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FREE INSIDE-
SIX MORE
COLOURED PICTURE
STAMPS



When NELSON was a MODERN BOY!—See inside

The Chinaman chuckled as he let the pearls run through his fingers. . . . It was the chance for which Ben Keefe, bound as he was, had been watching!



The Swinging Head.

BY the smoking wood-fire in his hut the devil-doctor of Aya-ua sat crooning and muttering to himself as he turned a dark object suspended over the fire. It hung on a fibre cord, dangling from a smoke-blackened roof-pole twenty feet above.

The devil-doctor's hut was large and spacious, built of palm-poles and plaited pandarus. The interior was dark and gloomy. There were no windows and only at the low doorway a shaft of brilliant sunshine penetrated. A faint glow of red came from the wood-fire, and a steady stream of smoke mounting upward spread about the roof and escaped in tiny spirals through cracks and crevices to the outer air.

From the roof-poles hung many round, dark objects similar to the one that O'o'oo was turning in the smoke. Smoke-curing the heads of slain enemies was one of the duties of the devil-doctor—a congenial task to the wizened old savage. Intent on his task, he squatted crouched by the fire, turning and turning the head that swung on the thin fibre cord.

With his arms bound behind his back, and leaning wearily against the wall of the hut, Peter Parsons—Dandy Peter of Lukwe—watched the devil-doctor turning the head. There was no colour in his haggard face. His chin was sunk on his breast in despair and his arms ached from the cruel tightness of the tapa cords that bound them.

But he hardly heeded the pain. One thought was in his tormented mind—how long would it be before his own head was turning in the wood-smoke under the claws of O'o'oo?

More than one tribe dwelt on Aya-ua, warfare in the bush was incessant, and O'o'oo was seldom without a head to smoke. But there were white men's heads, as well as black, among the

trophies in O'o'oo's hut—heads of shipwrecked sailormen, of massacred pearl-ers. Lonely as the island was, lost in the immensity of the Pacific, white men had come there from time to time, and not all who had come had sailed away again.

One more white man's head was to be added to O'o'oo's collection—Dandy Peter's, when the time came. That was to be on the feast-day, near at hand, though how near Parsons did not know.

Many a desperate adventure had Dandy Peter been through, and lived to tell of it. He had come to have an almost superstitious faith in his own luck. But his luck had failed him now, and hope was dead. He did not expect help from Black Furlley and his crew, rivals in the quest of the pearls of Aya-ua. He knew that they would not give him a thought.

If a gleam of hope crossed his mind, it was when he thought of King of the Islands, whose ketch, the Dawn, was anchored in the lagoon. He was Ken King's bitter enemy, but Ken would have saved him from these black demons, if he could.

But Ken King could not save him. He was a prisoner in the devil-doctor's hut, in a black village back of the bush, swarming with cannibals. Between him and the lagoon, where the Dawn rode at anchor, was a mile of tangled, thorny bush. If King of

Wu Fang's cunning enables him to win a prize for which many desperate men have sought—but in the moment of his triumph the boy skipper of the South Seas steps in and makes things hum!

By

Charles Hamilton

Ken King Steps In!

COMPLETE

the Islands landed, he would land only to find his death.

From without, where the bright sunshine burned down, came a cackle of native voices. It penetrated into the stillness of the dim house of death, and O'o'oo listened to it, and ceased to croon over the swinging head. He turned his old gnarled face to the low doorway, a glitter of anticipation in his eyes.

Dandy Peter looked in the same direction. The thought was in his mind, the icy fear in his heart, that it was the end—that that outbreak of excited cackling and howling meant that the savages were coming for him.

From where he sat he had a glimpse through the doorless opening into the village street outside, irregularly scattered with grass huts. There was a crowd advancing towards the house of death and Dandy Peter watched it with throbbing heart. It seemed to him that the howling of the blacks told of triumph, as if they were celebrating some victory. Ahead of the swarming blacks marched Tame'eto, the greatest chief of Aya-ua—chief of the most numerous tribe on the island and always a victorious chief till King of the Islands had defeated his war-fleet on the lagoon, and destroyed all his canoes. Now, judge by his looks, Tame'eto had been victorious once more.

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With yelling and howling and beating of drums, the swarm of blacks came on to the house of death. Then the swarm opened out, and Dandy Peter could see that they brought prisoners in their midst.

"Black Furley!" breathed Peter Parsons as he stared at the three white men who walked with bound arms and haggard faces.

He had seen Black Furley on Wu Fang's schooner, the Flamingo, outside the reef of Aya-ua. Now the burly freebooter of Lukwe was a prisoner of the savages, and with him were two of his men, Preece and Finn.

The two latter looked dazed, sunk in despair. Furley, blood-stained and weary, still carried his head high and glared at his captors with undaunted defiance.

With blows from the butts of spears, the three Lukwe men were driven into the devil-doctor's hut.

They staggered in, one after another, blinking like owls in the semi-darkness of the interior.

"So you're here, too!" said Dandy Peter. "You've had no better luck than I had, Jim Furley."

The Lukwe men stared round. They had not seen Parsons in the dimness. Preece and Dick Finn stared, but did not speak. They flung themselves on the earthen floor, slumping down in weariness and despair. Furley scowled, and muttered in his tangled black beard.

"They got us!" he muttered. "The durned black swabs—they got us! By hokey, if I had a hand loose, and a gun in it—"

He broke off, and slumped down wearily like the others. Outside, there was still howling and shrill cackling of triumph among the blacks. Old O'o'oo, grinning and chuckling, peered at the prisoners with his old bright eyes, and then turned back to his interrupted task. Squatting by the wood-fire, he turned and turned the swinging head and crooned happily. And the prisoners in the house of death watched him in the silence of despair.

"Throw a Line!"

UNDER the bright stars that glimmered on the lagoon of Aya-ua, under the glow of the Southern Cross, Ken King, the boy trader, paced the deck of his ketch Dawn.

Kit Hudson, his young Australian mate, lay asleep in a long Madeira chair. Koko, the brown-skinned boatswain, sat against the hatchway coamings, his ukelele on his bare brown knees, sleeping. On their mats on the forward deck, the Hiva-Oa crew, Lompo and Lufu, Tomoo and Kolulo, slumbered, and from the little galley came the snore of Danny the cooky-boy.

Ken King was keeping watch and ward while his crew slumbered. But each man slept with a loaded Winchester by his side, and King of the Islands had his rifle under his arm as he paced.

On Aya-ua the night had been still and peaceful. From the black bush at the back of the circling beach came no sound, and the boy trader might have fancied that the island was uninhabited. No figure moved on the beach that glistened in the starlight.

A cable's length from the ketch, the schooner Flamingo rode at anchor. Many times Ken's glance turned towards Wu Fang's ship, wondering what was happening aboard it.

He knew that the man for whose sake he had come to Aya-ua—Ben Keefe, the pearler—was a prisoner aboard the Flamingo, bound to the mast. And guarding him was the last of Furley's men, Harris, rifle-armed and ready to shoot Keefe should Ken attempt to rescue the pearler.

Keefe had been so bound since he had refused to guide Furley, Preece, and Finn to a cache of pearls ashore—pearls which he had been forced to abandon during a previous visit to the island, during which his crew had been massacred by the cannibals, and he himself had narrowly escaped with his life; pearls which had already lured Dandy Peter and Furley and his comrades into the hands of the cannibals.

When shouts from ashore had told Ken of the fate of Furley, the boy trader had rowed over to the Flamingo and demanded Keefe's release. But Harris had refused to hand him over. He clung to the hope that Furley, Preece, or Finn might have escaped the savages and be hiding in the bush. If neither of the men showed up by dawn, then he would hand Keefe over. And to avoid bloodshed, Ken had agreed to this.

Black Furley and his crew had seized the Flamingo for their cruise to the Island of Pearls, and kicked the black crew into submission. Wu Fang, the Chinese skipper and owner, they disregarded with utter contempt. But Ken knew, if Black Furley did not, that the Chink was a dangerous man.

Wu Fang was no fighting-man, but he was as treacherous as a snake and as ruthless as a tiger-shark. Harris gave him no more heed than he gave to one of the cockroaches crawling in the cabin, and for that very reason Ken could not help thinking that the cunning Chink might find an opportunity to turn the tables.

A sudden outburst of rifle-fire that broke the silence of the starry night with an effect of thunder seemed to confirm his uneasy doubt. A sound of startled, cackling voices—the voices of the Santa Cruz crew—floated across the water. Crack on crack rang from the repeating rifle; flash on flash gleamed in the shadows. Someone on the schooner was pumping out bullets, and Ken could only suppose that Wu Fang and his crew had turned on the Lukwe man, and that he was defending himself desperately.

Kit Hudson came out of slumber and the Madeira chair with a bound as the rifle shots rang out across the lagoon.

"What's that?" ejaculated Hudson.

"Trouble on the schooner," said Ken.

Koko and the Hiva-Oa crew, all awake at once, stared across the dim lagoon at Wu Fang's schooner.

The firing died away as suddenly as it had started. The excited cackle of the black boys could still be heard, but the trouble, whatever it was, was over.

"Looks as if they've got Harris!" said Hudson.

Splash! It was the sound of a swimmer in the water.

"White feller stop along lagoon, sar!" said Koko, his keen eyes piercing the shadows.

Ken King ran to the rail. From the starlit lagoon a white face stared up—the haggard, bearded face of the Lukwe man. He was swimming desperately.

"Ahoy, the ketch!" His panting voice came up. "Ahoy! Throw a line, for the love of Mike! Sharks—"

The panting cry broke off as the Lukwe man dived. A hideous shape glided in the water, the stars glistened on a black, gliding fin, and then on a white throat as the shark turned over to bite.

KEN'S rifle leaped to his shoulder. Crack! The bullet smashed into the throat of the shark, and the white was dimmed with red. In a flurry of fury, the shark thrashed wildly, tossing up spouts of foam. But the brute had missed his victim, and the face of Harris, white and drawn with fear, came up again close under the hull of the ketch. Hudson tossed a rope, the Lukwe man grasped it, and three or four pairs of hands dragged him up the side.

His feet had barely left the water when another and another black fin glided underneath, and there was a snap of fearful jaws. The lagoon in the shadow of the ketch was alive with sharks, drawn by the disturbance created by the wounded brute. But the snapping teeth missed the Lukwe man as he was dragged swiftly up. He sank down on the deck in a pool of water, almost fainting with exhaustion and terror.

"They nearly got me," he muttered thickly. "If I hadn't made this craft—" He broke off, shuddering.

"You're safe now," said King of the Islands quietly. "What's happened on the schooner, Harris?"

"The Chink—" breathed Harris. "He got me from behind, pitched me over the side, and blazed after me with my own rifle! He reckons that the sharks have got me! You'll stand by me, King of the Islands?"

"Ay, ay! But if you sail on this craft, Harris, you'll sail under orders," said Ken. "You came here with Jim Furley to steal Keefe's pearls, and I'm standing by Keefe."

"The game's up," muttered the Lukwe man. "The niggers have got Furley and Preece and Dick Finn. I'll be glad to take your orders if you'll keep me aboard this packet."

"That goes, then!" said Ken.

"I reckon them pearls will never be lifted," said Harris. "I'd like to see you lift anchor, King of the Islands, and run out to sea. I tell you you'll never lift the pearls—nor Keefe, neither. The Chink will take care of

him. I'd give all the pearls in the Pacific to be walking the beach at Lukwe this minute. We was fools to come to this island of devils!"

"The anchor doesn't come up yet, Harris," replied Ken. "Koko, get the whaleboat down."

King of the Islands stepped into the boat, with Koko, Lompo, and Kolulo. Hudson watched him rather anxiously.

"Look out for the Chink, Ken," he said over the side. "He's a rat—but a rat in a corner—"

"Leave it to me," said Ken. "We've got to get Keefe. I reckon Wu Fang isn't the man to put up a fight. If he does, there will be a dead Chink to go to the sharks of Aya-ua. You feller boy, you washy-washy along schooner."

The Kanakas pulled for the schooner, and Ken, rifle in hand, watched Wu Fang's vessel keenly as he approached it. He did not believe that the Chinaman would fight, but if desperation nerved Wu Fang to a conflict, the boy trader was ready. Once he had taken Keefe from the schooner, the Chink was welcome to keep his ship, which he had recaptured from the Lukwe crew. But he wondered whether, with the pearler in his yellow hands once more, the pearls almost in his grasp, the Chink would be desperate enough to face him in deadly strife. Standing in the whaleboat, finger on trigger, he watched the schooner as the Kanakas pulled.

Black faces stared at him as he came, but among the black faces there was no yellow face to be seen. Perhaps Wu Fang was watching from the shadows, ready for a swift, sudden shot! Ken's eyes gleamed over his rifle.

But no shot rang from the schooner. Only the Santa Cruz boys stared and jabbered as the whaleboat swept on and bumped on the hull of the Flamingo.

Out of the Cavity!

CROUCHED over the tiller of a gliding boat, Wu Fang looked back with his slanting eyes as two black boys pulled silently with muffled oars. In the bottom of the boat lay Keefe, the pearler, bound hand and foot, gagged with a strip of tapa. Hardly a sound was made by the two black rowers as they pulled for the dim beach of the lagoon. But from the distance astern came the sound of Ken King's whaleboat pulling from the ketch to the Flamingo.

Wu Fang grinned. Whether the Lukwe man had lived or died, he did not know, and cared little. But he had fully expected a visit from the Dawn's boat after the outbreak of firing, and he had lost no time. And as Ken's whaleboat bumped on the schooner, Wu Fang's boat thudded on the soft sand, and the Chinaman chuckled.

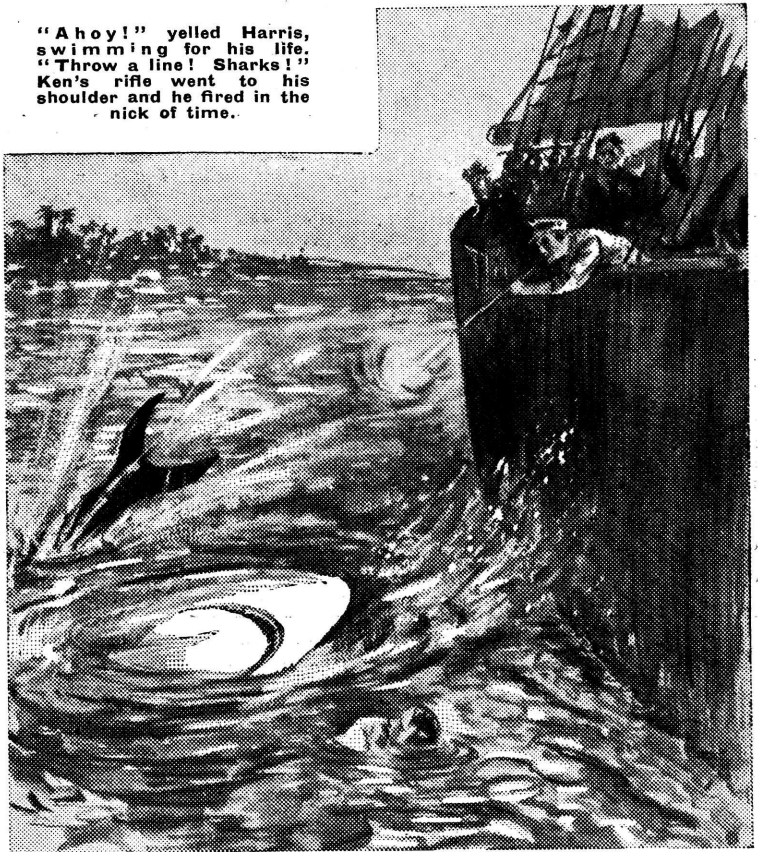
The black boys dragged the boat up the shelving sand, and Wu Fang leaped ashore. He muttered a word or two, and the blacks lifted out Keefe. The ropes on his legs were cut, and he stood on his feet.

The pearler was no coward. In his rough calling he had often faced danger and death. But his face was white, his eyes uneasy, under the look of the Chink. It was not the first time that he had been Wu Fang's prisoner, for it was the Chinese trader who had picked him up long ago, when he had fled in the lugger from Aya-ua after the massacre of his crew. It was the handful of pearls he had had with him then that had roused the greed of the Chink, and only his escape had saved him from torture. Now that he was in Wu Fang's hands again, Keefe knew that he was lost.

The little Chink approached him, grinning as he saw the pearler shrink from him. He removed the gag from the pearler's mouth.

"You plenty flaid along this Chinaman," he said in a low, soft tone.

"A hoy!" yelled Harris, swimming for his life. "Throw a line! Sharks!" Ken's rifle went to his shoulder and he fired in the nick of time.



"Me savvy, you plenty flaid along this Chinaman."

Keefe did not speak. With his hands free, he could have crumpled the grinning little villain in his strong arms. The Chink was not likely to give him a chance. His legs were freed to allow him to walk, but his arms ached in cruelly tight cords. The fear and horror in his coppery face drew a chuckle from Wu Fang.

"Plenty feller look findee feller pearl!" grinned Wu Fang. "Me tinkee this Chinese findee! What you tinkee? Black Furley plenty big fool—he stop along cooking-oven belong Tame'eto. Dandy Peter plenty big fool—he stop along cooking-oven all sance Furley! King of the Islands plenty big fool—he tinkee findee you along schooner—he no findee! Plenty

feller look along pearl—this Chinese findee.

"Along night, black feller stop along house belong him," he said. His slanting eyes swept the shadowy beach. "Me savvy! Along night, black feller no stop along bush! No see black feller, eye belong us, along we go findee pearl! What you tinkee?"

"We go findee pearl, you savvy!" added Wu Fang as Keefe made no answer.

Keefe cast a despairing look towards the masts of the ketch, dim in the starlight, far out on the lagoon. A shout might have reached King of the Islands, but it would have been futile. The boy trader could never have found him if he had followed and landed. A few steps would take him into the dark and trackless bush.

The two black boys stood looking on stolidly. Under Black Furley's bullying voice and heavy fists they had disregarded their Chinese skipper, and jumped to the orders of the Lukwe freebooter. But Furley was gone now, and they were Wu Fang's men again. Keefe had nothing to hope from them.

"You feller boy stop along boat," said Wu Fang. "You stop, along me comey back along this place." He took hold of the end of a cord looped round the pearler. "You walkee along this Chinaman," he said softly, and Keefe tramped after him as he moved up the beach.

Searching for the hidden cache of pearls in the darkness was a hopeless task. But the Chinaman did not

Ken King Steps In!

intend to search, he intended Keefe to guide him to the cache. And he was ready to use measures of which Black Furley would never have dreamed, and from which even Dandy Peter might have shrunk.

With the bound pearler at his heels, the Chink traversed the beach, where the ruins of the old camp of the Paumotu crew glimmered in the starlight. Like the other seekers of the pearls, he had no doubt that the cache was in the vicinity of the old camp.

On the edge of the bush he stopped to listen. But there was no sound from the darkness, save the faint murmur of branches and ferns in the wind from the Pacific.

"Me tinkee all light," murmured Wu Fang. "Black feller no stop along bush! Now you speakee! My fiend, tongue belong you! What place feller pearl he stop?"

Keefe breathed hard and deep. The look in the slanting eyes of the Chinaman struck ice to his very heart. But he could not bring himself to reveal the secret he had so long kept locked in his own breast.

Wu Fang's eyes glittered, and he drew the knife from his girdle.

"Me tinkee you speakee!" he murmured, coming closer to the pearler. "Me tinkee you no likee this Chinaman cuttee off ear belong you, along this feller knife! What you tinkee?"

Keefe muttered huskily: "You yellow demon! Follow me!"

He tramped into the bush, the grinning Chink following him, holding the end of the cord.

Five fathoms in the bush he tramped, by the way Black Furley and his men had gone the day before, and Dandy Peter earlier. He stopped under a great baobab tree. There were many signs, in torn and trampled branches and ferns, of the desperate fight of the Lukwe men in

the hands of the cannibals. Ever in the darkness, broken only by the glimmer of the bright stars through the branches above, they could be seen. Keefe looked round, but not at the traces left of Black Furley's last struggle. He looked at the glimmering yellow face and slant-eyes of the Chink. Wu Fang smiled.

"Feller pearl he stop along this place?" he asked softly. "Stop along trunk belong tree?" asked the Chink, understanding at once, as Keefe nodded.

"Ay, ay!" muttered the pearler hoarsely.

With the keen edge of his knife, the Chink slashed away creepers and vines that cumbered the great trunk of the baobab. Keefe watched him with a desperate gleam in his eyes. His hands were fast bound, but if he had a chance to get loose from the hold of the Chink, he was ready to take it. But Wu Fang was wary. He had wound the end of the rope round his left arm as he hacked and slashed at the creepers, and the trunk of the baobab was revealed.

THE Chink sheathed his knife, and peered at the trunk, as if he could see like a cat in the dark. His yellow hand glided over the rough surface, and he gave a soft chuckle of triumph as his fingers felt a soft spot. The cavity that had been cut in the baobab to hide the pearls had been plugged to make the hiding-place safer. Wu Fang had found it.

A suppressed cry came from Wu Fang. His hand came out of the cavity, with a tapa bag in it. His yellow fingers tore open the bag. Even in the gloom of the dark bush there was a glistening of the large round pearls with which it was packed. With blazing eyes, the Chink dived a hand into the bag and pulled out a heap of pearls.

For the moment, his attention

left his prisoner. The sight of the treasure, the feel of the smooth pearls running through his slim, yellow fingers, seemed to have intoxicated him. He grinned and chuckled, and fingered the pearls, forgetful of everything but the glimmering treasure. It was the chance for which Keefe had been watching.

With a sudden tug he tore the cord loose from the Chinaman's arm. Wu Fang started, almost dropping the precious tapa bag. He grasped the bag, closing it in his left hand. The knife flashed in his right, and he spun round at Keefe like a cat. And as he turned, the pearler kicked, his heavy boot catching the Chink on the thigh and spinning him over.

Wu Fang crashed down with a yell. Almost before he touched the ground, the pearler was plunging away in the dark bush, the loose rope trailing behind him.

Wu Fang scrambled to his feet, spitting with fury. His slant-eyes glared round for the pearler. But the desperate man was already deep in the bush. A crashing and rustling told the way he had gone. But the sound suddenly ceased. Aware that the sound would guide the Chink, Keefe stopped and flung himself down in the deepest shadow in the tangled bush. Wu Fang made two or three steps in pursuit and stopped.

For several minutes he listened. A cracking twig would have guided him, but in the darkness it would have been hopeless to seek the pearler by sight. He listened intently, but heard nothing. The pearler, with the fear of death on him, lay silent in blackness. The treasure was Wu Fang's now, and Keefe knew what to expect from the little yellow demon who had no further use for him.

Wu Fang at last turned away and limped back to the beach. The rustling of the twigs as he went came like music to the ears of the shuddering man hidden in the bush. Through the silence came the clatter of the Santa Cruz boys pushing off and dropping the oars into the rowlocks. The Chink was gone, and with him were gone the pearls. But the pearler gasped with relief.

"Where's Keefe?"

KING OF THE ISLANDS looked up at the black faces along the schooner's rail as Koko hooked on with a boathook. The Santa Cruz crew of the Flamingo stared at him, but gave no sign of hostility. Pipiteto, the black mate, ducked his fuzzy head with respect to the white man, and ordered the black boys to let down the accommodation ladder for the boy skipper of the Dawn.

Ken King, very much on his guard, and extremely puzzled, stepped on board the Flamingo. A swift glance round the starlit deck did not reveal the pearler or the Chinaman.

"Feller Wu Fang stop along this ship?" asked Ken.

"Cap'n belong me no stop, sar," answered Pipiteto. He waved a black paw towards the dim shore of the lagoon.

THIS WEEK'S PICTURE-STAMPS!

BRED to haul heavy sledges over the snowbound wastes of the Arctic—that's the sturdy Samoyed, shown in one of the splendid Picture-Stamps given away with this week's issue. Six dogs make up a full sledge team, and they can keep up a steady pace for vast distances. Shackleton and Scott, the Arctic explorers, both took Samoyed sledge-teams on their polar expeditions.

ALSO at home in the snow, though used for a different purpose, is the big St. Bernard. The monks of the Swiss hospice of St. Bernard send out these dogs with blankets and restoratives strapped to their bodies, to rescue travellers overcome by cold in the Alps. One dog, named Barry, is said to have saved the lives of forty travellers in that way.

A FIRST-CLASS return ticket to Australia on the Orient Line steamer *Orontes* costs £150. This 20,000 ton, 20,000 horse-power vessel, carrying Australian mails, does the double trip in ninety-six days. It recently took the Test Team to Australia.

LAATEST to join the R.A.F. is the Westland P.V.6 aeroplane, recently christened the Westland Wallace. It has a top speed that will leave behind anything but the very latest fighters and day bombers, and its tanks will hold enough petrol to carry its crew of two or three for 1,000 miles non-stop.

MEXICO has few railways and the inhabitants travel mostly on horseback. The Caballeros, the cowboys of Mexico, spend most of their lives in the saddle. Their quaint costumes are decorated with silver buttons and braid, and there is great rivalry to see who can own the most splendid costume.

THE Hush-Hush locomotive of the L.N.E. Railway has been called a "torpedo-boat on wheels." It is the first of all streamlined locomotives, and its unusual boiler shape and side-screens are designed not only to reduce head resistance, but to throw the smoke from the funnel clear of the driver's look-out windows.

Six Super-Stamps Also with This Week's RANGER and the MAGNET.

6 MORE PICTURE-STAMPS NEXT WEEK!

"Gone ashore?" exclaimed Ken. "What place feller pearler he stop?" It flashed into Ken's mind what had happened.

"He stop along Wu Fang, sar," answered Pipiteto, with another wave towards the beach.

King of the Islands understood now.

Wu Fang had gone ashore and taken the pearler with him. Evidently he had slipped away without losing a moment, probably even before the Lukwe man had been picked up on the ketch. He had taken Keefe with him, and that meant that he had gone for the pearls. Ken stared across the starry lagoon towards the beach. It was useless to follow and search along miles of dim beach for the Chinaman.

Ken wondered what was happening—what had already happened—in the darkness of the bush. If the little yellow scoundrel had harmed the pearler, vengeance at least was in his hands; and he resolved that vengeance should be unsparing. He was in a mood to hang Wu Fang at the boom of the ketch.

WU FANG must intend to return to his ship—he dared not remain ashore after sunrise, when the cannibals would be astir. He would return, and Ken could only wait till he came.

He called to his boat's crew, and Koko, Lompo, and Kolulo came on board the Flamingo. They were more than enough to keep the black crew in check if the Santa Cruz boys gave trouble when Ken came to deal with the Chink.

The boy trader did not have to wait long. There was a ripple of oars in the water, and a boat loomed up in the starlight, with two black boys pulling and the Chinaman sitting calm and impassive as an ivory statue in the stern-sheets.

At the sight of King of the Islands looking over the side, Wu Fang rose to his feet in the boat and made a deep bow. The boat hooked on, and the Chink came up the side. There was a smile on his yellow face, and he kow-towed to Ken with the deepest respect.

"O born-before-me," said Wu Fang. "This Chinaman velly please see handsome skipper along ship belong him!" He almost wriggled with ingratiating friendliness.

"Where's Keefe?" demanded Ken abruptly.

"That feller pearler he stop along beach, sar," answered Wu Fang. "Me no want that feller along this ship. He wantee go along beach, along findee pearl belong him; me takee that feller along beach, along boat. Along night, him tinkee black man no stop. He allee light, sar!"

Ken's eyes searched the smiling face of the Chinaman. What had happened ashore in the bush? From Wu Fang he was not likely to get the truth. The Chink had had no choice but to return to the schooner, and he had returned relying upon his wily Oriental cunning to see him through.

"If you've harmed him, Wu Fang, I am going to hang you!" said King

Fun With Model Gliders

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

TO get out on a hill-top with a model glider is a fine way to improve your knack of handling powered model aircraft. In our photograph the fellows have what might be termed "powered gliders"—that is, gliders fitted with small rubber motors supplying just enough power to enable them to reach the necessary height for a good long glide.

The machine at the extreme right of the photo is a real glider, of unique design. It has two rudders on the tailplane, two more on the wing-tips, and the fuselage, being flat, also acts as a stabiliser.

You can't have too much rudder on model gliders. They depend entirely



on air-currents flowing past them, and they must be constantly headed into the wind. Notice how most of the models in the photo have very slim fuselages—to save weight and air resistance. For the same reason, some of the models are not fitted with undercarriages or landing gear.

Although a glider must be constructed very lightly, it must also have a certain amount of nose-weight to make it glide towards the earth at a gradual angle instead of falling bodily. When in flight, this tendency to glide to earth is partly counteracted by the lifting power of the wind acting under the machine's wings, and the glider is therefore buoyed up in the air.

If insufficient nose-weight is fitted, a strong head-wind will stop the forward motion of the glider and blow the machine about like a dead leaf. Too much nose-weight is just as bad, because it drags the glider to earth and prevents the machine soaring and making long flights.

To make a glider soar well, the nose of the model should be kept heading into the breeze so that every puff of wind gets under the wings and lifts the glider. Then, when the wind drops, the glider volplanes gently earthwards.

of the Islands quietly. "Search this Chink, Koko! Me tinkee feller pear stop along him."

"Me no savvy feller pear, sar," said Wu Fang; and he made no resistance as Koko searched him for the pearls.

No pearls were found, and at a word from Ken the two blacks who had been with him in the boat were searched. But the result was the same. Then Koko stepped into the boat and searched it, but no pearls were hidden in the boat.

KEN felt himself baffled. He had taken it for granted that Wu Fang had led the pearler ashore to force him to reveal the cache. He had had no doubt that the Chink had done so, and laid his thievish hands on the bag of pearls. But if that was the case, Wu Fang had not brought the prize back to the schooner.

"Me no savvy pearls, sar," said Wu Fang blandly. "Me wantee go along sea, along schooner belong me. Me plenty flaid stop along this feller island. Me plenty flaid along Lukwe man."

"You're not sailing till I know what's happened to Keefe," snapped King of the Islands. "If he's a free man ashore, I shall see him at sunrise. If you've harmed him, I'm going to hang you, Wu Fang. I'm going to lay your schooner alongside the Dawn, and keep you till I get it clear."

For a second, a blaze leaped into the eyes of the Chinaman. But it was gone at once. Resistance was not in his power. Only cunning could save him, if indeed it could save him. He bowed his head submissively.

"S'pose you wantee this Chinaman stop along you, sar, this Chinaman plenty likee stop!" he said affably. "Me no flaid along black man, no flaid along feller Furley, s'pose you plectect this poor Chinee."

Ken turned away from him, and rapped out orders which the Santa Cruz boys hastened to obey. Koko kept a suspicious eye on the Chink. But Wu Fang stood smiling and submissive—the smiling submission that had so effectually deceived Black Furley and his crew.

The anchor was lifted, and the

Ken King Steps In!

schooner towed across to the Dawn. Ropes were flung to the ketch, and Lufu and Tomoo and Danny made them fast. Kit Hudson and Harris looked on, the latter fixing a glance on Wu Fang that disturbed, for a moment, the smiling calm of the Chink. It was not till he saw Harris on the ketch that Wu Fang knew that he had escaped the sharks.

"O horn before me," murmured Wu Fang, touching the boy trader's arm. "You protect this poor Chinese from bad Lukwe man."

"You've nothing to fear!" growled King of the Islands. "Don't touch me, you yellow scum." And the boy trader returned to his own ship.

"You'll leave the Chink alone," he rapped out to Harris, whose expression, as he glared at the Chink, was more than enough to alarm Wu Fang. "You're under orders here. You and your gang seized his ship like a crew of pirates, and he was in his rights in pitching you over the side and taking it back again. If Keefe's alive and safe, the Chink's free to sail away in his own ship as soon as I know. If you put a foot on the schooner, I'll have you thrown back where you were picked up from. I'm giving orders here, and there's going to be no more Lukwe freebooting."

The stars were paling towards dawn, and when the sun at last came up over the lagoon King of the Islands swept the circling beach with his binoculars in the hope of picking up the pearler. But only the sandy coral-powdered beach, the crawling land-crabs, and the black bush behind met his searching eyes. There was no sign of Keefe. Alive or dead, the bush hid his fate!

Lost in the Bush!

KEEFFE staggered to his feet in the blackness of the bush. Long he had lain there after the sound of the Chinaman's departure died away. His arms ached in the cords that secured them behind him and he was torn by the thorns through which he had recklessly plunged to escape the Chinaman's knife. But he lived, and Wu Fang was gone.

He stared round him in the dense darkness of the bush. Over his head, branches and vines were interlaced, shutting off every gleam of the stars. Round him was thick bush, tangled and trackless. In what direction he had fled he hardly knew. It was likely that he was not more than a dozen yards from the baobab-tree where the pearls had been hidden, but in the blackness of the tangled wilderness it might as well have been a dozen miles.

From the baobab, he could have picked his way to the lagoon—it was only five fathoms deep in the bush, and the way was familiar to him. But to find the baobab in the blackness was another matter.

His only hope was to get in touch with King of the Islands before the

new day came. With the first gleam of day, the natives would be astir, watching for a chance to snap up any white man who set his foot ashore, as they had snapped up Dandy Peter and, after him, Black Furlay and his men. If he was still in the bush when daylight came, he was lost.

Slowly, peering with haggard eyes in the dense darkness, the pearler moved from the tangled thicket where he had lain hidden. Chance might direct his steps aright, but he knew that in the darkness it could only be chance.

His feet sank in rotten vegetation,

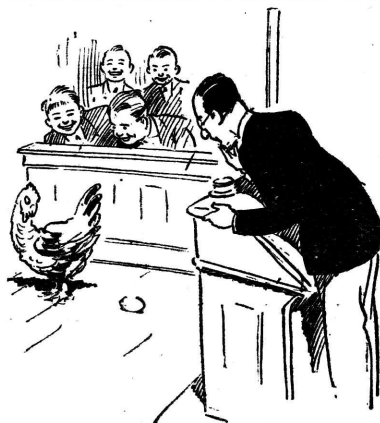
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thorns tore his clothing and his skin, drooping branches and hanging vines caught him at every step. Every moment he hoped to see the gleam of starshine on the lagoon through some opening in the bush. But only blackness was round him—no faintest gleam came to his haggard eyes.

He stopped at last, weary and streaming with perspiration, and threw himself down to rest. It was useless to continue. Had he been steering a right course, he would have



THE fellows were allowed to take their pets to school as models during drawing lesson. One day a boy turned up with a chicken which, after gazing all around, calmly sat down on the floor and laid an egg!

A prize of 5s. for the above has been awarded to R. H. Beechey, 784, Garratt Lane, Tooting, London, S.W.17.

emerged upon the beach before this. Every step might be taking him deeper and deeper into the trackless bush, farther and farther from his only hope of safety. With the dawn, the savages would be astir, but he had to wait for light.

The dawn was long in coming. Weary as he was, he dared not close his eyes in sleep. He waited and watched, till the blackness round him turned to a faint grey, and then to the dim twilight of the bush. The sun was up over Aya-ua, though no shaft of its light penetrated through the tangled roof over his head. But now he could see, and he got to his feet and wearily strove to pick a way through the woven thickets and tall tree-ferns higher than his head.

The sun rose higher, the heat intensified, and myriads of buzzing insects swarmed in the heavy, close air. A glimpse of the lagoon would have guided him, but it was never possible to see more than two or three feet from where he trod. But suddenly the lost man gave a gasp of relief as he caught sight of a rag of cotton on a sharp thorn. He remembered that a spear-like thorn had torn his arm as he ran from the Chinaman, and this was the place. After his weary wanderings in the maze of the bush, he was somewhere near the great baobab again.

He scanned the thickets eagerly for sign. A trampled fern, a trailing twig, a broken vine guided him, and almost sinking with exhaustion, he tottered at last under the baobab. For a minute he leaned wearily against the tree, and then stumbled the way trampled by many feet, down to the beach.

A startled cockatoo flew past him and disappeared, and for a moment he wondered what had startled the bird, but he was too dulled by weariness and the stifling heat to think. He stumbled on, the bush thinned and opened, and the shelving beach lay before him, a cable's length to the edge of the shining lagoon.

He gave a cry of relief and joy at the sight of the shining water and the ketch anchored far out, with the schooner alongside. On the ketch, he made out moving figures and saw one sturdy form in white ducks lifting a pair of binoculars. Again and again, since sunrise, had King of the Islands swept the beach with his powerful glasses, hoping against hope for a sight of the pearler. Now he was searching the shore once more and Keefe knew that he was seen. And over the schooner rail he had a glimpse of a yellow face that watched.

He saw King of the Islands lower the glasses and the Kanakas rush to lower the whaleboat. He was to be saved—the Dawn's boat was coming as fast as sinewy arms could pull. And even as he panted with joy and relief at the sight, a grasp was laid on his arm, holding him back from the beach. In almost stupefied horror and dismay, he stared round at a black, grinning face. Then, with one wrench of his powerful arm, Tame'eto swung him into the bush.

A groan of despair broke from the pearler. He could not attempt to

resist with his hands bound. He knew now what had startled the cockatoo. Tame'eto had been at his very heels as he stumbled from the baobab down to the beach.

"You stop along this big feller chief!" chuckled Tame'eto. "Me savvy white feller plenty too much! One time you run away sea, me savvy. This time you stop along Tame'eto."

From the direction of the lagoon came the sound of dashing oars. The whaleboat was pulling hard and fast for the beach. But Keefe knew that there was no hope. King of the Islands and his men might reach the shore, but they could not follow him into the bush swarming with cannibals.

Tame'eto was not alone. On all sides there were grinning black faces. The blacks seemed puzzled to find the white man's arms bound. They touched the tapa cords, and jabbered to one another in their own savage dialect.

A sharp order from the chief, and two of the blacks grasped Keefe's arms, and hurried him away into the bush. He gave a backward glance as he went, and saw Tame'eto and his bucks facing towards the lagoon, spears and bows and arrows in hand, ready for the boat's crew if they landed. He saw no more as he was led into a runway of the bush and hurried on.

He heard again the dash of oars, but the sound was receding. King of the Islands was not attempting a landing. It was madness to venture with so small a force into the swarming bush, where the black man was at home and where the stabbing spear and the whizzing knife were more deadly than the white man's rifle. Ken and his men would have been overwhelmed and massacred without hope or mercy.

If he could be saved, King of the Islands would save him yet. But throwing away his life, and the lives of his men, was not the way. King of the Islands had seen him, and knew that he was in the hands of the cannibals, and hope was not dead in Keefe's breast as he was hurried away through the bush.

STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER!



NOBBY CLARK, A.B., who served on the East Indies Station, had a contempt for all "forniners," particularly those whose skin differed in colour from his own. Out East in the Navy we engage natives for certain work aboard warships, and that was how a Somali boy, nicknamed Brassbound, came to belong to the cruiser in which Nobby served in the Red Sea.

One night Nobby and some shipmates engaged a shore-boat to return to their ship, and Brassbound found his way into the boat. The native boatman protested there were too many passengers, whereupon Nobby remarked to the mate:

"Aw, push Brassbound ashore and let him wait for the picket-boat. He's only a nigger."

A few days later Nobby came near to "losing the number of his mess." A tumble from the cruiser's boat-boom plunged him in the sea, and a shark glided towards him. Nobby dodged it, but another shot towards him from the opposite direction.

A moment later there was a tremendous splash as Brassbound, the Somali boy, jumped between the man-eater and its intended prey. The startled shark made off. The two fellows, the white and the black, were hauled on board—and Nobby gripped his rescuer's dusky hand.

"Only a nigger!" Ay, but a "white man" for all that!

The Admiral

Even when Keefe was flung into the house of death, the den of O'o'oo, the devil-doctor, hope did not desert him, though in the faces of his fellow-prisoners, Dandy Peter and the Lukwe men, he read black despair.

It was hard for King of the Islands to turn back, but he knew how to bow to stern necessity. His face was grim as he stepped again on the Dawn.

"They've got him, Kit—but we'll save him yet! We can't sail and

leave a white man to that! We've got to take our lives in our hands, shipmate, and face worse risks than we've ever faced before. We've got to put it through!"

And if courage and determination could do it, the shipmates of the Dawn were the men to put it through!

There's more rattling Adventure in these lively South Seas in another topping King of the Islands story Next Saturday!

ONE GUINEA

has been awarded for this photo of Evesham and District Scouts to T. OWENS, 56, Albert Road, Evesham, Worcs. He is seated second from right in the front row

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. Owens, in envelope marked "Claim," to the Editor, MODERN BOY

