

BOB HAMPTON of PLACER

By RANDALL PARRISH AUTHOR OF "WHEN WILDERNESS WAS KING" "MY LADY OF THE NORTH" "HISTORIC ILLINOIS, ETC."



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SYNOPSIS.

A detachment of the Eighteenth Infantry from Fort Bethune trapped by Indians in a narrow gorge. Among them is a stranger who introduces himself by the name of Hampton, also Gillis the post trader, and his daughter, Gillis and a majority of the soldiers are killed during a three days' siege. Hampton and the girl only escape from the Indians. They fall exhausted on the plains. A company of the Seventh Cavalry, Lieut. Brant in command, find them. Hampton and the girl stop at the Miners' Home in Glencaid, Mrs. Duffy, proprietress. Hampton talks the future over with Miss Gillis—the Kid. She shows him her mother's picture and tells him what she can of her parentage and life. They decide she shall live with Mrs. Herndon. Naida the Kid—runs away from Mrs. Herndon and rejoins Hampton. He induces her to go back, and to have nothing more to do with him. Hampton plays his last game of cards. He loses to Red Slavin, a gambler who has quit, and then leaves Glencaid. Miss Phoebe Spencer arrives in Glencaid to teach its first school. Miss Spencer meets Naida, Rev. Wynkoop, etc. She boards at Mrs. Herndon's. Naida and Lieut. Brant again meet without his knowing who she is. She informs him of the coming Bachelor club ball in honor of Miss Spencer. Lieut. Brant meets silent Murphy, Custer's scout, who reports trouble brewing among the Sioux. Social difficulties arise at the Bachelor club's ball among the admirers of Miss Spencer. Lieut. Brant meets Miss Spencer but she is not his acquaintance of the day before. She tells him of Naida, and he accidentally meets her again as he is returning to the ball room with a fan for Miss Spencer. Brant accompanies Naida home from the dance. On the way she informs him as to who she is, and that she is to meet Hampton. Brant and Hampton meet. Hampton informs the lieutenant that his attentions to Naida must cease, and proclaims an authority over her that justifies the statement. Brant tells Hampton of the presence of silent Murphy, and the fact that Red Slavin receives government messages for him. Miss Spencer called on Bob Hampton. Tells him of a red-faced stranger mistaking her for Naida. Brant interviews Red Slavin. Finds that he is an extrovert in the Seventh Cavalry. It was Slavin's and Murphy's testimony that more than ten years before had convicted Robert Nolan, then a captain in the Seventh, of the murder of Maj. Brant. Sr. Hampton attempts to force a confession from Slavin. Slavin insists that Murphy wants, and Murphy has left. In a scuffle Slavin is killed by a knife thrust. Hampton surrenders to Buck Mason, marshal. Mob attempts to capture him. Mason and his prisoner escape to a hill and defend themselves.

"Wal, I reckon not, old man. We kin give him a trial w'ol nough here in Glencaid," roared another voice from one of the group, which was apparently growing restless over the delay. "But we ain't inclined to do you no harm unless ye ram in too far. So come on down, Buck, throw up yer cards; we've got all the aces, an' ye can't bluff this whole durn camp."

Mason spat into the dump contemptuously, his hands thrust into his pockets. "You're a fine-lookin' lot o' law-abidin' citizens, you are! Blamed if you ain't. This yer man, Bob Hampton, is my prisoner, an' I'll take him to Cheyenne if I have ter brain every tough in Glencaid to do it. That's me, gent's."

"Oh, come off; you can't run your notions agin the whole blame moral sentiment of this camp."

"Moral sentiment! I'm backin' up the law, not moral sentiment, ye crossed-eyed beer-slinger, an' if ye try edgin' up ther another step I'll plug you with this '45."

There was a minute of hesitancy while the men below conferred, the

of discharged sojers," he growled, "an' they know their biz all right. I reckon them fellers is pretty sure to git one of us yit; anyhow, they've got us cooped. Say, Bob, thet lad crawling yonder ought to be in reach, an' it's our bounden duty not to let the boys git too gay."

Hampton tried the shot suggested, elevating considerably to overcome distance. There was a yell and a swift scurrying backward which caused Mason to laugh, although neither knew whether this result arose from fright or wound.

"Bliged ter teach 'em manners onct in awhile, or they'll imbibe a fool notion they kin come right 'long up yere without no invite. 'Taint fer long, no-how, 'less all them guys are ijuits."

Hampton turned his head and looked soberly into the freckled face, impressed by the speaker's grave tone.

"Why?"

"Fire, my boy, fire. The wind's dead right fer it; thet brush will burr like so much tinder, an' with this big wall o' rock back of us, it will be hell here, all right. Some of 'em are bound to think of it pretty blame soon, an' then, Bob, I reckon you an' I will hev' to take to the open on the jump."

Hampton's eyes hardened. God, how he desired to live just then, to uncover that fleeing Murphy and wring from him the whole truth which had been eluding him all these years!

CHAPTER XXI.

"She Loves Me; She Loves Me Not."

It was no claim of military duty which compelled Brant to relinquish Miss Spencer so promptly at the hotel door, but rather a desire to escape her ceaseless chatter and gain retirement where he could reflect in quiet over the revelations of Hampton. In this quest he rode slowly up the valley of the Bear Water, through the bright sunshine, the rare beauty of the scene scarcely leaving the slight

nor heard his approach, and he stopped in perplexity. He had framed a dozen speeches for her ears, yet now he could do no more than stand and gaze, his heart in his eyes. And it was a vision to enchain, to hold lips speechless. She was seated with unstudied grace on the edge of the bank, her hands clasped about one knee, her sweet face sobered by thought, her eyes downcast, the long lashes plainly outlined against the clear cheeks. To draw back unobserved was impossible, even had he possessed strength of will sufficient to make the attempt, nor would words of easy greeting come to his relief. He could merely worship silently as before a sacred shrine. It was thus she glanced up and saw him with startled eyes, her hands unclasp, her cheeks rose-colored.

"Lieut. Brant, you here?" she exclaimed, speaking as if his presence seemed unreal. "What strange coincidences an' idle thoughts can work!"

"Thoughts, I have heard," he replied, coming toward her with head uncovered, "will sometimes awaken answers through vast distances of time and space. As my thought was with you I may be altogether to blame for thus arousing your own. From the expression of your face, I supposed you dreaming."

She smiled, her eyes uplifted for a single instant to his own. "It was rather thought just merging into dream, and there are few things in life more sweet. I know not whether it is the common gift of all minds, but my day-dreams are almost more to me than my realities."

"First it was moods, and now dreams." He seated himself comfortably at her feet. "You would cause me to believe you a most impractical person, Miss Naida."

"If that were only true, I am sure I should be most happy, for it has been my fortune so far to conjure up only pleasure through day-dreaming—the things I like and long for become my very own them. But if you mean, as I suspect, that I do not enjoy the dirt and drudgery of life, then my plea will have to be guilty. Back of what you term practical some one has said there is always a dream, a first conception. In that sense I choose to be a dreamer."

"And not so unwise a choice, if your dreams only tend toward results." He sat looking into her animated face, deeply puzzled by both words and actions. "I cannot help noticing that you avoid all reference to my meeting with Mr. Hampton. Is this another sign of your impractical mind?"

"I should say rather the opposite, for I had not even supposed it concerned me."

"Indeed! That presents a vastly different view from the one given us an hour since. The distinct impression was then conveyed to both our minds that you were greatly distressed regarding the matter. Is it possible you can have been acting again?"

"I? Certainly not!" and she made no attempt to hide her indignation. "What do you mean?"

He hesitated an instant in his reply, feeling that possibly he was treading upon thin ice. But her eyes commanded a direct answer, and he yielded to them.

"We were informed that you experienced great anxiety for fear we might quarrel—so great, indeed, that you had confined your troubles to another."

"To whom?"

"Miss Spencer. She came to us ostensibly in your name, and as a peace-maker."

For a moment she sat gazing directly at him, then she laughed softly.

"Why, how supremely ridiculous; I can hardly believe it true, only your face tells me you certainly are not in play. Lieut. Brant, I have never even dreamed of such a thing. You had informed me that your mission was one of peace, and he pledged me his word not to permit any quarrel. I had utmost confidence in you both."

"How, then, did she even know of our meeting?"

"I am entirely in the dark, as mystified as you," she acknowledged, frankly, "for it has certainly never been a habit with me to betray the confidence of my friends, and I learned long since not to confide secrets to Miss Spencer."

Apparently neither cared to discuss the problem longer, yet he remained silent considering those questions which might decide his fate.

"You speak of your confidence in us both," he said, slowly. "To me the complete trust you repose in Mr. Hampton is scarcely comprehensible. Do you truly believe in his reform?"

"Certainly. Don't you?"

The direct return question served to nettles and confuse him. "It is, perhaps, not my place to say, as my future happiness does not directly depend on the permanence of his reformation. But if his word can be depended upon, your happiness to a very large extent does."

She bowed. "I have no doubt you can safely repose confidence in whatever he may have told you regarding me."

"You indorse, then, the claims he advances?"

"You are very insistent; yet I know of no good reason why I should not answer. Without at all knowing the nature of those claims to which you refer, I have no hesitancy in saying that I possess such complete confidence in Bob Hampton as to reply unreservedly yes. But really, Lieut. Brant, I should prefer talking upon some other topic. It is evident that you two gentlemen are not friendly, yet there is no reason why any misunderstanding between you should interfere with our friendship, is there?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



"Hi, There!" He Called, "You Fellers Ain't Invited to This Picnic."

marshal looking contemptuously down upon them, his revolver gleaming ominously in the light.

"Oh, come on, Buck, show a little hoss sense," the leader sang out. "We've got every feller in camp along with us, an' there ain't no show fer the two o' ye to hold out against that sort of an outfit."

Mason smiled and patted the barrel of his Colt.

"Oh, go to blazes! When I want any advice, Jimmie, I'll send fer ye."

Some one fired, the ball digging up the soft earth at the marshal's feet, and flinging it in a blinding cloud into Hampton's eyes. Mason's answer was a sudden fusillade, which sent the crowd flying helter-skelter into the underbrush. One among them staggered and half fell, yet succeeded in dragging himself out of sight.

"Great Scott, if I don't believe I winged James!" the shooter remarked cheerfully, reaching back into his pocket for more cartridges. "Maybe them boys will be a bit more keener if they once understand they're up agin the real thing. Well, perhaps I better skin down, fer I reckon it's liable ter be rifles next."

It was rifles next, and the "winging" of Big Jim, however it may have inspired caution, also developed fresh animosity in the hearts of his followers, and brought forth evidences of discipline in their approach. Peering across the sheltering dump pile, the besieged were able to perceive the dark figures cautiously advancing through the protecting brush; they sped out widely until their two flanks were close in against the wall of rock, and then the deadly rifles began to spit spitefully, the balls casting up the soft dirt in clouds or flattening against the stones. The two men crouched lower, hugging their pile of slag, unable to perceive even a stray assailant within range of their ready revolvers.

"This whole blame country is full

est impress on his mind, so busy was it, and so preoccupied. He no longer had any doubt that Hampton had utilized his advantageous position, as well as his remarkable powers of pleasing, to ensnare the susceptible heart of this young confiding girl. While the man had advanced no direct claim, he had said enough to make perfectly clear the close intimacy of their relation and the existence of a definite understanding between them. With this recognized as a fact, was he justified in endeavoring to win Naida Gillis for himself? That the girl would find continued happiness with such a man as Hampton he did not for a moment believe possible; that she had been deliberately deceived regarding his true character he felt no doubt. That the girl was morally so far above him as to make his very touch a profanation, and at the unbidden thought of it, the soldier vowed to oppose such an unholy consummation. Nor did he, even then, utterly despair of winning, for he recalled afresh the intimacy of their few past meetings, his face brightened in memory of this and that brief word or shy glance.

All the world loves a lover, and all the fairies guide him. As the officer's eyes glanced up from the dusty road, he perceived just ahead the same steep bank down which he had plunged in his effort at capturing his fleeing tormentor. With the sight there came upon him the desire to loiter again in the little glen where they had first met, and dream once more of her who had given to the shaded nook both life and beauty. He swung himself from the saddle, tied a loose rein to a scrub oak, and clambered up the bank.

With the noiseless step of a plainsman he pushed in through the labyrinth of bush, only to halt petrified upon the very edge of that inner barrier. No figment of imagination, but the glowing reality of flesh and blood, awaited him. She had neither seen

The BANANA IN HAWAII

BY J. E. HIGGINS



CHINESE BANANA GROWING IN LOW LANDS NEAR HONOLULU.

The people of the United States consumed over \$7,000,000 worth of imported bananas in the year 1902. Each year the importations are increasing and at the rate of nearly a million dollars per annum in value. The West India Bulletin states that in the height of the season, upwards of 20 steamers per week leave Jamaica alone laden chiefly with bananas for the markets of the United States. Comment is unnecessary upon what this trade has done for Jamaica, particularly since the decline in the sugar industry. Banana growing is to-day one of the most profitable industries in that island, notwithstanding the fact that tornadoes sometimes destroy whole fields. Further, the indirect influence which this trade has had upon tourist travel can not be easily estimated. The frequent passage of steamers has attracted thousands of people to the West Indies to spend the winter.

Why should not the Hawaiian islands take some more considerable part in this large and increasing industry and commerce? This is a question worthy of careful consideration. This territory possesses soils and climate admirably adapted to the growth of bananas. It also is free from tornadoes, the grower thus avoiding the great losses that come to planters in some other countries. A great market, on the Pacific slope of the main land of our own country, is at Hawaii's doors.

The banana plant is used in an almost infinite number of ways. Nearly every part of it is put to several uses. To describe these in full would require a small publication in itself. Here only brief mention can be made of some of them.

The ripe fruit is known to most northern people simply as an article of dessert—a mere incidental to a well provided table. In tropical countries, however, it is a staple article of food, the native population frequently being quite dependent upon it. It is eaten not only raw but cooked in a great variety of ways. The unripe fruit is also cooked, some varieties being better in this way than when ripened. Some varieties are especially adapted for drying and in favorable climates may be dried by the sun without resort to artificial means. In this form, they may be used as are other dried fruit now so common in the markets.

Banana flour or meal is made by reducing the dried fruit to a powder.

Other secondary products that have been made from bananas are preserved ripe fruit, alcohol, vinegar and wine.

The fruit-bud of some varieties is cooked and eaten and is said to be very good. The flowers, fruits and corn or root-stock are said to have medicinal value. The corn is also used as food for stock as is also the part of the fruit stem inside the "trunk." The latter is also used as food by the natives of some tropical countries.

The leaves have been used as fodder for stock and Prof. Hilgard states that they contain nearly as much albuminoids as average meadow hay.

The fibre of the leaves of the ordinary bananas has long attracted attention and continues to do so. That of the so-called fibre banana (*Musa Textilis*), as is well known, is the source of the Manila hemp of commerce and is one of the most valuable fibres in the market.

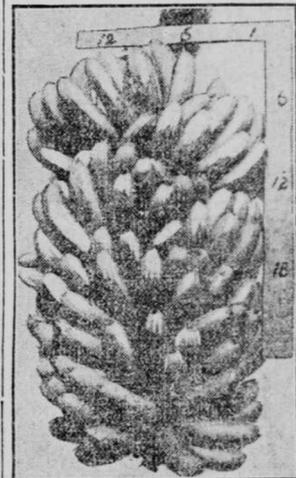
The banana fibre while of fair quality and adapted to some uses is so inferior to that of *Musa Textilis* that the former does not find a ready market except when the latter is scarce and the price very high. It then brings only half the price of Manila hemp. It is inferior both in strength and luster.

The Hawaiian banana trade had its beginning between 40 and 50 years ago. As early as the year 1864, according to Thurston's Hawaiian Annual, there were 121 bunches of bananas exported from these islands. Probably these were the first of the Chinese variety to be shipped from here, since Hillebrand records that this species of *Musa* was first brought to us from Tahiti about the year 1855. In the year 1863 only 60 bunches were exported, but from this time onward the trade increased slowly until it reached its maximum in the year 1896. In this year the export amounted to 126,413 bunches. The next three years show a considerable decrease in this export. From that date to the present time there are no figures to show the size of the shipments, for since

annexation to the United States the Hawaiian custom house authorities have made no specific classification of bananas sent to the mainland. It is probable, however, that the shipments were light until last year when they increased again. This drop in the Hawaiian trade was no doubt due to the diligence of those interested in the Central American and West Indian fruit trade in extending their trade westward.

The Hawaiian product suffered in the market not because of inferiority, for the Chinese variety is considered superior in flavor to the Jamaican. The latter, however, can be handled more cheaply because of its hardness.

The future development of the banana trade of course cannot be foreseen, but there is no reason to suppose that the limit of capacity has yet been reached. The figures above show a steady increase in consumption in America. In the future more of the bananas from the British West Indies will probably find an outlet in



The Chinese Banana.

the markets of the Mother Country. It is possible that the public taste may become more discriminating, thus giving a stimulus to the trade in the finer varieties.

There seems no good reason why the Hawaiian islands should not now assume a very much larger share in the trade. The soil, the climate and proximity to market are all in their favor.

CITY MEN AS FARMERS.

Find Health and Zest if Nothing More in the Operation.

Great is the debt of gratitude due the man who makes money in trade or professionally and spends it on farming as a fad, says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. He is laughed at by the real yeomanry as one to whom the proper purpose and value of ready cash are unknown, and who scatters it on fantastic experiments; but the amateur takes his own course and enjoys it more than his critics imagine. A city's most energetic population is recruited from the farms, and the old merchant or practitioner, as a rule, craves the country when he retires. This passion is strong even among those born in cities, and if they want to amuse themselves with little extravagances on the soil they ought to have sympathetic encouragement. It is seldom that farming is attempted on Monte Cristo principles, but surely it is better to scatter a million on the soil than to see it lapped up by brokers in a single night. Occasionally a wizard in selecting and crossing plants comes along and causes the world to marvel by the new varieties he produces and the old ones he improves. Inventors who have never lived out of a city street constantly add to the machinery that places American agriculture far in the lead. Give the city farmer the glad hand. The money he "fools away" is not barren. He finds health and zest, if nothing more, in the operation.

Modern Hotels Needed in China. Modern hotels are much needed in China. Ordinary establishments at Tsingtau and elsewhere get five to six dollars gold a guest day. The accommodations are inadequate and the fare poor.