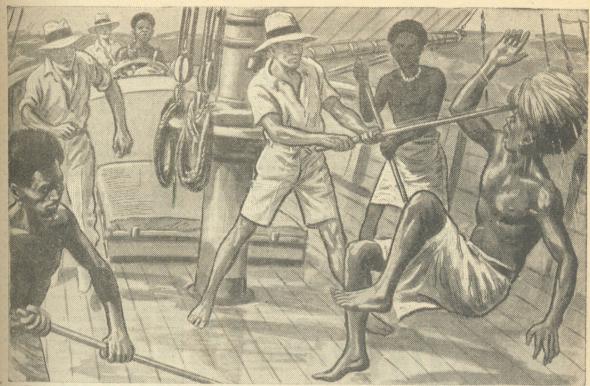
## GREAT MOTOR-RACING STORY | By SIR MALCOLM CAMPBELL!

6 COLOURED PICTURES
FREE INSIDE







The beachcomber, with an angry snarl, swung round the mop and landed it with a crash on Koko's woolly head.

# ON the PINK CORAL TRAIL!

The market value of pink coral is £5 an ounce—and KING OF THE ISLANDS is sailing in search of a South Seas island that is MADE of that treasure. And he doesn't find it easy going! By Charles Hamilton

A Dozen for Danny!

OU feller Billee!" roared Koko, the brown boatswain of the Dawn. "You feller Billee! You show feller leg belong you!

Koko's powerful voice rang from one end of the ketch to the other, and to a considerable distance over the shining waters of the Pacific. But there came no answer from below. If Billy the Beachcomber—the derelict whom King of the Islands, the boy trader of the South Seas and owner of the ketch Dawn, had taken off Tahiti -heard, he did not heed.

King of the Islands, standing by the binnacle, was looking up at the crowd of canvas carried by the tall cedar masts of his ketch. Kit Hudson, his young Australian mate, sat on the taffrail, hands in pockets. The wind came out of the north-west, and the mountains of Tahiti had long since vanished below the sea-line. It was morning on the Pacific, and a sky of cloudless blue gleamed over a sea of deep indigo.

"You feller Billee!" roared Koko again.

There was a cackle from the Kanaka crew. Lompo at the lielm, Kolulo

looked round at the boatswain, and down to the far-off, lonely isle of cackled. Danny the cooky-boy looked out of his little galley forward, but he did not cackle—he seemed uneasy.

Koko was growing wrathy. The beachcomber was a white man, and Koko a brown man. But the beach-comber was only a dingy derelict off Tahiti beach, whilst Koko was boat-swain of the Dawn, and a rather important person in his own eyes, and

"You feller Billee!" he roared angrily. "What name you no sing out along this feller Koko? Which way you no tumble up along deck, along me sing out along you, you plenty bad feller?"

"Tinkee that feller Billce stop along sleep along cabin!" ventured Danny the cooky-boy.

"What name he sleepee, along day he come?" hooted Koko. "You shut up mouth belong you, you feller Danny My word, me plenty too much mad along that feller Billee! S'pose he no tumble up, me go along that follow with lawyar cone!" that feller with lawyer-cane!"
King of the Islands frowned. He

had taken Billy the Beachcomber on board the Dawn because the French authorities had turned him out of scraping the whaleboat, Lufu and Tahiti, and Ken King had consented Tomoo swabbing the fore-deck, all to waste a week's time in running

Tunaviva, where the outcast believed that precious pink coral was to be

But good-natured as he was, Ken King was firm on one point-he was going to have no loafers on his ship. The outcast had to turn to while he was on the Dawn, and do a man's work for his rations.

"Rouse him out, Kit!" said the boy trader. Hudson smiled, and jerked himself from the dipping taffrail. Much as he thought of Koko, and little as he thought of the beachcomber, Ken did not want to see a brown man handle a white man. But the mate of the Dawn was ready and willing to do all the handling that might be necessary.
"Leave him to me, old coffee-bean,"

said Hudson, as he passed Koko and went down the companion.

King of the Islands glanced back over the taffrail at a sail that showed far astern in the direction of Tahiti. It was the brown, patched sail of a pearling schooner and since sunrise Ken's eyes had turned on it many times. The schooner was making the same course as the ketch. Likely enough, it was only some Tahitian schooner going down to Mangareva or possibly Pitcairn. But there was a

#### On the Fink Coral Trail!

suspicion in Ken's mind that Mr. Jam, an enemy he had left at Papeete, might have followed him to sea.

Hudson tramped down into the abin. The beachcomber had been given a berth on the lockers, and there Hudson found him, in his dingy, tattered shirt and his old duck trousers cut short at the knee, fast asleep. One grubby hand held an empty bottle. And as Kit Hudson realised the cause of the outcast's deep slumber, his brow darkened. The Dawn was a temperance ship and drink was absolutely "taboo."

Hudson stood staring grimly at the miserable wretch on the lockers. The beachcomber had not brought the bottle on board with him. He had jumped on the ketch in Papeete harbour in the rags he stood in. One of the Kanakas must have smuggled the bottle on board, and Hudson could

guess which. It was not the first time that Danny had offended, and he would be made to pay for it!

AKING a grip on the man's neck, Hudson tipped him sprawling on the floor. His eyes opened and he gave a gasping

"Burn my timbers! Hands off!" "Get on deck!" ordered Hudson.

Billy tried to sit up on the planks. But he rolled over again, helplessly. With a snort of contempt, Hudson hauled him bodily up the companion ladder and dumped him down on deck.

"What's the matter with him?"

exclaimed King of the Islands.
"What's been the matter with him
for donkey's years!" snorted Hudson. "What he was kicked off Tahiti for! Look at him!" King of the Islands looked, and his brow became as dark as his mate's. He rapped out an order to Tomoo and Lufu.

"You feller boy, you take bucket along water, swab that feller al-together too much!" The Kanakas entered on the task

with zest. Bucket after bucket of water was swamped over Billy, and he

gasped and gurgled and grunted.
"Danny!" roared Hudson. The
uneasy cooky-boy came along from the galley. "You bring bottle along this ship you givum along that feller Billee?" asked the mate.

"Me plenty solly, sar," mumbled anny. "Me tinkee likee bling one Danny. "Me tinkee likee bling one feller bottle along galley belong me, sar. That feller givum this Kanaka money belong him along that feller bottle, sar."

"Koko, you go along galley belong Danny, you look see feller bottle he ordered Hudson.

"Oh, sar, no feller bottle he stop!" howled Danny. "Me bling one feller bottle, sar, along galley belong me, and givum to feller Billee. This feller boy talk good talk along you, sar, along he say one feller bottle he

stop!" Unheeding the cooky-boy, Koko tramped along to the little galley. There was a clattering as he searched Danny's den for smuggled goods. He came out again with a bottle

under each arm.
"That the lot?" growled Hudson.

"Yes, sar! Two feller bottle he stop!" said Koko.
"Chuck them over the rail!" said Hudson. The bottles whizzed over the teak rail, and vanished into the depths of the ocean. Then the mate of the Dawn fixed a grim look on the

"You too much bad feller altogether!" he snapped. "What name you say one feller bottle he stop, along two-three feller bottle he stop?

"Me no savvy two feller bottle, sar!" wailed Danny. "No see um, eye belong me!"

"Give him a dozen, Koko!"

The brown boatswain selected a lawyer-cane, and Danny bolted back into his galley like a fat black rabbit into a burrow. The boatswam followed him, and there came a sound like the cracking of coconuts as Koko laid on the cane. Danny was still yelling when the boatswain came out of the galley with the cane tucked under his arm.

Billy's Lesson!

K ING OF THE ISLANDS stood looking at the beachcomber, who stood drenched and dripresting one shaking hand on the mizzen and blinking at the boy

Kicked out of Tahiti, Billy had been glad to ship on the Dawn. He had been overjoyed when Ken King consented to run down to uninhabited Tunaviva to test his story of the precious pink coral. But sailing on a temperance ship had been a blow to him, and at the first chance his besetting sin had found him out. It was likely to be a long time before the clean sea-winds blew the rotten-

ness out of Billy the Beachcomber.

"You rascal!" said Ken, in disgust. "Are you sober enough to listen to me?"



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The beachcomber scowled sullenly at the skipper and mate of the Dawn.

"Now listen to me!" snapped King of the Islands. "You're going to be rigged out in decent clothes, and you're going to keep yourself clean. You're going to pull and haul with the crew, and take your fair share of the ship's work. You've finished with loafing in the sun and putting poison down your neck. Got that?

"We make Tunaviva in a couple of days," said Billy. "You know what we're going to raise on Tunaviva. It will be the best week's trade you've ever done. I told you there was a fortune on Tunaviva, and you and your mate share when we raise the pink coral. That's good enough for you. Leave a man alone!" And with that he turned his back on King of the Islands, and slumped away towards the companion, to go below

Ken drew a deep breath. He had been aware that the man was worth-less—that whatever manhood there might once have been in him had been sapped away by drink—but he had been sorry for the dilapidated wreck of what had once been a white man, and had felt that he could not leave the miserable wretch at the mercy of the half-caste pearl-trader, Mr. Jam, who had twice sought to take his worthless life.

Cost and trouble the boy trader could tolerate, but not impudent defiance on his own deck. He stared after the slouching outcast, then glanced at the mate of the Dawn.

"I leave him in your hands, Kit," he said, and turned away to watch

the distant schooner.
"You couldn't leave him in better," grinned Hudson. The sturdy Australian stepped after Billy, grabbed his shoulder as the man was stepping into the companion, and twirled him round. "You're ordered on deck, my man!" he said tersely.

Billy's sunken eyes glittered at him. Ashore in Tahiti he had been one of the most quarrelsome and troublesome of the rough characters who haunted Yellow Charley's place. And it seemed that in his fixed belief that there was a fortune on Tunaviva, which the skipper and mate of the Dawn were to share if found, he now regarded himself as a person of some consequence. He glared at Hudson, lifted his grubby hand, and struck the grasp from his shoulder.

"Hands off, you!" he grunted.
"Burn my timbers! I'll be riding in my own car at Sydney after re've raised Tunaviva! You reckon I'm

raised Tunaviva! You reckon I'm going to be handled by a mate on a trading ketch? Hands off!"

"You're going to be handled, my man, and handled hard!" Hudson smiled grimly. "You won't be long on this hooker, I hope, but you'll be a different man when I'm done with you! Koko, hand me that lawyer-cane!"

The hostswain handed it over

The boatswain handed it over.
The beachcomber set his jaw as
Hudson grasped his shoulder again,
to twirl him away from the com-

panion to the open deck. Next moment the outcast, with a savage

snarl, struck at the mate's face. "That does it!" said Hudson, and, dropping the cane, he put up his fists and sailed into the beachcomber.

There was a cackle of excitement from the crew. A fight on the deck of the Dawn was a welcome enter-tainment to the Hiva-Oa boys. Ken King glanced round from the taffrail, but he knew that the beachcomber could safely be left in the hands of his mate.

The outcast, used to rough-and-tumble scrapping, wretched derelict as he was, seemed to have some pluck. He stood up to the mate of the Dawn for a full five minutes, during which he was knocked right and left. Then he was knocked sprawling on the deck, beaten to the wide, blinking and gasping. Hudson rubbed his knuckles, which had een damaged, and looked down at the outcast.

"That enough?" he inquired. "Then I reckon I'll let you off the lawyer-cane, but only if you jump to orders, my man! Get up! Get a bucket of water, and wash—sharp! Get your-self clean—a tiger-shark wouldn't touch you as you are! Jump to it!" rapped Hudson.

The outcast of Tahiti glared at him, but he was thoroughly thrashed, and there was hardly a kick left in him. Slowly he obeyed. Under Hudson's eye he washed and cleaned himself, shaved, and cropped his (Continued on next page)

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On the Pink Coral Trail!

tousled hair, and dressed in clean shorts, shirt, and hat that a Kanaka fetched up from the trade-room for him. The difference it made in his

looks was amazing.
"Good!" said Hudson at last.
"Now you look a white man of sorts. You're going to be in my watch, and if you don't turn out a good sailor-man, you'll wish yourself back in prison at Papeete. Bear a hand swabbing decks!"

BILLY looked at him, and breathed long and hard. But he had had his lesson-and he took a mop and joined Lufu and Tomoo swabbing the deck.

"Koko, you see that feller stop along work, eye belong you!" said the

mate of the Dawn.
"Yes, sar!" grinned the boatswain.
Kit Hudson walked aft to Ken. The boy trader was standing with his eyes fixed on the distant schooner.

"She's after us, Kit!" said King of the Islands abruptly. "I've shifted the course three times, and each time she's shifted to keep astern, like a shark astern of a pilot-fish. If she was making a port, she'd make her own course. That's a schooner out of Papeete, and she's followed us down to the south.

"She can't be following for anything but trouble! It must be that half-caste, Jam, in our wake! Goodness knows what the man's game is, but we know that he's got some interest in Tunaviva, though I'm pretty sure it's not that swab Billy's pink coral. With her spread of canvas she could run us down in this wind if she

"Why doesn't she, if it's trouble?" asked Kit.

"We told Jam we were sailing north —as we intended when we pulled out of Tahiti," answered Ken. "We've changed our minds since. I reckon he was watching to see if we made Tunaviva, and he's spotted it. He knows we can't be making anything else on this course, and he doesn't overhaul us because he's waiting to get clear of the French islands. Once in lonely seas, I fancy he'll overhaul us fast enough."

Hudson's face became very grave, and he said:

"That half-caste's a murderous villain, Ken, and he's got some game on, at Tunaviva, that he doesn't want a white man to spot. If they overhaul us in lonely seas, it means-fighting!

"He'll have a good crew on packet that size, and you can bet he's picked them for trouble," added Kit. "The swab seemed to have plenty of money—made by selling dud pearls, I suppose. We're landed with a hefty dose of trouble, for the sake of that swab of a beachcomber.

trouble again!" He's giving

Hudson spun round, staring along

Billy had ceased his labours almost as soon as the mate's back was turned. Koko was on him like a shot.

deck, all same white master he say!" he ordered.

The beachcomber, with an angry snarl, swung round the mop and landed it with a crash on Koko's woolly head. There was a yell from the boatswain as he sat down suddenly on the deck.

"Take that, you nigger!" growled Billy. "And if you give me any more of your lip-

He got no further. Hudson came striding along the deck, and with a swing of his sinewy arm, flung the outcast on the teak planks.

"Give me the lawyer-cane, Koko!" he cried, then laid it on good and hard. Not till his strong arm was tired did he cease, after which the outcast of Tahiti turned to and swabbed decks with the meekness of a lamb.

A Warning Shot!

ISTER JAM, the fat, oliveskinned pearl-trader, stood by the rail of the schooner, watching the ketch that fluttered like a sea-bird far away ahead on the (Continued on opposite page)

The said that has been all the said the

### The Schoolboys' Own!

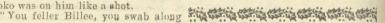
HO'D like to win a £135 talking-picture apparatus for his school—plus a super radio set for himself? Don't alk shout at once! These are just two of the fine prizes waiting to be won at the Schoolboys' Own Exhibition, which opens on December 28th at the White City, London, and lasts till January 13th.

Half a million fellows at least are expected to visit this Exhibition, and, from what I have seen of the lists of exhibits, every visitor is going to have a really GREAT time. There is plenty to interest everybody—full-size and model planes; the very latest wireless, telephone, tele-printer, and television apparatus; models of railway locos; magnificent stamp collections; racing cars; pets; working models of blast furnaces and machinery-something of everything, in fact.

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Now-what about it?



Pacific. His fat form, almost bursting from his white ducks, with the crimson cummerbund encircling his enormous waist, and his podgy face perspiring under his big panama hat, drew many grinning glances from the schooner's crew. But if Mr. Jam's aspect was amusing, there was nothing funny in the cold, hard ferocity of his olive face as he watched the ketch skimming the sea.

Captain Shuck, skipper of the Frisco Belle, sat on the hatchway coamings, smoking a black Manila cheroot and watching the fat man curiously. There were a dozen men on deck, and every man, from the skipper to the cook, was as tough a specimen as had ever sailed out of San Francisco.

The Frisco Belle was well known in Pacific waters. Pearl poaching and kidnapping were all in the day's work to Captain Shuck and his crew, and tales were told on the beaches of darker deeds—island traders robbed and plundered, and of piracy in lonely waters. It was because of his tough reputation that Mr. Jam had picked out Captain Shuck for the present

The Dawn ran on under full sail to the south-east, and like a hound on the track of a deer, the Frisco Belle followed. The schooner had almost twice the ketch's spread of canvas, and it rested with her whether to overhaul the ketch or not. So far, Mr. Jam had been content with keeping Ken King's ship in sight. But he turned from the rail at last, and looked into the glowing west. The day was drawing to a close. He came across to the stubbly-faced American skipper.

"Fall of night approximates," said Mr. Jam, in his remarkable English. "Great distance has elapsed from Tahiti, yess?"

"I guess we're getting clear of the islands," answered Captain Shuck. "I'll say that if young King figures that you're arter him, he will change his course after dark, and give you a

"Such suspicion has entered wary mind of this Mr. Jam," said the pearl-trader. "From course followed by ketch, what destination would appear to be desire to approximate?"
"Might be making Miraroa or
Mangareva, I guess. Might be making Pitcairn," answered Shuck.

"But on present course of ketch, possibility exists that youthful King makes Tunaviva?" said the pearl-

"Yep, if he wanted !" Shuck rose from the coamings, and stared across the sunset-reddened water at the ketch. "Likely enough; I guess. He sure ought to make more easting for Mangareva."

Mr. Jam had no idea of giving Ken King a chance to escape after dark, and to make Tunaviva at a later and safer date. His plans were laid, and captain and crew of the Frisco Belle were ready to carry them out, as they were paid to do.

"Order is to approximate to ketch," said Mr. Jam. "Youthful skipper will have no opportunity to remove himself after fall of dark with prompt dispatch to other places. No! You have numerous crew, and resistance of King of the Islands will be negligible trifle."

"I guess it's jest pie!" the Frisco skipper grinned. "King of the Islands won't be the first, by long chalks."

He threw away the stump of his cheroot, and shouted orders to the crew. Immediately more sail was shaken out on the Frisco Belle, and she surged more rapidly through the water, masts and spars straining under the load of patched brown canvas.

M. Jam resumed watching the ketch. Nearer and clearer she grew, till he could make out the three white men staring back over her rail, and the gazing Kanakas on her deck.

The pearl-trader recognised Ken and Kit instantly. But the third white man puzzled him. He knew Billy the Beachcomber was aboard, and expected to see the ragged, un-shaven individual he had been accustomed to see loafing and cadging on the beach of Tahiti. The new Billy-washed, shaved, and decently dressed-was something unexpected, and not until the schooner approached nearer, and he was able to see the third man's features more clearly, did Mr. Jam recognise them as those of Billy the Beachcomber-the man he had tried to kill!
"Great gophers!" yelled Shuck sud-

denly, as a puff of white smoke showed over the taffrail of the Dawn. The bullet from Kit Hudson's rifle whizzed over the schooner before the report was heard. It tore a gash in a brown patch in the mainsail.

"They're asking for it!" snarled

"They're asking for it!" snarled Shuck, gritting his tobacco-stained teeth. "They sure won't have any kick coming when they do get it!"

The shot from the ketch was a warning. It was not heeded. The schooner swept on, overhauling the Dawn hand over fist. Again came a puff of white smoke, and again a leaden messanger sang over the leaden messenger sang over the schooner. Captain Shuck roared to his crew. Five or six of the ruffians lined the rail, rifles in hand. The two vessels were now within easy range, and a good shot could have picked off men on either deck. The blaze of rifle-fire from the schooner pitted the sails of the Dawn. Jam rubbed his fat hands.

"I think with extensive confidence that youthful skipper will not approximate to Tunaviva!" he murmured, as the schooner rushed down on the ketch, to the tune of ringing rifles.

And Mr. Jam's confidence seemed to be well founded. King of the Islands had been in many a tight corner in his adventurous life in the South Seas, but never in a tighter corner than

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