

## THE SWAMP SECRET.

A STORY OF THE FRONTIER.

By EPHEN R. RENFORD.

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PROLOGUE.

About a score of years ago, a man was following the trail of a bear through a dense swamp in one of our Western States. The bear had been seen to follow a trail of footprints that led to a small clearing where a man had been seen to enter. The man was a stranger to the country, and the bear was a wild animal. The man was a white man, and the bear was a black bear. The man was a hunter, and the bear was a prey. The man was a white man, and the bear was a black bear. The man was a hunter, and the bear was a prey.

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## PHILIPPINE ADVENTURE

AN AMERICAN SKIPPER'S STARTLING EXPERIENCE WITH MALAY PIRATES.

Many First, Then Tenth-Deafened and Tenth-Deafened by the Pirates Who Intended Him as a Sacrifice to Their Native Deity—How He Escaped.

There lives on the Hawkeyon road, six miles from Englewood, relates the New York press, a man who passed through a hair-raising experience in one of the islands of the Philippine archipelago thirty years ago, the details of which have never before been made public. The man is Erasmus Hepworth, an old skipper, and though now bowed with the weight of years, he still has a keen recollection and vividly recounts his tale of the months of horror which he spent on a thickly wooded island in the Pacific.

In 1867 Hepworth was a skipper of a small sailing vessel that left San Francisco for Hong Kong. At that time men were scarce and wages high, so Hepworth was obliged to take an ill-assorted crew; but though of villainous countenance, they behaved themselves in an unexceptional manner until the China Sea was reached. Then a mutiny was unexpectedly developed, and Hepworth, supported by only one man, an officer, found himself confronted by a blood-thirsty set of cutthroats, who demanded that he lower the stars and stripes and raise the black flag. It afterward developed that a large number of the crew had served on Malay pirate ships, and that by threats and promises of reward had won over the mutiny.

Their demand was, of course, refused, and the officer fired a pistol, wounding one of the men. There was a rush forward, and he was knocked down and cast overboard, food for the sharks that had followed the ship. Hepworth was bound, and a consultation held as to what disposal should be made of him. The Malays favored sending him floating in the officer, but the minority of American sailors, in which Hepworth was included, insisted that his life should be spared, and he was finally put in a boat, given a pair of oars and a small supply of food, and told if he would steer in a certain direction he would reach one of the Philippine islands.

After thirty-eight hours on the ocean, Hepworth reached a thickly wooded island, which he subsequently determined was the group lying between Nippon and Leyte. There was a dense, tropical vegetation, but when he pulled his boat up on the beach no sign of life. Besides the provisions he had an old-fashioned fowling piece and a flask of powder. The women he had in the boat on the beach, and within the other packages stowed the boat. He had gone but a short distance when a noise and chattering savage sprang from behind a huge palm tree, threatening him with a spear. Almost instantly he was surrounded by a yelling, howling crowd of savages, and death seemed near. However, one of the mob, apparently the chief, interposed, and he was escorted inland through a trackless forest, until a village of huts, well up in the mountains, was reached.

Here he was led to a tree and the chief held a long consultation with his followers. The man Hepworth's lands were unbroken, he was escorted to a hut adjoining that occupied by a chief and shown every courtesy. As time wore on and he picked up a little of the language, he was horrified to learn that he, with two other victims, prisoners captured on a neighboring island, were held for a human sacrifice. It was the custom of this tribe to select prisoners taken in battle or captured by other means for sacrifices to their gods. The victims would sometimes be kept a whole year, and during that time were treated with every respect, rich food, flowers and everything that could make life tolerable. The victims, however, being looked upon as property.

Hepworth had been with the tribe about eight months when he learned that the man of one of the victims was drawing to a close, and on a certain day the sacrifice would be performed. Once devoted to the sacrifice, there was no escape for the captive, and at the expiration of the time he was seized by the medicine man or priest of the tribe and escorted up the mountain in plain view of the huts and assembled villagers, to a spot on a promontory where a stone altar had been erected. Here two other medicine men, striped and painted, with their hair and beards matted, and some wearing fearful, were on hand to assist. They seized the victim and laid him on his back, while the chief, with a quick pass of his flint knife, opened the breast and drank the blood, palpating heart, holding it first toward the sun, then toward the village, and finally casting it into the sea.

This ended the ceremonies for the day, but the most ghastly were yet to come, for at evening a huge fire was lighted, songs were sung, and the medicine man, with the chief and his followers, sat down to feast off the body of the victim, which had been roasted to a turn. When Hepworth saw the sacrifice, he felt that he was in a perilous position, and he decided to make a dash for it. He was placed, he became wild with horror. Escape was out of the question, for not only was he out of the track of vessels, but carefully watched.

## CAPTAIN SIGSBEE'S STORY

HIS OWN ACCOUNT OF THE BLOWING UP OF THE MAINE.

He Was Writing a Letter to His Wife When the Explosion Came—He Thought the Bombs for the Vessel Had Been Taken from the Outside.

Captain Charles D. Sigsbee is contributing to the Century Magazine an account of the blowing up of the Maine. In his narrative he describes the blowing up of the Maine and the events that followed it. Captain Sigsbee says that about an hour before the explosion he had completed a report called for by Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, on the advisability of continuing to place topographical observations on board cruises and battleships. I then wrote a letter home in which I mentioned the blowing up of the Maine and the events that followed it.

They had arrived at the stone altar, and Hepworth had to again appeal to the priests, when there was a loud explosion and the altar was hurled heavenward with a deafening noise, while the priests fell upon their faces. When the cloud of smoke rolled away the crowd on the hillside could be seen prostrating themselves and howling toward Hepworth. He was escorted back to the village and treated as a god. Nothing was too good for him. He was allowed the full liberty of the island, and two months afterward succeeded in fitting out his boat, and one night shoved off in the direction of Manila, arriving at the island of Luzon after a two days' sail.

During his imprisonment Hepworth had explored his way to the altar with the powder from the flask he had possessed. A flask was made of a piece of wood, and filled with powder and fired by the crystals of Hepworth's chronometer, which he had fastened to the altar and filled with water, thus forming a burning glass. Through the hole in the glass, Hepworth's chronometer, with his wife, enjoys life on the Hawkeyon farm.

Some one, however, a little girl for her extravagance, said: "You should not burn the candle at both ends." "Why, is not that the way to make both ends meet?" retorted the child. The Hon. Mr. Grant-Duff, who noted down the reports in his "Diary," mentions also the following incident: "When the day breaks, what becomes of the pieces?" "They go into mourning." The following are among the items of pleasant gossip to be found in the "Diary."

An English peer coming out of the House of Lords met the Hon. Lord Rosebery. "How do you like this place?" asked the peer. "Well," was the reply, "I feel that I am dead, but in the Lydian field." At a meeting in Exeter Hall Bishop Wilberforce spoke eloquently, and at the close of his address the people began to go away. A gentleman, who, according to the programme, was to speak, and to the Bishop.

"I need not speak," I hardly think they expect me." "To be sure they do," retorted the prelate, "don't you see they are all going?" An English Duke, while being shown the collection of birds in the museum, asked the name of one of them. "That a hawk!" said the attendant. "A hawk?" exclaimed the Duke. "A hawk," repeated the man, with even more distinctness, whereupon a bystander, seeing the cause of the Duke's mystification, said, "Your Royal Highness," he says "it's a hawk."

Where Men Must Be Worshipped. Woman's present position in India is realistically set forth in the following extract from a Government paper issued for the girls' schools in the Bombay Presidency. If the husband of a virtuous woman is unable of good or bad disposition, dressed, deformed, insensible, a drunkard, old, stupid, dumb, blind, deaf, hot-tempered, poor, extremely covetous, a glutton, cowardly, perfidious and ungrateful, never allows her to worship him as a god, with mind, speech and person. The wife who gives an angry answer to her husband will become a village pariah; she will also become a female demon, and then she will be abandoned by her husband. The woman who talks sweetly without sharing with her husband will become a village pariah; she will also become a female demon, and then she will be abandoned by her husband.

How His Head Was Shaved. The Youth's Companion tells a story of a woman on board ship who saw a sailor fall and cut his head badly. She was solicited by her passengers to his welfare when she saw the captain that night, and would undoubtedly have continued her sympathy had not a rough sea called to mind her own sufferings. Four days later, when she emerged, white and weak, from her stateroom, she suddenly remembered the poor sailor. In the course of the day she saw him, with a strip of plaster on his forehead. "How is your head?" she asked, kindly, as he passed her berth on some duty. "Well, my head, my head," was the reply, "I've been with you, but I've been with you, and he was gone."

## AN IRRESISTIBLE IMPULSE.

Fatal and Destructive Consequences of a Train Dispatcher's Conscious Error.

A singular psychological phenomenon occurred at Hagerstown, Md., the other day. Governed by some impulse which he cannot explain and could not control, the train dispatcher on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad at that point committed an error of which he was fully conscious at the time and which was followed by fatal and destructive consequences. He says that he fully could not help it. No. 19 train was coming down the road at full speed, with right of way. The track was open, the signals were all properly set, and if the dispatcher had gone to sleep or left his post or turned his back and looked out of the window the train would have passed on to its destination and all would have been well; but, prompted by some irresistible impulse, he stepped across the lower, seized the handles of one of the levers and threw a switch which turned the train and the other tracks practically destroyed and 2100 tons of freight was so badly damaged that the company had to pay for it.

The train dispatcher was a man of middle age, temperate habits, good judgment and had been in the service twenty years without getting a mark against him. No dispatcher or operator on the road had a better reputation or was considered more reliable. He says that he knew he was doing wrong when he pulled the lever and was unable to resist the impulse that impelled him. He made no effort to evade the responsibility or excuse his conduct. When the explosion occurred he had passed by the lever and was on the floor of the tower and cried like a child. He offered himself for any punishment that might be imposed, has been indicted by the Grand Jury and will plead guilty to the charge of manslaughter at the next term of court.—Chicago Record.

Make-Believe Meteorology. Whatever may be the state of the weather outside, the stage manager within can bring about rain or hail, wind, or a thunderstorm at will; and the illusion is so complete as to sometimes make nervous members of the audience inaudibly shudder. Hail and rain are represented by a closed wooden cylinder about six feet long, which is obstructed inside by various cross-pieces, a quart of peas completing the arrangement. By turning this cylinder first one way and then the other, the peas rattle through it with close imitation to the sound of heavy rain on a roof.

The wind arrangement consists of a wheel of about two feet diameter, set on a frame like that of a grindstone. This wheel is furnished with ribs on its periphery somewhat like the floats of a waterwheel, and drawn tightly over the ribs is a piece of thick silk. When the wheel is turned the ribs rub against the silk, and by turning the handle first quickly and then slowly, a very good imitation of the sighing of the wind can be produced. Lightning can easily be imitated by electrical means, and the usual mode of producing thunder is by shaking large sheets of flexible iron plate. A smokescreen is brought about by a perforated revolving cylinder about the stage, charged with paper cuttings.—Chicago Record.

An Incurable From Manila. One of Chicago's music teachers, a Frenchman, went to Cuba as band leader in the Cuban company. Since his return he has been unable to play any instrument, and he has been compelled to accept a number of unattractive pupils. The other week the patience of the teacher became exhausted in the case of one pupil, the daughter of a North Side board of trade man. In a moment of exasperation the Frenchman commenced to play an English air on the piano, and the girl who was not making advancement in her piano studies.

"Dear Sir: It regrets me, indeed, to hear of your departure to sea, that your daughter is not your only child, and your only one of honor, I am sure you will want that, even should she be expelled repeatedly to infection at grand opera and concerts, not a single word of music would lodge in her mind, her soul, her constitution, in general. Again, with apologies, I must conclude. I do you declare that my pupil is a waste of money, and so I hereby unceremoniously cut her off with my regrets most sad."—Chicago Record.

An Expensive Custom. I have learned in M. A. P., writes T. P. O'Connor, on some of the quaint observations from generation to generation, of the marriage ceremonies of the leading families in these countries. Let me detail a very charming birthday usage, from which there has been no departure for centuries in the Rothschild family. With the Rothschilds it is the custom to purchase six pairs, each costing \$100, on the birthday of each child. On each birthday six additional pairs are added to the original purchase, so that when a young lady makes her debut in society, a cabinet of magnificent pearls, valued at \$100,000.—London Mail.

About To Be. American proprietors of machinery in England are endeavoring to buy in Spain.

After many sleepless nights he decided that he would try to work in his own office. He was allowed the liberty of the island, the only prohibited spot being the public place, where his boat, together with several canoes belonging to the tribe, were kept. At night he made several trips to that chaste spot on the mountain side where some of the natives had been gathered, and as he went to his cabin he was in a