

# The MODERN BOY 2<sup>d</sup>

EVERY SATURDAY  
Week Ending February 17<sup>th</sup> 1934  
No 315 VOL 13

REMARKABLE  
SCIENTIFIC  
NOVELTY

**FREE  
INSIDE!**

DIRECTION  
FINDER  
AND  
TIME  
INDICATOR

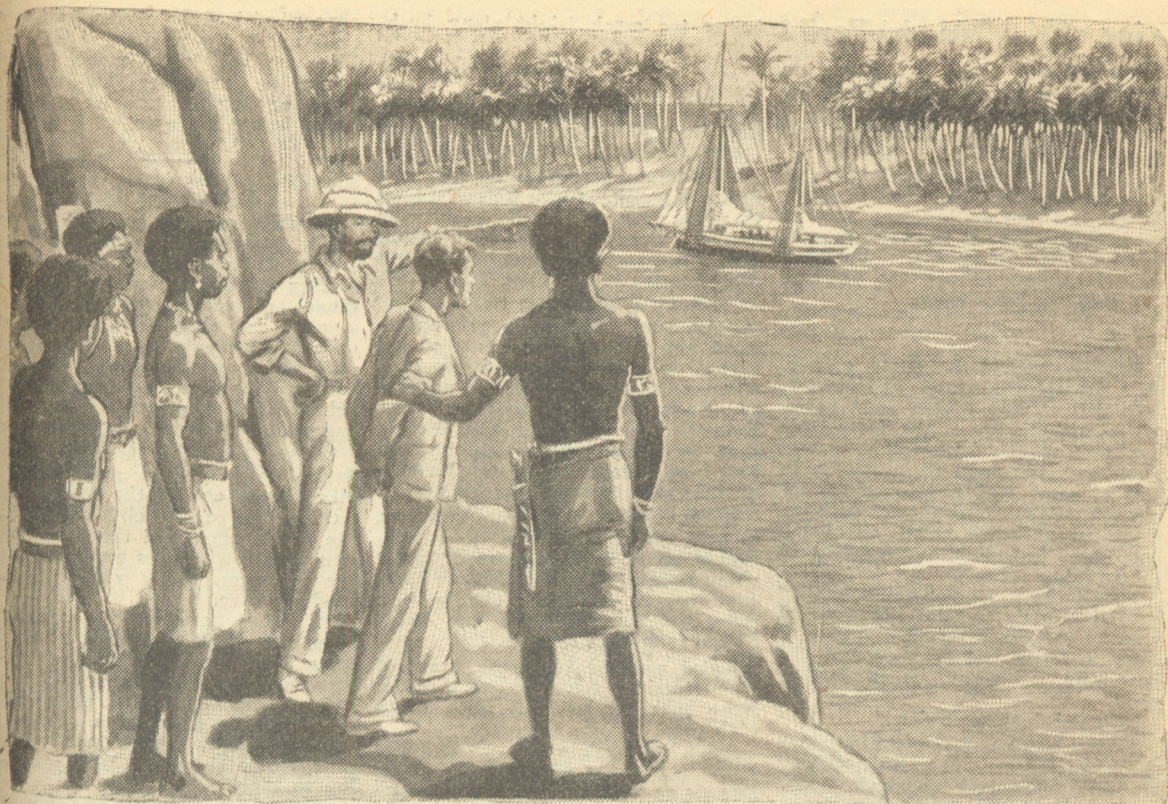


**The "Modern Boy" DIRECTION FINDER and TIME INDICATOR**

How to use the "Indicator"

TO FIND CORRECT TIME  
SET OUTER POINTER TO SUN THEN TURN INNER DISK  
UNTIL THE SOUTH POINTER IS ONE SOUTH. THE SOUTH  
POINTERS THEN SHOWS CORRECT TIME

TO FIND COMPASS POINTS  
POINT OUTER POINTER TO SUN. TURN  
UNTIL THE SOUTH POINTER POINTS TO S  
SO THAT BOTH COMPASS POINTS ARE IN  
THE TRUE POSITIONS AS SHOWN



Ken King's heart leaped at sight of his ketch riding at anchor far out across the shining lagoon.

## KING of the ISLANDS' PERIL!

Poor old faithful Koko is faced with a terrible choice—to surrender his master's ship or see KING OF THE ISLANDS perish before his eyes! . . . By CHARLES HAMILTON

### A Terrible Choice!

**K**OKO, the brown-skinned boatswain of Ken King's South Seas trading ketch, the Dawn, glanced across the shining lagoon of Tunaviva, and picked up the long razor-edged bush-knife from the hatchway coamings. He ran a brown thumb along the keen edge, his black eyes gleaming.

The wind from the south hardly ruffled the surface of the lagoon, and the ketch lay still at her anchor, the cable dropping like a bar to the coral sixty feet below. It was yet early morning, but the sun was hot. On the deck the Hiva-Oa crew lolled in what shade they could find and chewed betel. Danny, the cooky-boy, was crooning a native song in the galley.

Many days had the ketch lain idle in the lagoon of that lonely island, a far-flung speck of the Society Group. It was supposed to be uninhabited, but when King of the Islands had put in there to put to the test Billy the Beachcomber's story that the island was "made" of precious pink coral, mysterious inhabitants had captured Billy and fired on the Dawn.

Ken and his Australian mate, Kit Hudson, had gone ashore overnight to rescue Billy. But their plans had

miscarried, and Ken had been captured and Hudson thrown into the lagoon and carried out to sea. Then the men of the island—Pinto, a white man from Mindanao in the Philippines, and a crew of Santa Cruz blacks—had attacked the Dawn and been beaten off.

The lazy Hiva-Oa boys seemed to forget that the ketch was imprisoned in the lagoon, that the skipper and mate were gone, and that hostile eyes watched for a chance of capturing the Dawn. But the giant boatswain did not forget.

Koko's thoughts were with his white master, a prisoner in the hands of the secret men of Tunaviva, and his unsleeping eyes watched for his master's enemies.

From the rocks at the foot of the great basaltic cliff by the reef passage a canoe shot out into the sunny lagoon. Koko's eyes fixed on it and his grip tightened on the bush-knife—a weapon in which he placed more faith than in white man's firearms. But he puckered his brows in perplexity as he watched the canoe.

There was only one man in it—a black, fuzzy-haired Santa Cruz boy—paddling across the shining water towards the Dawn. It could not be another attack. The white man of Tunaviva, and his whole crew, had

been beaten off in the night, the bush-knife in Koko's sinewy hand taking toll of the assailants, and every hour Koko had expected them to return to the attack. Now a single black boy was coming, paddling a small fishing canoe.

Koko's suspicious eyes swept round the anchorage of the ketch. He was watchful for an attack from other quarters. But there was no sign of a boat or another canoe. The great lagoon was deserted, save by the seabirds that skimmed and dipped for fish. High up on the rock terrace on the high face of the cliff he made out the figure of Pinto, the white man of Tunaviva, watching the canoe as it glided over the shining water. The Filipino, tiny in the distance, was clear to Koko's keen eyes.

"You feller boy, you stir stumps belong you!" rapped out Koko, and the sprawling Hiva-Oa boys picked themselves up from the deck and stared across the rail at the approaching canoe. "You takee feller gun, hand belong you!"

"Us feller shootee along gun, along black feller along canoe come along this ship!" said Lompo, picking up a rifle. The other brown boys followed his example. Blazing away with firearms was sheer joy to the Kanaka mind.

## King of the Islands' Peril!

"You shootee along gun, along me sing out!" rapped Koko. "Along me no sing out, you no shootee!"

Unwillingly, the Hiva-Oa boys rested the butts of the rifles on the deck. Not that the Santa Cruz boy in the canoe would have been in much danger had they opened fire. Even at point-blank range it was even chances whether they hit or not. But they were very keen to pull the triggers and hear the rifles bang.

KOKO watched the canoe grimly. It paddled nearer and nearer, till it was within easy knife-throw, and the life of the Santa Cruz boy was at the boatswain's mercy. The black boy held up a paddle in sign of peace, but Koko's grim brow did not relax. A couple of fathoms from the anchored ketch, the black boy ceased to paddle, and stood up in the swaying canoe.

"Big feller Koko stop along ketch!" he called out, in the high-pitched voice of the Black Islander.

"This feller Koko!" answered the boatswain. "What name belong you?"

"Name belong me Ko'oo!"

"What name you come along this ship, you feller Ko'oo! Knife belong me killy you plenty too quick!"

"You no killy this feller Ko'oo, along he comey along ketch, talkee good feller talk along you!" said the black boy. "White master belong me, name belong him Pinto, makee this feller Ko'oo comey, along me talk along you, you feller Koko."

The black boy watched like a cat while he spoke, ready to dodge the knife if it came. But Koko held his hand. He understood that Ko'oo was bringing a message from the white man of Tunaviva, and he was willing to hear it. Since the defeat of Pinto and his crew, Koko's faithful heart had ached with anxiety for the safety of his white master, a prisoner in their hands in the cavern high up the basaltic cliff.

"You talk, mouth belong you!" snapped Koko. "Me hear, ear belong me."

"White master Pinto he say, feller King of the Islands stop along him, along cavern along cliff!" said Ko'oo. "White master Pinto say, you bring feller ketch along beach, along he takee feller ketch."

Koko gave a scornful laugh. "This feller Koko 'bey order along white master belong him," he answered. "No 'bey order along feller Pinto. S'pose feller Pinto wantee takee ketch, him comey along ketch, s'pose

he no too much fright along bush-knife belong me!"

"That feller Pinto too much fright along bush-knife belong you," Ko'oo grinned. "Two feller go finish along that feller knife, along night. Feller Pinto no likee plenty too much."

"White master Pinto he say you look along cliff," added Ko'oo. "Close-up, you see feller King of the Islands. Rope stop along neck belong him. S'pose you no givum ketch along white master Pinto, feller King of the Islands go finish along rope!"

Koko caught his breath. He understood now. The fierce lesson of the night had been enough for the men of Tunaviva. They were not anxious to attack the ketch again. Either Koko had to surrender Ken King's ship, or see his white master dangling from a rope on the rock terrace. A blaze of fury came into his eyes.

Ken's last order to him had been to hold the ketch against the enemy, regardless of what happened to his white master. But now that he knew what was to take place, that was an order the faithful Koko was likely to find it difficult to obey.

Ko'oo watched his fierce, troubled face—watchful for a whizzing knife. Koko spoke at last, his voice husky with rage.

"You go back along white feller Pinto. You say s'pose King of the Islands go finish, that feller Pinto go finish close-up! This feller Koko cut off head belong him, all same Solomon Island boy!"

Ko'oo, glad to get his perilous errand over, paddled away rapidly in the canoe. The little craft shot across the lagoon to the base of the great cliff, and vanished from sight among the rocks there. Koko's keen eye followed it, and he knew that there must be some channel in the cliff into which the canoe had gone, doubtless communicating with the cavern high up which was the den of the men of Tunaviva. The Hiva-Oa boys were exchanging startled glances.

"Tinkee feller King of the Islands go finish close-up!" murmured Lufu. Koko stood with his brown hands gripping the rail, watching. His eyes were fixed on the rock terrace high up the cliff, facing the lagoon. Presently he discerned the figure of Ko'oo coming round the cliff from the reef-passage side, to join the white man who stood there.

Evidently there was an interior way up the cliff from the water-channel below where the canoe had gone in. The Hiva-Oa boys gave no heed to it. But Koko, as he often said, was no common Kanaka. When his white master's safety was at stake, nothing escaped Koko's eyes.

With eyes almost as keen as those of an albatross, the brown boatswain of the Dawn watched. He saw Ko'oo join the white man, and saw the gesture of rage from Pinto that followed. Then the two disappeared together along the rock terrace, round the great bulge of the cliff above. They were gone from his sight, but he knew what was to follow!

With a tormented heart, the boatswain watched for the black crew to

appear, with King of the Islands in their midst, the rope round his neck. Then he had to make his terrible choice—to surrender his master's ship, or see his master done to death before his eyes!

## A Dash for Life!

"BURN my timbers! If only a man had a smoke!" groaned Billy the Beachcomber.

King of the Islands gave him a glance of contempt, but did not speak. In the little cave that opened off the great cavern in the cliff, the boy trader sat with his back to the rock, his hands bound behind him. His face was pale and haggard, bitter with helpless anger.

In the cavern a number of the Santa Cruz blacks were loafing; others were out on the rock terrace on the face of the cliff overlooking the reef passage and the sea. Every now and then glances were turned on the prisoners, dimly visible in the shadowy cave.

"I ain't smoked for days!" mumbled the beachcomber. "And I come here to make a fortune!" He groaned. "If I'd known this gang was on Tunaviva, I'd never have asked you to give me a chance to raise the island, pink coral or no pink coral, skipper! And you can lay to that!"

The outcast of Tahiti was thinking only of himself and his misfortunes. He had little or no thought to waste on the disaster that had overwhelmed the boy traders who had befriended him. Indeed, his feeling towards them was rather of resentment than anything else.

On board the ketch Billy had had to wash and shave, and turn to and do a man's work. He had consoled himself with the hope of finding precious pink coral on Tunaviva.

All he had found was the mysterious gang who seemed to have taken possession of the lonely island and to display bitter hostility to anyone else who sailed into the lagoon.

"Belay your jawing tackle, man!" snapped King of the Islands. "What's the good of grouching?"

"The game's up!" mumbled Billy. "They got me, and they got you, and they've chucked your mate into the sea—and your niggers won't keep them long from getting hold of the ketch. And when that half-caste swab, Mister Jam, raises the island, it's 'go finish' for both of us! Burn my timbers! I wish you'd left me where you found me on the beach at Tahiti!"

"You were kicked off Tahiti!" growled King of the Islands. "And I wish I'd let you be kicked on to any craft but mine!"

"There's a sail in the offing!" the beachcomber mumbled on. "I heard one of the niggers singing it out. A lugger, I reckon. That means that that swab Jam is coming back—no other vessel would be likely to sail into these waters! And when he comes—" Billy broke off with a shiver. His dread of Mr. Jam, the half-caste dealer in false pearls, was deep.

## TO READERS IN THE IRISH FREE STATE

Readers in the Irish Free State are requested to note that when Free Gifts are offered in this publication they can only be supplied when the article is of a non-dutiable character

The half-caste had made two attempts on the beachcomber's life, and only the intervention of Ken King had saved him. And when Ken had sailed for Tunaviva with Billy on board, Mr. Jam had pursued him in a schooner. But the schooner had been wrecked on hidden reefs.

There was a tramping of footsteps in the cavern, and Pinto came up to the little cave in the cavern wall. His eyes glistened down at King of the Islands. Taking no notice of the beachcomber, he rapped an order to the blacks, who lifted the boy trader to his feet and led him out.

King of the Islands was led down the cave to the opening on the rock terrace, where the sunshine glimmered in. Following Pinto, the blacks led him out on the rock terrace, and he blinked in the blaze of the tropical sun after the shadow of the cave.

His heart leaped at the sight of the shining lagoon and the ketch riding at anchor far across it. Distant as it was, he could pick up every graceful line of the Dawn and discern the figures of the Hiva-Oa boys on her deck. One gigantic figure that towered over the rest he knew was that of the faithful Koko. All of them were lining the rail, looking towards the cliff.

"Look!" said the man from Mindanao, with a mocking grin. "Look, senor, on your ship—you will not live to look on it long unless it is handed over to me by your crew!"

Ken made no answer. He looked at the ketch, then turned his eyes away to look at the precipice over

which his mate, Kit Hudson, had been hurled. Little hope was in his heart that the brave, stalwart Australian yet lived.

If he had not been crushed on the teeth of the coral when he was hurled from the high cliff, he had been carried out to sea on the tide, drowned helplessly in the vast ocean. It was well for the grinning Filipino that Ken's hands were securely bound.

"You feller Ko'oo!" rapped Pinto. "You get feller rope, stop along neck belong that white feller!"

Ken's eyes blazed as the loop of the rope was placed round his neck. He knew what the intention of the man of Tunaviva was. Unless Koko surrendered the ketch, he was to be hanged within sight of his crew!

Even to save himself from that fearful fate, Ken would not have given the order to his boatswain to surrender. But he hardly doubted that, to save his white master's life, Koko would yield the ship to the men of Tunaviva, regardless of orders. Pinto was counting on it.

As the blacks were about to lead him along to a point facing the lagoon, there was a sudden call from the summit of the cliff, twenty or thirty feet over the rock terrace.

Pinto stared up. From high above an excited face looked down.

"What name you sing out, you feller Tokoloo?" snapped Pinto.

"This feller sing out, sar, along signal stop along lugger!" answered the watchman on the cliff-top.

Pinto started.

"You savvy feller signal along lugger?" he demanded.

"Yes, sar, me savvy! Feller signal belong Mister Jam, sar," answered Tokoloo. "Me savvy that signal plenty too much, sar."

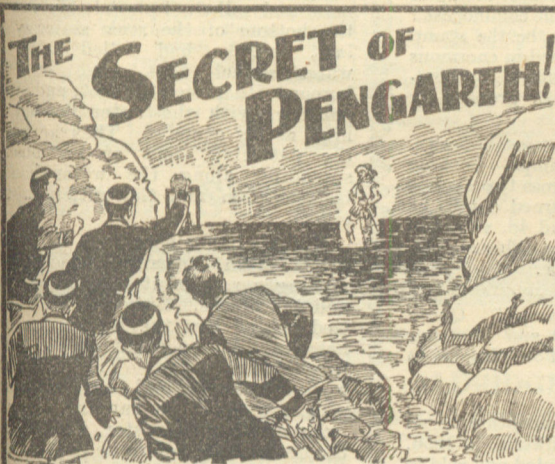
Pinto turned to the blacks. "You stop along this place, along white feller he stop."

LEAVING King of the Islands standing with the Santa Cruz boys, the man from Mindanao stepped to the cliff and clambered up. Above the rock-terrace the basaltic cliff rose almost as steeply as a wall, but there were ledges and projections that gave hand-hold and foot-hold. Pinto was evidently accustomed to the path. He clambered up like a monkey, and disappeared over the top of the cliff.

Ken King stood among the blacks, the loose rope dangling over his shoulders. He had already heard that a lugger was in sight from the solitary island. Now he knew that it carried his bitter enemy, the half-caste trader in false pearls. Pinto had ascended to the summit of the cliff to answer the signal from Mr. Jam. On the high summit he was out of sight from the rock-terrace.

There were nine or ten of the blacks round Ken, and his hands were fast tied. But they were not holding him now—all of them were staring up the cliff the way their master had gone.

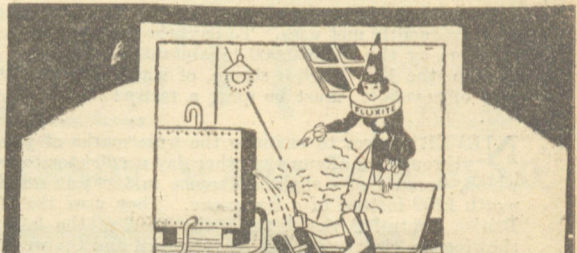
Far off, on the ketch, Koko's eyes  
(Continued on next page)



To Harry Wharton & Co., the popular chums of Greyfriars, Pengarth House, on the rocky coast of Cornwall, is an ideal place to spend a vacation. But little do they realise that a strange mystery awaits them at the sinister old house—for it is a place that is feared—haunted by an old-time sea captain! Read all about their big-thrill adventures in Cornwall. Get this grand book-length yarn to-day.

A Book-Length Yarn for 4d. Only!

Ask for No. 213 of  
**SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY** Now on Sale at all News-agents and Bookstalls, 4d.



"We're Fluxite and solder—the reliable pair—Famous for Soldering—known everywhere! See that Fluxite and Solder are always by you—in the house—garage—workshop—anywhere where simple, speedy soldering is needed."

**ALL MECHANICS WILL HAVE**  
**FLUXITE**

**IT SIMPLIFIES ALL SOLDERING**

All Ironmongers sell Fluxite in tins, 4d., 8d., 1/4, and 2/8. Ask to see the FLUXITE POCKET SOLDERING SET—complete with full instructions—7/8. Ask also for our leaflet on HARDENING STEEL with Fluxite.  
FLUXITE LTD (Dept MB) Rotherhithe, S.E.16

**FOR ALL REPAIRS!**



## King of the Islands' Peril!

were glued on him—watching! The Santa Cruz boys, with the careless indifference of their race, hardly regarded him now that their master's eye was off them. Not that it could have crossed their minds that he was thinking of escape. No man with his arms bound could have clambered down the steep cliff without falling and breaking his neck!

But Ken was not thinking of that. He was thinking of the rock-staircase in the interior of the cliff, down which he had been taken to the lagoon in the night when Pinto had vainly striven to force him to order his crew to surrender.

Was there a chance? Koko was watching, and would help him, if and when he could! In the innumerable black fissures and hollows that honey-combed the great cliff he might find hiding—for a time! It was a chance—a remote one—but the alternative was certain death. Even if the man from Mindanao spared him, Mr. Jam was coming—and there was no more

mercy in Mr. Jam than in a tiger-shark. Ken made a movement towards the mouth of the cave. Immediately, Ko'oo looked round at him.

"You stop along this place, you white feller!" he said, and stretched out a black paw. Before it could touch the boy trader, Ken made a desperate bound towards the cavern's mouth. There was a shrill yell of surprise from the blacks.

"Catehee that white feller!" shouted Ko'oo.

In a body, the blacks rushed after King of the Islands. Even yet they did not realise that it was a desperate attempt to escape. But he was running back into the cavern, and their master had ordered them to keep him on the rock-terrace, so they ran to drag him back.

Ken raced into the cavern, with the crew of blacks whooping and howling at his heels. In the cave a couple of black men started up from mats and jumped in his way.

Ken lowered his head. It crashed on a bare black stomach, and the Santa Cruz boy went spinning. At

the same moment the other man grasped the boy trader with a sinewy black hand. With all his strength, Ken kicked at a bare black shin, and the black boy, with a howl of agony, released him and staggered away.

Behind the boy trader, the pursuing blacks were almost in reach. He bounded on desperately up the great cavern—past the small cave, where Billy the Beachcomber stared at him in amazement as he flew by.

Farther up the cavern the twilight deepened into dark, where the sun's light did not reach. Somewhere there in the darkness was the irregular staircase cut in the rock that led down to the water-channel under the cliff, communicating with the lagoon.

Ken could not see it—but he found it all right. The ground suddenly vanished from under his running feet, and he stumbled over and rolled, bumping helplessly from rocky step to rocky step.

Behind and above him sounded the excited cackle of the blacks. He heard the patter of naked feet on the rock steps. Bruised, battered, breathless, rolling helplessly with his hands bound, the boy trader stopped at last on a broad step far down.

He staggered to his feet. The darkness was absolutely black. He could see nothing, but he could hear the naked feet of the blacks dropping from step to step after him. He had to carry on or be captured—and he groped with his feet for the edge of the step, and jumped!

Again he lost footing in the darkness, and rolled. Splash! He was at the bottom of the rock stairway at last, and he had rolled into the water-channel that gave on the lagoon. He gained his feet, and stood panting, with the water flowing as high as his armpits. Then he heard the pattering steps of the blacks, spreading along the water-channel between him and the outlet on the lagoon.

Had his hands been free, Ken could have swum towards the outlet, making a race of it between himself and the blacks. But with his hands tied behind him the boy trader was helpless. All he could do was wade through the water. That was slow work, and he realised that the blacks, who seemed to be running along a ledge circling the water, would reach the outlet long before he could. And once they reached it, no doubt some of them would remain on guard, whilst the remainder searched for him. He was trapped and helpless, and it seemed just a question of time before his captors found him again.

For the moment the darkness saved him. But there was no escape for him from that dark den under the cliff of Tunaviva!

## Astonishing Things about Stamps

THERE are 56,000 different stamps to collect, according to the latest edition of the "Standard" Catalogue. This includes varieties of watermark, but not of perforation or shade. Ruling these out, probably 40,000 "face different" would be nearer the mark. How many are in your collection?

ALMOST every stamp collector knows that the world's rarest stamp is the unique 1 cent of British Guiana 1856, but which is the commonest? Once upon a time a 10 pfennig German was considered to be the stamp most frequently met with. To-day, the 3 cents U.S.A. is used in enormous numbers by the 120,000,000 inhabitants of that vast country. By comparison, the 1½d. English stamp, of which a mere 17,000,000 are sold by post offices daily, must be quite a rarity!

NEVER neglect to examine the watermarks of your stamps. Looking through an album the other day a collector came across two stamps which, because of a slight difference in the watermark, turned out to be worth £200 instead of a few pence. They were the 2d. and 4d. values of British Central Africa bearing the head of the late King Edward VII, showing multiple instead of single crown and CA watermark.

WHOSE likeness occurs most frequently upon stamps? Queen Victoria's! During the sixty years between 1840 and 1900 her portrait appeared upon practically every variety of stamp of our Empire, to the number of 3,193.

THE smallest stamp in the world is the ¼ schilling denomination issued by the old German Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, in 1856. Measuring less than half an inch square, it was normally printed and sold in blocks of four representing 1 schilling, but could be divided into fractions for use on newspapers and the like.

BY contrast, the largest stamp is the old Chinese express delivery label, which measures 7¼ inches by 2¼ and is divided by perforation into four parts, with the design of a flying goose upon a background formed by the words "Chinese Post Office" repeated very many times.

THERE are any number of black stamps, but can you name a white one? The only example of an all-white stamp is the ½ anna Indian stamp of the "Scinde District Dawk" (or Post), which is embossed in colourless relief upon white paper.

WHAT single country has issued the most stamps to date? According to "Gibbons," it is the U.S.A., with more than 1,750 varieties to her credit. Turkey is a close second, with about 1,150, whilst Persia and Spain vie for third place with 850 or so apiece. The Indian native state of Wadwahn claimed a solitary ½-pice stamp, long since obsolete.

*Here's a terrible fix for the Boy Skipper! Unless a miracle happens he is—doomed! Give YOUR order TO-DAY for Next Saturday's MODERN BOY, so that you will be CERTAIN of learning what happens then to King of the Islands!*