoon at the ketch. His scowl was reflected on the faces of his crew, Finn, Norris, and Preece. Only Keefe the pearler brightened as he saw the ketch and the two white men on her deck.

The kidnapped pearler had hoped, but had hardly dared to believe, that he would find King of the Islands at Aya-ua. His eyes shone at the sight of the Dawn riding in the lagoon.

Furley had feared that the boy trader of Lalinge might beat him in the race to the Island of Pearls. He had sighted it at sea, heading in the direction of Aya-ua. His square jaw set grimly under his beard.

"If they've got the pearls," he muttered, "there'll be shooting, and you can lay to that!"

The schooner ran on into the lagoon, the sails dropped, and the cable ran out. Black Furley snapped orders to the Santa Cruz crew, as if the ship were his own, and they jumped to obey the black-bearded freebooter as they had never jumped at the orders of Wu Fang. Furley had put the spell of fear on Wu Fang's crew.

Wu Fang, unregarded on his own deck, watched the Dawn. The Chink was of less account on his own schooner than one of the native hands. What Wu Fang thought, and felt, in that strange situation was not revealed in his yellow mask of a face. He seemed to have submitted to his fate with passive resignation. Only at rare moments his slanting eyes fixed on Black Furley with a deadly glitter in their depths.

The Dawn was gliding back to her

former anchorage, and there King of the Islands dropped the anchor, a cable's length separating the two vessels.

Black Furley stood staring at the ketch, and hitched his belt to bring his revolver nearer to hand. The expression on his face was growing darker and more savage. He turned to Keefe.

"You never let on that that kid trader knew the bearings of the island."

He scowled threateningly at the man from the Paumotus.

"I never knew," answered Keefe quietly. "It's got me beat how he raised the island. I reckon he must have picked up something from me when I was delirious on board his hooker, after he saved me at sea."

"Well, he's here! If he's lifted the pearls, it will come to shooting. You standing in with this crew?"

"Never!" Keefe shook his head. "I warned you fair and square that I'd stand in with you unless I got a chance of getting in touch with King of the Islands. You know that."

"And what's to stop me from dropping you over the side and letting the sharks take you off my hands?" roared Furley.

The pearler made no answer. But his coppery face was set and inflexible. Furley glared at him savagely, as if minded to put his threat into execution. Dick-Finn broke in.

"Belay it, Furley! Keefe put it fair and square—he never wanted to sail with us. I reckon we can keep him out of harm's way if it comes to fighting with that hooker. Nobody's going to the sharks off this packet, Jim Furley!"

"Run a rope round him!" growled Black Furley. "If he's not standing in with us, we got to keep him safe. Anyhow he's steered us a course for the island—we've got that much out of the lubber."

Keefe backed away as the Lukwe men advanced on him. He gave a quick look at the ketch, and the shining space of water that separated him from friends and safety. Black Furley dragged the heavy revolver from his belt.

"Swim!" he snarled. "Swim for it if you like—and, by hokey, I'll riddle you with bullets in the water!"

He levelled the revolver at the Paumotus pearler.

"I'm in your hands!" said Keefe. And he submitted quietly while Finn and Preece bound his arms and ran a rope round him and secured him to the mast.

"That's that!" growled Black Furley, putting his revolver back in his belt again. "You're out of this crew now, Ben Keefe, and you don't come in when th' pearls are shared out. You can lay to that. Get the boat down. I'm going on board that ketch." He roared to the black crew: "Lower that feller boat, you black lubbers—look lively, along you want me knock seven bells outer your black hides."

The boat dropped promptly into the water, and Black Furley jumped into it, snarling to the black boat's crew

to give way. His men remained on the schooner, watching the boat pulling for the ketch.

Furley stared round at the shores of the lagoon as the Santa Cruz boys pulled. According to the pearler's story, the island swarmed with black cannibals, who had massacred the Paumotus crew, with the single exception of Keefe. But he could see no sign of a native on the beach. In one spot a number of grass huts could be seen among the palms, but they were deserted. Furley gave a snort of contempt. Keefe had talked much of the danger from the natives, but so far as Furley could see, they had been frightened away into the bush.

The boat bumped on the hull of the ketch, and Furley swung himself over the low freeboard of the vessel, the skipper and mate offering no opposition.

"So you're here?" he snapped.

"Right on the spot, old bean," said Kit Hudson, with a grin. "Sort of pleasant surprise for you, what?"

"You're after the pearls?" snarled Furley.

you ain't found the pearls?" He glared suspiciously at the shipmates. "I've said so."

"Then I reckon you'll up anchor and get to sea now!" said Furley threateningly. "I've got three men on that schooner, and a black crew that will jump to my orders, Ken King. You don't want to start a bigger trouble than you can handle."

"We'll chance that!" said King of the Islands. "Have you taken to piracy, Furley? We know that schooner. It belongs to Wu Fang. I can see him on the deck."

"He ran my boat down and drowned two of my crew!" replied Furley. "I've borrowed his schooner for this cruise. He can have it back when I'm through. But that's no business of yours, Ken King. I'm master of that hooker now, and you can lay to that! And if you don't up hook—" The Lukwe freebooter's voice rose to a threatening roar.

"Go easy!" broke in King of the Islands. "Just at present I'm not thinking of the pearls, or even of Keefe. There's a white man in the

I can see myself bush-fighting with niggers to hook out Dandy Peter—when he'd stick a knife in my back and grab the pearls, if he could, just to square the account! Oh, sure!"

"Then the sooner you get back to your stolen ship the better!" snapped King of the Islands. And Kit walked away in disgust.

Furley set his teeth. His hand was resting on his belt, close to the butt of his revolver.

"If they got Dandy Peter, they can keep him!" he said grimly. "I ain't worrying about him! I'm here for the pearls. Keefe's thrown us over now he's seen your hooker—reckons he's going to stand in with you. But I reckon that he ain't! And you ain't going to chip in, King of the Islands!"

With the last word he flashed the revolver from his belt and levelled it, glaring fiercely over the barrel at Ken.

"Don't you touch a gun!" said



Mad with rage, undaunted, Black Furley fought wildly and desperately against overwhelming odds.

hands of the niggers—one of your gang, I reckon!"

"What're you giving me?" snarled Furley. "My men are on the schooner."

"Peter Parsons of Lukwe—"

"By hokey! So the niggers got him!" grunted Furley. "But that won't keep me awake in my bunk! Dandy Peter don't belong to my crew! We found him a prisoner on the Chink's schooner, and let him loose. He slipped over the side last night while we was waiting outside the reef to run in at dawn. Keefe reckoned the niggers would get him!"

"Well, they've got him—and you know what that means," said King of the Islands. "Will you stand in with us to help him?"

Furley stared at the boy trader blankly for a moment, then burst into a scoffing roar of laughter.

"Ch, sure!" he grinned. "I reckon

Black Furley between his teeth. "I'll lay you dead on your own deck as soon as I look at you! Keep your eyes on this iron, and don't touch a gun!"

Whiz! There was a crash as a belaying-pin shot through the air from the hand of Koko standing on the rail and landed on the side of the ruffian's head.

Black Furley staggered, half-stunned by the blow, a gasping yell breaking from his lips. In an instant King of the Islands leaped on him and struck the revolver from his hand. It shot across the rail and dropped splashing into the lagoon.

An instant more, and the grasp of the brown boatswain was on the staggering ruffian. The freebooter gave grasp for grasp, struggling furiously in the hands of Koko.

But, burly and muscular ruffian as he was, he was no match for the gigantic Kanaka, who swept him from his feet and brought him down with a crash on his back on the deck.

A brown bare knee was planted on Furley's broad chest, pinning him down. Koko freed one hand, and a

"The pearls belong to Ben Keefe," said King of the Islands quietly. "I can see him yonder."

"And he'll stay there!" growled Furley. "If you want him, you can have him after I've handled the pearls—not before. You've beaten me to the island, Ken King, and I reckon you've been here some time. I'm asking you if you've lifted the pearls."

"We don't know where the cache is," said Ken. "I reckon I could figure it out, but we haven't landed yet. We've had trouble with the natives."

"Seems to me you've got 'em scared stiff!" grunted Furley. "They seem to have taken to the bush. Sure

The Beach of Terror!

knife flashed in the sunshine as he threw it up to strike. A moment more, and the long Malaita knife would have pinned the struggling ruffian to the planks. But King of the Islands grasped the boatswain's arm and arrested the blow.

"Hold on, Koko!"

"Plenty good killy feller Furley, sar!" panted Koko. "Plenty good that bad feller he go finish!"

"Hold on!" ordered Ken. He dragged at the Kanaka's muscular arm, and Kit Hudson, running up, caught the knife and twirled it away from Koko's fingers.

"Throw him into his boat!" said King of the Islands.

"Plenty much better, sar, sling that bad feller along lagoon, along he makee kai-kai along shark, sar!" snorted Koko.

"You throw that feller Furley along boat, all same me say!" snapped King of the Islands.

Koko grunted with dissatisfaction, but dragged the panting Lukwe ruffian to his feet.

"Get back to your ship, Furley!" said King of the Islands sternly. "And mark this! We're here to help Keefe lift his pearls, and we're standing by him to the finish! Now throw him into the boat, Koko!"

Koko hustled Furley to the side, lifted him, heavy as he was, and hurled him down into the boat in the midst of the staring blacks. There was a terrific crash as Furley landed.

"You feller boy, you washy-washy along schooner, plenty quick!" King of the Islands called down to the boat's crew.

The boat's crew gave way, and the boat shot away from the Dawn. As it pulled back to the schooner, Black Furley struggled to his feet and stood, spluttering with fury, shaking a clenched fist at King of the Islands and bawling furious threats.

"Foes afloat and foes ashore!" Kit Hudson laughed grimly. "We've found a hornets' nest at Keefe's island, Ken—and you can lay to that, as Furley would say!"

Tame'eto Strikes!

BOUND to the mainmast of the Flamingo, Keefe watched the Lukwe crew in silence.

The sun was rising higher over the lagoon and the heat of the tropical day setting in. To that Black Furley gave no thought. He was eager to begin the quest of the cache of pearls. Somewhere on Aya-ua was cached the tapa sack of pearls, taken from the lagoon by the lugger's crew that had perished on the island. The Lukwe freebooter was losing no time.

Half a dozen Santa Cruz blacks manned the boat, and Dick Finn and Preece stepped into it. Harris was to remain on the schooner to keep guard. Black Furley stopped before the pearler.

"You ain't letting on where the pearls are cached?" he asked.

"Never!" answered Keefe.

"I suppose you reckon King of the

Islands will get you off this packet?" jeered Furley. "I'm leaving a man on board with orders to shoot if they pull for the schooner. King of the Islands will think twice before he starts trouble!"

"The pearls are mine," answered the man from the Paumotus quietly. "Find them if you can. And if you do find them, I reckon King of the Islands won't let you rob me of them, Jim Furley."

"Stand in with us, and we'll share and share alike!" growled Furley. "You'll have to share with those swabs on the Dawn if they see you through!"

"They won't lose on the trip," answered Keefe. "I'll see to that. But King of the Islands isn't the man to rob a pearler. Find the cache if you can, and be hanged to you!"

"I'll find the cache all right," snarled Furley. "I've picked up your old camp on the beach yonder already, and the cache won't be far away from the camp. I'll raise them pearls, before sundown."

Keefe compressed his lips. The pearls were hidden in the trunk of the great baobab tree, which could be seen from the lagoon. They had been safe enough from the natives, who had no suspicion that they were there; but he realised that the hiding-place was not likely to elude a prolonged and determined search by men who knew that the cache could not be far distant. He cast a glance towards the ketch, riding a cable's length away on the sunny lagoon. And Furley, as he noted it, gave a scoffing laugh.

"Ken King won't help you," he jeered. "Harris, you'll open fire with your Winchester if they come a boat's length nearer."

"You bet!" answered the Lukwe man.

Black Furley tramped to the side and swung down into the boat.

"Look out for the natives," Keefe called as he went. "They got Peter Parsons."

"You can't scare us with the niggers," laughed Furley. "I reckon they wouldn't have got Dandy Peter if he'd had a gun in his hand. They're welcome to smoke my head—if they can get it off my shoulders."

The blacks pulled for the shore, at the point where the bush receded a cable's length from the water. There, with his binoculars, Furley had picked up traces of the pearlery camp, and the heaps of shell they had rotted out. He had no doubt that the cache was in the vicinity of the old camp of the Paumotus crew, and that a vigorous search would bring it to light.

Of the natives he had no fear whatever. He was accustomed to dealing with "niggers" with a heavy hand, and he would have laughed at the idea of three white men, armed to the teeth, fearing to land on any island in the Pacific.

Neither did he fear or even think of trouble on the schooner while he was absent. Keefe was a bound and helpless prisoner, and the man Harris was armed and on the watch. The Santa Cruz crew had been kicked into

terrified submission, and the presence of one white man was enough for them. As for the Chink, Furley did not waste a thought on him.

Wu Fang, stretched on a tapa mat in the shadow of the companion, smoking, looked half asleep. Not a word of rebellion, not a sign of resentment, had escaped the Chinaman since the Lukwe freebooters had taken possession of his ship. Black Furley regarded him as of no more account than the cockroaches that crawled in the cabin.

But when the boat pulled away from the schooner, Wu Fang ceased to smoke. He lifted his head in its immense Chinese hat, stared after the boat, and smiled. Then, as Harris' careless glance fell on him, he sank back into his former position, and seemed to slumber in the drowsy heat of the tropical day.

If Wu Fang was biding his time, the time for action had not yet come.

BLACK FURLEY steered for the beach without a backward glance at the schooner. He shook a fist at two faces looking from the ketch, that was all. Preece and Dick Finn eyed the ketch rather uneasily. They were within easy rifle range, and in the open boat there was no cover from flying lead. King of the Islands was not likely to burn powder if he could help it; but they were glad when the boat bumped on the beach.

"You feller boy stop along boat," snapped Furley, tramping ashore. The Santa Cruz boys were glad enough to remain with the boat at the water's edge. Their eyes were lingering uneasily on the shadowy bush.

The trampled sand bore many traces of what had happened on the beach that morning, but there was no sign of the natives. The dead and wounded had been removed by Tame'eto's followers. Black Furley stared round, and grunted.

"I reckon this is where they got Dandy Peter," he growled. "He'd found the old camp. Keep your eyes peeled for the niggers—there might be some of them around yet."

The bush, dark and to all appearance impenetrable, was silent and still. If savage eyes were watching from the tangled jungle, there was no sign of them. The three Lukwe men tramped up the beach to the spot where the fragments of the old hut lay. Black Furley paused there, looked round him, and shook his head.

"Not here!" he said. "I reckon the niggers rooted through this pretty thorough when they wiped out the Paumotus crew. Keefe reckons the cache is still safe, and I reckon it was put where the niggers wouldn't look for it. And that's in the bush."

"Dandy Peter knew more than he let on to us," said Dick Finn. "And you can see that he went into the bush here. That's where they got him."

There were ample signs of Parsons' desperate struggle out of the clinging bush with the yelling savages behind him in torn and trailing branches and creepers. In many places the

small footprints of the dandy of Lukwe could be picked up among the tracks of the bare splay feet of the blacks. That terrible scene was almost as clear to the eyes of the Lukwe crew as if they had beheld it, and it had a sobering effect on them. Even Black Furley lost a little of his unthinking recklessness, and stared round with moody eyes into the shadows of the dense undergrowth.

With his revolver in his hand and his finger on the trigger, Furley pushed into the bush, almost in the footsteps of Peter Parsons. More than once the Lukwe crew had suspected that Dandy Peter had some knowledge of the cache, derived from the delirious babblings of Keefe when the pearler had been his prisoner. They were sure of it now. After his escape from the schooner the previous night, it was clear that Dandy Peter had headed for this very spot. And it was likely enough that he would have lifted the pearls had not the savages intervened.

A faint rustle in the bush made Dick Finn start and swing round with uplifted revolver.

"Only a cockatoo, you fool!" growled Furley.

"They got Dandy Peter here!" muttered Finn. "I reckon I'm not keen on leaving my head in this bush, Jim Furley."

"I'd get after them pearls if they was in the devil-doctor's house at their village," snarled Furley. "But, by hokey, the sooner we're through the better I'll like it. If we don't raise them pearls before sundown I'll bring Keefe ashore and make him point out the place."

Following the traces of Dandy Peter, the three Lukwe men reached the great baobab tree. Behind them, the thick, high bush shut off the beach and the lagoon. Shadow and silence and solitude surrounded them, and the nerves of two of them, at least, were on the jump.

Furley stood staring at the baobab, the trunk almost hidden by a tangled network of creepers and wild vines. He moved round the great tree, trampling down creepers and ferns. It was clear in his mind that Dandy Peter had known, or guessed, something of the cache, and that this was the spot where the man had been searching for the hidden pearls when the blacks came down on him.

Two or three yards away from his followers he was out of their sight. They were moving round the other side of the gigantic baobab. There was no sign that Dandy Peter had gone farther: he had been under the branches of the baobab when the blacks came on him. Black Furley's heart beat faster. He felt that he was close on the prize, that it was at hand, and probably within reach.

Crack! Crack! Furley gave a leap as two shots rang out on the other side of the baobab. A yell from savage throats answered. Trampling feet, panting breath, screaming voices—it was like pandemonium suddenly breaking out in the deathly silence of the bush.

"By hokey!" panted Black Furley, rushing fiercely round the tree, tear-

Just My Foolin'

By THE OLD BOY

A CHEERY old sailor named Bunn

Was one day blown out of a gun;

They thought he was dead,

But he gasped, and he said:

"Well, messmates, you will 'ave your fun!"



I AM afraid it is simply impossible for me to publish this week's picture for my amazing serial. I intended to begin the story by explaining that Claudius Carbuncle had often seen the villain, Erasmus Earache, hanging about his house, and he wondered what Earache was after. So I asked our hare-brained artist to draw a picture of Erasmus Earache hanging about our hero's house.

THE result was positively ghoulish. Erasmus had chosen the area railings to hang himself on, and there he was, drooping into the area, with his tongue hanging out. Really, really, I don't want to be fussy, but this sort of thing won't do.

It's time somebody told that artist a few home truths, and if the Editor is too busy to do it I suppose I'll have to do it myself. The worst of it is he is bigger than I am. I think I'll ring him up on the telephone—later on. Meanwhile, shall we try something fresh? Right-ho! Here it is!

OUT in the Wild West, my lads, where men are men and villains are so tough that they keep up their socks with tinctacks, a handsome hero thundered along the sierras or pampas or something on his intelligent mustang. Suddenly a dozen tough eggs jumped out from behind a cactus and popped several ounces of lead into his wishbone.

The intelligent mustang carried his wounded master to the shack of a beautiful girl, who put him to bed with a hot-water bottle and a severe headache, and left him while she went into the town to collect her old Pop before he drank himself to a fever on eggs-and-milks.

BUT while she was gone, along came the tough eggs and sneaked the family cash-box. The handsome hero jumped up and rode after them, firing furiously all the way, and as the going was uphill the tough eggs rode so slowly that the bullets nearly overtook them.

The beautiful girl, when she came back, saw that the cash-box was gone and ditto the near-invalid in the bedroom. She called in the sheriff and the handsome hero was arrested and— At this point the cinema very fortunately caught fire so I tottered round to the box-office, took my money back, and went home to bed!

ing through tangled vines, pistol in hand, rage and fury in his bearded face.

He knew that Finn and Preece were in the grasp of savage hands, struggling for their lives. It did not cross Black Furley's mind to run for the beach and the boat, as he might have done, for he was as yet unassailed. Lawless ruffian and freebooter as he was, he was a loyal comrade. With his lips drawn back in a savage snarl, he raced round the immense trunk of the baobab, and plunged into the conflict.

THE bush, so silent and still a few seconds ago, was humming with life and movement. Black faces glared from the tangled thickets. Preece and Finn were down, still resisting, but helpless in the grasp of many hands. With a roar of rage, and revolver spitting, Black Furley burst on the cannibals. With fierce yells and howls they closed and swarmed round him.

Four yelling demons went down under his shooting in as many seconds. Then he was struggling hand

to hand, with clubbed revolver, crashing heavy blows on fuzzy heads.

He could not help his comrades. Already Preece and Finn, overpowered by numbers, had been dragged away into the bush. But Black Furley, mad with rage, undaunted, fought a wild and desperate fight against overwhelming odds.

Foes were all around. He was dragged down to his knees, and with all his efforts he could not get to his feet again. But he still fought like a tiger. The revolver was wrenched from his hand, but his clenched fists crashed into black faces, spinning yelling savages right and left.

More than once a knife or spear flashed over him, but did not strike. Only too well he knew what that meant—and death under a spear was better than torture and the cooking-oven!

He fought on until there came a sudden crash of a spear-butt on the back of his head, and he reeled over and sprawled. Before the half-stunned freebooter could make another effort, he was pinioned by a dozen jabbering

(Continued on page 18)

The Beach of Terror!

(Continued from page 15)

blacks, and tapa cords bound his muscular arms to his sides.

"You make plenty big feller fight, my word!" said Tame'eto, his white teeth flashing as he grinned with triumph. "You white feller plenty too much strong feller! You stop along this big feller chief Tame'eto. Bimeby, all white feller along Aya-ua stop along this big feller chief. Along feast day he comey, you make kai-kai along this feller! All white feller along Aya-ua make kai-kai!"

Bound and helpless, the freebooter of Lukwe was dragged away into the bush. On the lagoon, the Santa Cruz boys, who had tumbled into the boat at the first sound of alarm, were pulling back with frantic haste to the schooner. Harris stared towards the beach with consternation in his face. The bush of Aya-ua had swallowed his comrades, and to the din of conflict succeeded a silence as of death.

Wu Fang's Chance!

KING OF THE ISLANDS watched the bush. The shots and yells had rung across the lagoon, telling only too plainly of the fate that had befallen Black Furley and his comrades. Had a fugitive fled out of the bush, the shipmates were ready to help so far as help could be given. But no man appeared. It was evident that the three Lukwe men had been overwhelmed by numbers, and that they were either slain or taken prisoners by Tame'eto and his savage crew.

Ken might almost have supposed that that fearful pandemonium had been a figment of the fancy, so still and silent was the bush now. No sound, no movement, no sign of life,

yet it was certain that savage eyes were watching from the jungle cover, and that the bush still swarmed with deadly enemies.

"Feller Furley go finish!" said Koko. "He go finish close up. Head belong him no stop along shoulder belong him, my word!"

Ken looked across at the schooner. Santa Cruz boys were staring from her, with frightened faces. Harris was wiping perspiration from his brow. What had happened in the bush he had not seen, but could guess easily enough. And he had little hope of seeing his comrades in life again. The quest of the pearls of Aya-ua was taking a terrible toll of the pearl-hunters! But the Lukwe man watched the bush, hoping against hope to see some sign of the men who had gone ashore.

"Lower the whaleboat!" ordered King of the Islands. The whaleboat pulled from the Dawn towards the schooner, Ken in the sternsheets. Hudson grasped his rifle and watched from the Dawn as the whaleboat approached the Flamingo.

There was a shout from the schooner.

"Back-water, King of the Islands! I'll pump lead into you if you come nearer!" The Lukwe man rested his rifle on the rail of the Flamingo, bearing on the Dawn's boat. Ken signed to his Kanakas to cease pulling.

"Belay that!" he called back. "Are you mad? You know what's happened to Furley? My mate's got you covered from the ketch. If you pull trigger, Harris, it's the last thing you'll do in this world!"

"Keep your distance!" shouted Harris. "You're not setting foot on this packet! Another stroke of the oars, and I'll fire!"

"Talk sense!" snapped Ken.

"You've got Keefe a prisoner on that packet! Put him into this boat, and I'm done with you. Do you reckon you will raise the pearls on your own—or do you expect to see Furley again?"

"If the niggers have got them," retorted Harris, "the game's up. But I ain't sure of that yet. I'm standing by Jim Furley's orders till I know. They may have got away in the bush. And I reckon that if Furley gets back, he ain't going to find you on this schooner, King of the Islands.

"I'm standing by my skipper's orders! If the game's up, I'll ask you to give me a passage on your ketch, to get away from this durned hornets' nest. If they're hiding in the bush, I reckon they may get away after dark. Give me till dawn, and if Furley ain't back I'll throw up the game. Not till then!"

"You won't see Furley again," said Ken. "And if you've got the sense of a cockroach, you'll come on my ketch now. You'll be safer there than with Wu Fang and his crew!"

"I reckon I've got them feeding from my hand," the Lukwe man laughed contemptuously. "Give me till dawn—or start trouble, just as you like. I'm standing by Furley till I know the game's up."

"Let it go at that!" answered Ken. He raised his voice and called: "Keefe, you can hear me?"

"Ay, ay!" answered the pearler. "We're standing by you, and whether Furley gets back or not we're seeing you through, and seeing that you get your pearls!"

The oars dipped again, and the whaleboat pulled back to the Dawn. Harris watched it suspiciously as it went, and did not lower his rifle till it was swung up again at the ketch's davits, and signs of activity aboard the Dawn had ceased.

ONE GUINEA

has been awarded to **SANDY SMITH**, Bridge Street, Dunkeld, Perthshire, Scotland, for this photograph of Class Senior I, Dunkeld-Birnam Royal School. The guinea-winner is sitting on ground, second from left

FIVE SHILLINGS

will be awarded to the **OWNER** of the **RINGED HEAD** if she will send her full name and address, vouched for by Sandy Smith, in envelope marked "Claim," to the Editor, **MODERN BOY**



Then his eyes turned on the beach and the dark bush that had swallowed Furley and his comrades. His face was haggard with anxiety and doubt. There was a chance, at least, that the Lukwe men had fled in the bush and that one or two of them had escaped the savages.

But the long hours passed. The sun disappeared, and the soft southern stars came out over the lagoon, reflected on the shining surface in a thousand points of light. Beach and bush became a dim blur.

Keefe, sitting at the foot of the mainmast, dropped asleep, his head sunk on his breast. He was still a prisoner, but his mind was easy now. He knew that Black Furley would never come out of the fatal bush, and at dawn he would be free.

The Santa Cruz boys, sprawling on their sleeping-mats, slept too. Harris, standing at the rail, watching and listening, was the only man on the Flamingo who was wakeful—unless it was the little slant-eyed Chinaman who lay curled in the shadow of the companion, apparently in slumber.

Wu Fang's head lifted, and his slant-eyes rested on the back of the Lukwe man as he stood at the rail. The Chink smiled and moved till he could get sight of the man bound to the mainmast, and he watched Keefe till he was satisfied that the pearler slept. Then slowly, silently as a snake, the Chink moved again.

With a weary sigh, Harris turned from the rail and paced the deck. Instantly the Chinaman was motionless again, lying still in shadow.

For an hour the pacing went on, and during that time Wu Fang did not stir. But at last the Lukwe man went to the side, leaned on the rail, and watched the starlit water. It was near midnight, the man was tired, and his faint hope of seeing his comrades again was almost gone. Yet there was still a faint chance, and he waited and watched doggedly, while slumber reigned round him.

Wu Fang was stirring again. Silently, slowly, he was drawing nearer to the man who leaned on the rail. The little Chink, whose impassive submission had completely deceived the ruffians of Lukwe, had bided his time with Oriental patience and cunning. Now his chance had come at last!

Harris, staring wearily towards the beach with heavy eyes, heard no sound as the creeping Chink rose behind him. Had the little yellow demon had a weapon in his hand the Lukwe man's life would have gone out like the flame of a candle. And had the Lukwe man known his danger, one grasp of his powerful hands would have crumpled up the yellow man.

But Harris did not know his danger till it was too late. He knew nothing then till the creeping figure behind him rose, and a sudden grasp on his ankles tilted him over the rail, head-long into the lagoon.

The Lukwe man came to the surface, staring up at the schooner and gasping for breath. He caught a glimpse of a grinning yellow face. It

Model Plane Chat

The Expert who conducts this regular feature will answer Free, through the Post, any Air queries that any reader cares to send to the Editor

IT is a very simple job to make an unbreakable undercarriage for a model plane from a piece of springy piano wire, as shown here—gauge 20 wire for normal-sized, medium-lightweight models, gauge 16 for heavier machines.

Get the wire from a model aeroplane dealer. Cut off a suitable length for the model to which you intend fitting the undercarriage, and straighten it by gripping one end with a pair of pliers, and pulling till any kinks have been removed.

Fig. 1 shows the various stages in bending the wire to shape. Do that with flat-nosed pliers, and make all the angles sharp. If you don't possess pliers, bend the wire around nails driven into a board.

When ready, bind the undercarriage to the fuselage spars of your plane with strong thread, as at Fig. 2. Fixed quite rigidly, it will help strengthen the framework of the fuselage as well as providing a strong wing-mounting and shock-absorbing undercarriage.

For experimental work, instead of fixing the wing to the fuselage it may be clipped into the bent portion of the wire above the fuselage. It is held firmly in place when the machine is in flight, and should the wing hit the ground—if the model makes a bad landing—this wire undercarriage will slip out of its mounting and prevent any damage.

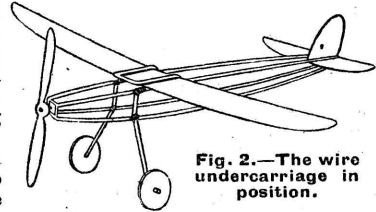


Fig. 2.—The wire undercarriage in position.

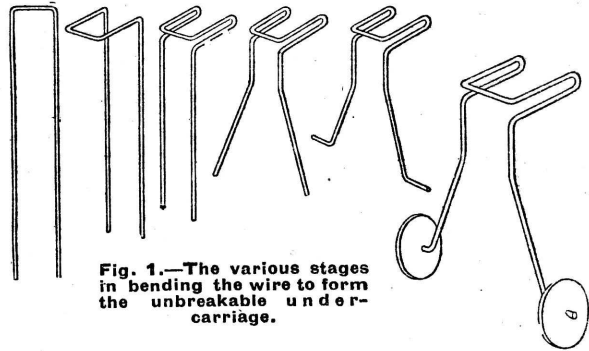


Fig. 1.—The various stages in bending the wire to form the unbreakable undercarriage.

vanished for a moment, then re-appeared, and a rifle-barrel glimmered over the rail.

Wu Fang had picked up the rifle the Lukwe man had dropped as he went overboard. His finger was on the trigger, and his slant-eyes gleamed along the barrel. The roar of the rifle woke a thousand echoes on the silent lagoon, and Harris

dived barely in time to escape the shot.

The Chink pumped out bullets till the rifle was empty, splashing lead into the lagoon. Then the slant-eyes stared from the rail, searching for the swimmer. But no swimmer was to be seen, and the Chink chuckled softly.

The Santa Cruz crew, startled out of slumber by the shots, leaped up from their sleeping-mats, staring round them. Keefe opened his eyes, to see Wu Fang standing before him, the rifle under his arm.

"White man no stop!" said the Chink softly. "Ship belong Wu Fang, belong Wu Fang one more time, savvy? White feller stop along shark along lagoon—you feller Keefe stop along this Chinaman. You sing out what place feller pearl he stop, you savvy? Plenty too soon, feller pearl stop along this Chinaman! What you tinkee?"

And the triumphant Chink grinned and chuckled like an exultant yellow gnome!

Another SIX SUPER PICTURE - STAMPS GIVEN FREE

with This Week's **RANGER and MAGNET**

Don't Miss Them!

There are more exciting happenings at Aya-ua in Next Saturday's King of the Islands yarn—happenings that will hold you spellbound!