

EXTRA "ARMAMENTS RACE" STAMPS FOR YOU THIS WEEK!

MODERN BOY

No. 19

JUNE 25th, 1938

EVERY SATURDAY

2^D

EIGHT GRAND
STORIES

**FLOOD-FIGHTER
NICK** *Speed Story with a
Difference!*
By CLIFFORD CAMERON

Fossy, the Dude Sheriff, in
**THE SKUNK
HOLE SWELLS**
By GEO. E. ROCHESTER

*Sky-Detective Juggers' Toughest
Case—*

**MENACE OF
THE X WAVE**
By JOHN TEMPLER

**IT'S UP TO
KOKO!** *Fine King of the
Islands Yarn*
By CHARLES HAMILTON

"Twins" of the Talkies in
**THREE GREEN
LIGHTS** By COLIN
ROBERTSON

Story of the Film
THE CHALLENGE

True Adventure—
CITY OF GOLD

MANY SPECIAL FEATURES



CHAMPION OF THE MAIN: Great Pirate Story by FLYING-OFFICER JOHNS
THRILLING ADVENTURES ASHORE THIS WEEK!

It's Up To Koko!

By CHARLES HAMILTON

The native bo'sun of the Dawn boasted that he was no common Kanaka, that he had brains. Now was his chance to prove it, for overnight Ken King and Kit Hudson had vanished on the mysterious Island of Silence

The Fourth Prisoner

KEN KING stood breathing rage, trapped in the deep cellar under the trader's bungalow at Lalua. Strong and sturdy as he was, he had exerted his strength in vain in a desperate effort to lift the trapdoor held in place by the enormous block of coral. He panted from the effort he had made, and he knew that it was useless to make it again.

He heard the heavy tramping of Ahab Pinner's boots on the floor above his head. The tramping died away. The trader of Lalua had gone out into the veranda in front of the bungalow—doubtless to keep watch on the ketch Dawn anchored in the lagoon.

"The swab!" muttered King of the Islands. "The swab!"

The boy trader had his finger now on the mystery of Lalua. He knew that there was a prisoner in the cellar, but in descending to go to his rescue he had himself been trapped.

But his ketch was in the lagoon, with Kit Hudson, his mate, and his crew aboard. The desperado could hardly hope to get away with this! Desperate as he was, he was only one man, against the mate and crew of the Dawn.

King of the Islands turned away from the ladder, and picked up the candle. Picking his way among the boxes and kegs that crowded the space among the coral blocks that supported the floor-joists above, he moved in the direction of the scuffling sound that told him where the prisoner lay.

Even now, on the verge of discovering the secret of Lalua, he was more puzzled and mystified than ever. So far as he knew, Ahab Pinner was the new trader sent out by the Pacific Company to take over the station from Sullivan, the agent he had seen on his last visit to the island. Why Pinner was so savagely determined that no white man should set foot on the island was a mystery—and the mystery was only deepened by the discovery that there was a prisoner hidden under the trader's bungalow. For who could the prisoner be—and why was the trader keeping him there? The trader's business was to oversee the natives working in the coconut plantations, to have a cargo of copra ready when a ship, once in six months, called at the island—and what else could be going on had been a puzzle to the shipmates of the Dawn. The answer to that puzzle was that Ahab Pinner was keeping a prisoner in the store cellar under the bungalow—but the answer was more astonishing than the puzzle!

Holding up the candle, King of the Islands stepped among the shadowy kegs and cases, peering before him as he went, till he reached the extreme end of the long wide space under the bungalow. Two figures caught his eyes then—one stretched on the floor, the other propped against the coral blocks that formed the cellar wall.

The former was a native—a brown boy of Hiva-Oa—and Ken, seeing him first, recognised him as Tototo, the house-boy, a relative of Danny, the cooky-boy of the Dawn.

Tototo was bound hand and foot, and a gag of tapa cloth was fastened in his mouth. His dark eyes gleamed up at King of the Islands in the flickering candlelight.

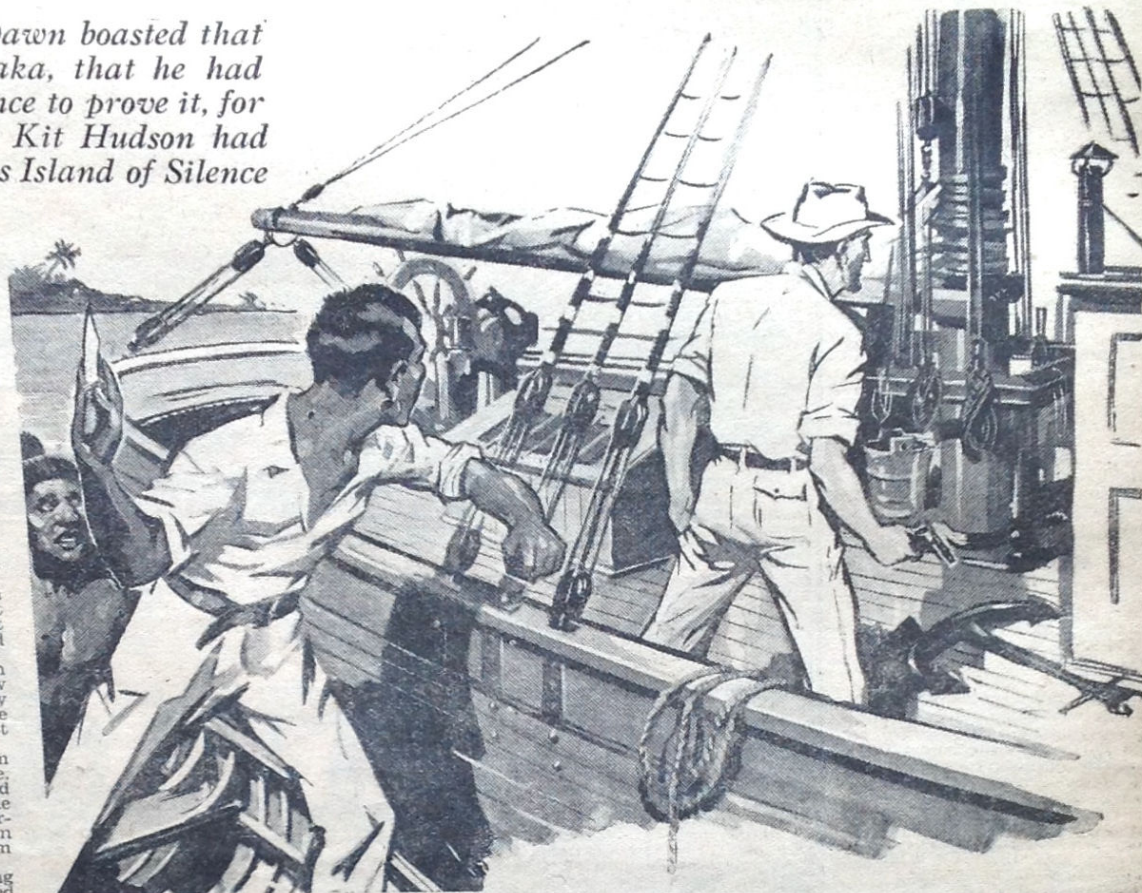
Then Ken saw the other prisoner—and stared at him blankly.

He was a white man, bound hand and foot like the native, and with a gag in his mouth. Propped against the wall of coral blocks, he was striving, bound as he was, to get on his feet.

King of the Islands gazed in astonishment at a plump face and a mop of red hair. It was old Dan Sullivan, the man he had expected to see when the Dawn sailed into the lagoon.

Ahab Pinner had stated that Sullivan was gone; that he, Pinner, had been sent out by the company to succeed him at the station. Ken had had no reason to doubt that statement, as Pinner was at the trader's bungalow, and Sullivan was not. And here was old Sullivan—bound, gagged, a prisoner, with his house-boy, in the coral cellar under his own bungalow!

As he recognised the old trader, King



The instant Pinner turned his back, Koko's hand flashed to his belt, plucked the knife from it, and came up for a throw.

of the Islands, in a flash, saw it all. The mystery of Lalua was a mystery no longer. This was the secret that Ahab Pinner had to keep—that he was not the agent of the Pacific Company, but a lawless freebooter who had seized on the company's station!

For a moment or two King of the Islands stood as if spellbound in astonishment. Never for a moment had he dreamed of anything like this. The ghost of the old red-headed trader, in the shadowy store cellar, could hardly have startled him more.

But he woke to action quickly enough. Setting down the candle on a packing-case, he opened his knife and cut through the strong cords of tapa that bound the old trader. In a few minutes Sullivan was released from bonds and gag.

He leaned on the wall, panting for breath. Ken turned his attention to Tototo, and freed the house-boy in his turn.

Sullivan found his voice at last. "It's really you, King of the Islands!" he exclaimed.

"Ay, ay!" answered Ken. "And glad to see you again, old Dan! That scoundrel Pinner told us that you had pulled out, and that the company had sent him out in your place."

"The liar!" breathed Sullivan. He rubbed his plump limbs, aching from the cords. "You believed him—"

"What else could we believe?" asked Ken. "He was in charge here, and you were gone."

"I reckoned that would be his game, as he knew that your packet was coming," muttered the old trader. "It was the only lie that was any use to him, when you found him here. If he got through he was safe for another six months. You got no cargo here, Captain King?"

"No! He told us there was a strike of the native labourers, and no copra to be shipped!"

Sullivan gave a savage growl. "The sheds are stacked with copra! He's waiting for his friends to run in with a craft to ship it when he can get word to them that all's clear here."

"Oh!" gasped Ken. "But—how—"

"The thief's been on the island a week!" groaned the old trader. "He came in a canoe. I had my doubts of him, but I couldn't turn him off the island. Then he found out that your packet was due, and pulled a gun on me, and drove me and my house-boy down

to this cellar! He'd have shot us dead and pitched us into the lagoon almost as soon as look at us!"

"We've been prisoners in this cellar for two days," went on Sullivan, "and when he raised your sail in the offing he came down and fixed us up like this, to keep us quiet till you were gone. I heard him roll a block of coral on the trapdoor to keep it shut if we got loose—not that he left us much chance. I never reckoned on seeing you, King of the Islands. I fancied he would take care that you never got any information from the natives."

"He did," answered Ken. "Not a native was to be seen when we came into the lagoon, and we've not seen a man on Lalua. He told us there was a native strike, and they had cleared off to the other side."

"They're a timid lot, on Lalua!" grunted Sullivan. "He got them scared! The sight of his gun was enough for them—he would have used it fast enough if they had kicked. I reckoned he'd drive them across the island, and keep them out of sight. But I don't make out how you're here, skipper. If you took it in that he was the company's new agent, in charge here, and he told you there was no cargo, I reckoned you'd pull out, and never know."

"Exactly what happened," answered Ken. "You owe it to my cooky-boy that I came back to Lalua after pulling out. That lubber Danny would not go without seeing Tototo, and he deserted on the island to look for him. When I missed him, I put the ship about to run back to Lalua and pick him up again."

Tototo gave a chuckle. "That feller Danny plenty good feller along me, sar!" he said. "Him like this feller Tototo too much. Him bling tick-tock along give this feller Tototo."

Ken smiled. He had mentally promised Danny a spot of lawyer-cane for taking French leave. But he was glad enough now that the fuzzy-headed cooky-boy had been so determined to see his relative Tototo. But for that, the Dawn would have been far from Lalua by this time, and Ahab Pinner left in undisputed possession of the company's station.

"Danny's still on the island," said Ken. "Pinner fired on him when he tried to get to the ketch, after we came back. I can see now why he dared not let Danny report what he learned from the natives. They must know what has happened here."

"Every man on Lalua knows!" grunted Sullivan. "Your cooky-boy must have got the news from the first nigger he saw."

"No wonder that swab watched like a cat, to see that he did not bring the news to my ketch!" said Ken. "His game would have been up as soon as we knew. No wonder he did not want white men on the island!"

"He got me!" muttered Sullivan. "Tototo's the only native here with a kick in him, and he got Tototo, too! The Laluan were like sheep for him to handle. But he's got you, too, King of the Islands—I heard the trap shut on you—"

"He won't keep me long," said Ken. "He's got me, but he hasn't got my mate or my crew. I came here to get him—and he's got me instead. But there's Kit Hudson for him to deal with. Hudson will get us out of this!"

"He's as cunning as a tiger-shark!" muttered Sullivan. "If he puts it across your mate, as he's done with you, the Kanakas on your craft won't worry him much."

"I think Koko would," said Ken. "But he won't put it across Hudson in a hurry. Sooner or later Kit will know that something has happened to me here, and Pinner will hear from him."

"Mebbe!" muttered Sullivan. It was plain that he had his doubts. All depended now on Kit Hudson, and if he failed the old trader had no doubt that Pinner would deal as easily with the native crew of the Dawn as he had dealt with the natives of Lalua.

The candle burned low. Tototo sorted out a box of candles from among the stores, and lighted another. Old Sullivan sat on a keg rubbing his fat limbs where the cords had been knotted. Ken waited, and listened. Once he heard the tramping feet of Pinner in the house above. Then there was silence again.

What would Hudson do? He would be puzzled when Kit failed to return and gave no sign. He could not guess what had happened—that was impossible—but he would know that something had gone amiss. Somehow, he would deal with Pinner before the night was out. Ken thought of loosing off his revolver, as the only signal he could make, but though a shot in the bungalow above would have been heard by keen ears on the ketch, anchored across the lagoon, it was a different matter in the deep cellar, shut in by blocks of solid coral, with a

THREE GREEN LIGHTS

"Sufferin' catfish!" gasped Ed with equal astonishment.

Nestling in the fleecy whiteness was a magnificent rope of pearls and a diamond tiara!

Not was that all. The cottonwool held a fortune in jewellery of all descriptions. Many of the gems had been taken from their settings, and in a small chaotic leather bag were dozens of small but beautifully cut diamonds worth a fortune in themselves.

Suddenly Ed whistled softly through his teeth; his inevitable cigar had dropped unheeded from his lips.

"Gee! I ain't surprised Lotherstein was all het up. No, sir! So this was what he was aimin' to collect! You was dead right, Archie. He sure meant to use his boat last night, an' he had a very important appointment. I'll say he had!"

"He's going to have another with the police," rejoined Mr. Richardson grimly. "As soon as we land I'm taking this stuff to the police station, Ed."

"Do you mean to say you can't arrest the man!" frowned the director in surprise.

The defective inspector at Beachbourne police station pursed his lips.

"It isn't as easy as all that, Mr. Richardson," he said. "I don't mind telling you we've had our eye on Lotherstein for weeks. We've got two men down here from Scotland Yard, but so far they haven't got anything on him. We've reason to suspect that he's a jewel fence operating in a big way. The stuff you've brought me is the loot from over a dozen big robberies on the Continent, and there's no doubt in my mind that Lotherstein is acting as receiver for a well-organised gang of jewel thieves over there. We know now how the loot is handed over to him, or at least we think we know. That's the rub. We can't prove it."

Archie, the director, and Ed all stared at him in astonishment.

"You may think this is an open and shut case," went on the inspector. "But

it isn't. You see, we can't prove that Lotherstein was going to collect those gems, not in a court of law. There's no conclusive evidence that he was. They were dropped into the sea. To put it another way, we haven't caught him with the goods."

"But the plane circled over the boat," protested Archie. "The pilot must have known it was Lotherstein's boat because of the three green lights."

"That doesn't help us, I'm afraid, because we can't prove it. Moreover, Lotherstein wasn't in the boat. Now if only we could prove that he intended to drive out and pick up the goods he wouldn't have a leg to stand on. As it is he'll have to answer a lot of awkward questions. But he's as smart as they make 'em. I very much doubt whether he'll be convicted."

It was then that Archie remembered the code message. The scrap of paper was still in his pocket, and taking it out he handed it to the inspector, explaining how it had come into his possession.

"H'm, it certainly looks like a cipher," commented the detective. "I believe you've got something here, Mr. Forsythe. One of those men from the Yard is a cryptographer. I'll let him have this at once."

Daniel Lotherstein was arrested in his cottage several hours later. By that time the cipher had been decoded. It was to earn the jewel fence a long term of penal servitude, for it supplied the only missing link in the chain of evidence. He had phoned the message to one of the gang in Paris. It ran as follows:

"Am expecting next consignment at nine o'clock to-night. Will be waiting half a mile from the shore. Boat will carry three green lights."

As Archie remarked to Jim, borrowing the inspector's words: "It was an open and shut case. The fellow hadn't a leg to stand on!"

Next Week :

THE RIVAL ROBOTS

IT'S UP TO KOKO!

(Continued)

shrieks of pain, he grasped him and dropped him bodily into the whaleboat.

The ruffian sprawled there, groaning and panting. Koko followed him into the boat.

"You feller boy, you washy-washy along beach along bungalow!" he said. And the Hiva-Oa boys put out the oars and pulled for the beach.

As they reached the landing-place, a fat, brown figure came scuttling down the beach from the palus. It was Danny, grinning with glee at the sight of the dreaded "white feller" a wounded and helpless prisoner in the boat. Round the cooky-boy's neck still hung the clock—the precious "tick-tock," he had brought to Lalua as a present for his relative Tototo, and which he had as yet not been able to hand over to the house-boy.

Koko did not heed the cooky-boy. He grasped Pinner and swung him from the whaleboat to the sand.

"You go along place along white master belong me stop!" he snapped.

And Ahab Pinner, groaning at every step, led the way up the coral path to the bungalow.

The Trap Opens

KING OF THE ISLANDS stood staring up at the trapdoor in the deep coral cellar.

It was day again on Lalua, but no gleam of daylight penetrated into the store-cellar under the trader's bungalow.

The flickering light of a candle revealed the pale and harassed faces of the prisoners to one another.

Tototo, stretched on a pile of sackings, gnashed his teeth with a Kanaka's impatient patience. Sullivan, slumped against a packing-case, looked, as he felt, hopeless in despair. Kit Hudson sat on a keg, his head bandaged. He had recovered consciousness long since, to find himself a prisoner with his shipmate. A big bruise and a headache were the extent of his damages, but, like the shipmate to whose rescue he had come, he was a helpless prisoner. Ken, his eyes fixed on the trapdoor, listened to a sound of footsteps in the hallway overhead. For a long time there had been silence, but now a tread was heard again in the trader's bungalow.

"If he should come—" he breathed. "He won't give you the chance, old man!" muttered Hudson. "Fool—fool that I was to let him get me."

"The game's not up yet, Kit!" said King of the Islands. "He's got us, old

man, as he got Sullivan, but Koko—"

"He won't have any trouble with the Kanakas on your ketch," grunted old Sullivan. "There's a hundred natives on Lalua, and he handled them like sheep. He'll handle your crew as easily."

Ken shook his head. He had faith in Koko; and to that faith he pinned his hope. It was the only hope that was left to him, for if Koko failed, as his white masters had failed, to deal with the ruffian of Lalua, all was lost.

The footsteps above stopped at the trapdoor. King of the Islands gave a start as he heard the heavy coral block rolled away. He gripped his revolver. If the ruffian was coming—if he had the ghost of a chance to meet him face to face—

The trap was flung up. Light from above glimmered down into the deep, dark store-cellar.

"White master!"

For a moment Ken hardly believed his ears as he heard the voice of the boatswain of the Dawn. Hudson leaped from the keg.

"Koko!" exclaimed Ken.

"Koko!" roared Hudson.

A brown, grinning face showed in the aperture above. Koko looked down into the store-cellar.

"White master!" he chirruped.

King of the Islands bounded up the ladder. His hope had been in the faithful Koko; but, now that it was realised, he knew how faint it had been. It seemed like a dream to him, to see the brown face, to hear the well-known voice calling him back from hopeless captivity to freedom.

"Koko!" he panted.

He leaped out of the trap. Hudson was only a second after him, then old Sullivan clambered up, followed by Tototo.

King of the Islands grasped the big brown hand of his boatswain. He wrung it hard. Kit Hudson smacked him on a brawny, brown shoulder. Koko grinned from ear to ear.

"This feller fidee white master belong him!" he chuckled. "This feller no common Kanaka sar!"

Old Sullivan's eyes fell on Ahab Pinner. He made a stride towards him with brandished fists, but stopped. The ruffian was leaning on the wall, white as a sheet, his right arm hanging like a broken reed, almost sinking to the floor.

In the doorway were the crew of the Dawn, with cheery, grinning faces, among them Danny, the cooky-boy. Danny waved a fat, brown hand to Tototo, and the house-boy cut across to his affectionate relative from Hiva-Oa. They gabbled gleefully in their own dialect, while Danny unstrung the precious "tick-tock" from his neck, the inestimable gift he had brought so far to bestow upon the happy Tototo.

NEWS FOR STAMP COLLECTORS

RUSSIA'S WARRIORS



RUSSIA certainly believes in "telling the world" about herself and her achievements by way of the postage stamp. An agricultural exhibition is held in Moscow, and out come a set of stamps to record the fact. The design of one of these is very interesting, incidentally. It depicts a Fordson motor tractor and unconsciously advertises the engineering powers of the U.S.A., a nation half the world away from the U.S.S.R.

The famous Five-Year Plan, a stratosphere flight, the opening of the new Moscow Underground Railway, all these events, and still less important ones, find a place on the Soviet's stamps.

Hence the fact that units of the Red Fighting Forces should also receive stamp glorification is not surprising. In 1928 appeared the first official stamp mention of the forces—a series of four specimens showing an infantryman, a sailor, a cavalryman, and an airman.

In 1919 the first legions of the Russian cavalry regiments were formed. Ten years of the existence of this very efficient fighting force were deemed good excuse for a series of stamps honouring these warriors, many of whom have ridden horses almost as long as they have walked.

Accordingly four exciting specimens, depicting various aspects of cavalry activity, came from the Moscow stamp printing presses late in 1929, reaching the outer world early the next year.

And now, this spring, the whole Russian fighting machine has had the searchlight of stamp publicity turned on it again through a series of labels which, in some ways, are the best of their kind so far issued by the Soviet.

Each specimen prominently displays the hammer-and-sickle decorated Red Flag emblem of the U.S.S.R. Before this, on the 10 kopeks value, stands an infantryman with an array of tanks and armoured cars, and mounted guns in the dim distance. The 20 kopeks specimen shows us a typical tank corps soldier wearing the odd crash-helmet like hat which the Russians have adopted. There's an imposing array of heavily armoured tanks behind him. Then linked with the familiar Red Flag on the 30 kopeks specimen is the new Russian naval ensign—the hammer, sickle, and star on a white ground.

A sailor with fixed-bayoneted rifle "holds the stage" on this stamp. In Russia, it appears, sailors undertake many of the jobs aboard ship that our own Marines normally do.

The Russian air ensign is very much like the Japanese flag—according to the new 40 kopeks commemorative, which is devoted to the Russian Air Arm. Blue rays replace the red rays, and outspread wings the red "sun" disc of the Jap flag. On this stamp is a smart-looking airman with folded parachute, all ready to "take off."

Mammoth guns and a Red artilleryman distinguish the new 50 kopeks. All the stamps so far mentioned are upright in shape, and to emphasise their relative high value, the remaining two items are horizontal. The first of these, the 80 kopeks, gives a very spirited impression of a cavalry review, while the highest value of the whole issue, illustrated here, shows a machine-gun team "in action."

King of the Islands looked round him, his face bright. A minute ago he had been an almost hopeless prisoner, at the mercy of the truculent ruffian. And now—

"How?" gasped Ken. Koko chuckled.

"That feller Pinner come along ketch, sar! He no savvy knife stop along this feller. This feller get that plenty bad Melican feller, along knife belong him. Me make that feller come along place along white master he stop. Spoose white master no stop, me cuttee off head belong that feller, all samee Solomon Island boy."

"The thief!" said the old trader of Lalua. "We've got him!"

King of the Islands fixed his eyes on the ruffian.

"This is the end of your rascality!" he said. "Bind up his wound, Koko, and get him back to the boat. He will leave Lalua on the Dawn."

Old Dan Sullivan nodded his head in approval. He was content to let King of the Islands take care of the ruffian. All the trader wanted to do now was to gather his boys again and get back to work.

But Ahab Pinner, with a groan, sank to the floor. He was insensible when, with his wounded arm bandaged, he was taken back to the Dawn—a prisoner in his turn.

It was the following morning that the Dawn pulled out of Lalua. She pulled out with a full cargo. Ahab Pinner was never to get word to his associates to call at Lalua for a cheap cargo—Ahab Pinner lay wounded and a prisoner in a berth on the cabin lockers, to be handed over to the law at the first white man's port.

As the Dawn made the reef passage, the beach was crowded with natives, and old Sullivan stood on his veranda, his plump face wreathed in smiles, his red head glowing in the sunshine, waving a plump hand. Behind him stood Tototo, grinning from one brown ear to the other, exchanging gesticulations with Danny, hanging over the taffrail of the Dawn. King of the Islands waved back to the old trader and, as the Dawn ran out to sea, the figures on the veranda faded from sight—the last seen of them being the old trader's red head and the gleam of the precious "tick-tock" that now hung round the neck of the happy Tototo.

Next Week :

HURRICANE SALVAGE

CITY OF GOLD

(Continued)

Indians speaking with Aloique. The man gathered that the massacre was to take place the next night.

Dyott laid his plans and gave his decision. He and his men were no match for these Indians who were gathering in greater numbers.

That night, instead of going to sleep, Dyott and his men went down to the river where their canoes were drawn up. They went down one by one. The Indians followed.

And then, suddenly, when all were aboard, the canoes were pushed off. Not a sound came from the Indians.

Far down the river bands of Indians were seen in pursuit, running along the banks.

To escape them Dyott had to jettison most of his stores.

They reached the spot where the other members of the expedition were waiting. There a similar tale was told of Indians who crowded round.

The expedition had to race for safety. Yet not a shot was fired, not an arrow unloosed.

Hundreds of feet of valuable film, with stores, had to be left. The search for Fawcett, or his bones, had to be abandoned.

For that is the way of the tribes in that strange, unknown land. Silent pressure on their prey. It is a pressure that demoralises those who are the victims. Pressure, pressure, pressure, and then, if resisted—swoop! And only dead men remain.

Surely this was the strangest noiseless battle ever fought.

The Dyott expedition did not establish Fawcett's fate, even if Dyott was the first man to trail the colonel and his two young companions to that distance.

But did Colonel Fawcett really die as these Indians pantomimed?

Nobody knows. A year after the Dyott expedition returned to civilisation a trapper named Stephen Rattin came to the British Consulate at Sao Paulo. He claimed that in the heart of the Matto Grosso he had come across a man who said that Fawcett was alive, that he had reached his golden city; but that a tribe was holding him and his companions.

Who knows? The Matto Grosso still holds its secret.

Next Week :

ADrift ON CRUMBLING ICE