

## SEEKING HAPPINESS.

I followed far o'er heath and desert land  
The fairy gleaming of a distant light;  
A shining lure, that beckoned as a hand,  
And with fair promise pierced the hostile night.

O'er rugged stones, and marshes, and slimy clay,  
And clinging tanglings of the thorny brier;  
But still the dancing light shone far away,  
And at my feet lay stagnant waste and mire.

Weary, I paused, and, turning in the track,  
Glanced where the long, bleak, barren hills declined.  
And lo! athwart the trailing, ragged wrack,  
The wizard beacon glimmered far behind.

—London News.

## The Czar's Messenger

THE thing that earned me my first promotion," said Colonel B., of the Seventy-eighth Russian Infantry, as we sat in the balcony of the little posthouse at Tchinas, in one of the dreariest parts of Central Asia, watching the red glow of the sunset fading over the broad, shining curves of the Syr-Daria and the great plain beyond, "was rather a queer affair altogether.

"It was certainly one of those things which are a good deal pleasanter to talk about afterwards than to go through at the time; and I don't much think that I should care to try it again, anyhow.

"This was how it happened: When I first came out here the Khokandess still held all the country that we Russians have taken since, and it would have been no easy matter to get even as far as this.

"As for the country on the other side of the river, we knew no more about it than if it had been in the moon.

"Now, this tract beyond the river (which belonged to the Ameer of Bokhara in those days), was just the very place that our colonel, Tchernajeff, particularly wanted to know about.

"We were pretty certain to have to invade Bokhara sooner or later, and it was specially important to know if we should find any water or forage on the way, and what sort of country we should have to cross.

"So, when I got down here with one of our flying columns, which was making a raid through the Khokandess territory to give the 'coffee-faces' a lesson, I bethought myself that it might be long enough before I was so close to the border again, and that, as I knew the native language pretty well and wasn't afraid of a rough ride, I'd just go over into Bokhara and see what it was like.

"Didn't the old colonel look pleased when I volunteered? And I hadn't to ask twice for leave to go.

"I don't think you'll ever come back, my boy," said he; 'but if you do, you shall see that I know how to reward good service.'

"With this consolation I set off, accompanied only by two Cossacks.

"I remember well how queer I felt when I stood for the first time on the opposite bank of the river and looked back at the camp-fires of our soldiers and then forward at the great wide waste of desert; but the bright sunshine kept my spirits up—it's wonderful what a difference it makes sometimes, whether the day is fine or gloomy—and away I went, merrily enough.

"As for my two Cossacks, they looked as comfortable as if they were going to a picnic.

"We kept a bright lookout as we went along; and well we might in a country where we might all have our throats cut at any moment. But for the first two hours we didn't see a living thing. However, I had already made up my mind what to do in case we did fall in with any of the Bokhariotes; and it was well I had, for all at once I caught sight of a cloud of dust, far in the distance, with a sort of glitter running through it every now and then, coming right down upon us.

"I saw my Cossacks looking at me to see how I took it, and so, of course, I had to put on as bold a face as I could; but I don't mind confessing now that I would have given all my chances of promotion to find myself safe across the border again.

"However, it was too late to think of that, for by this time we were so near that we could see we had in front of us a body of at least fifty horsemen, every man with a gun at his back and a sword by his side.

"I tied my white handkerchief to the point of my sword, by way of a flag of truce, and, bidding the Cossacks to stay where they were, I rode forward to meet the Bokhariotes, who slackened speed as I came up and looked at each other in a puzzled kind of way, as if they didn't quite know what to make of me.

"Peace be with you, brothers," said I. "You have doubtless been sent to meet me by the great Ameer, under the shadow of whose throne the whole world rests. May he live a hundred

and twenty years! I bring him gifts from the Czar of the Oorooss (Russians). Let our horses be swift to reach Samarcand, that I may make the dust upon the threshold of Hazret (his majesty) into ointment for my eyelids."

"The fellows looked more puzzled than ever, but no one thought of doubting what I said; for, indeed, it could never have entered into their minds that any Russian could be riding through their deserts with only two men at his back, unless he really had some business there.

"So the leader of the band saluted me politely, and said that he 'laid his forehead in the dust before the messenger of the great Czar,' with a lot more rigmarole of the same sort; and then the whole party turned and rode back toward Samarcand, with me and my Cossacks in the center.

"We slept at Djizak that night, just where the desert ends and the mountain begins. The governor pitched a tent in the garden behind his house, and entertained 'the messenger of the great Czar' sumptuously. My Cossacks—who, like true Russian soldiers, felt quite safe so long as their commanding officer showed no sign of anxiety—ate about two pounds of pilaff (a mess of rice and mutton) apiece, and then fell asleep quite comfortably.

"My slumbers, however, were not so quiet by any means. I had heard enough of the Ameer to be sure that he wouldn't be easily taken in; and if he found me out, it would be only being tortured to death by inches instead of getting cut down at once.

"Once or twice I thought of waking up my Cossacks and making a run for it; but every time I looked out of the tent there were two or three Bokhariotes strolling about with guns on their shoulders, and I soon saw that there was nothing for it but to go right through with it to the end.

"We started again a little before sunrise, and got to Samarcand about noon. The view of the Tchehan-Ata Hills, standing out over the rush and foaming of the river, was very fine; but to my great disgust, as soon as we got to the outskirts of the town, they blindfolded me with a silken scarf, so I missed seeing the very thing that I especially wanted to see.

"We passed through several streets, seemingly crowded, to judge by their noise. Then I felt myself led up a winding path and through a gate; and then, all at once, the bandage was taken away from my eyes, and I found myself in a large paved court, in the midst of which, on a pile of cushions, sat a short, fat, heavy-looking old man, with small, narrow black eyes.

"The moment the Bokhariotes who were with me came near him, they all fell upon their faces; and then I guessed that this old rogue must be the Ameer himself.

"What seek you here, Oorooss?" asked the Ameer, looking keenly at me.

"So then I plucked up courage and told him as steadily as I could (for the unsheathed swords all around were rather unpleasantly suggestive) that I had brought him gifts from the Czar, giving him at the same time my gold watch and my revolver.

"How delighted with the revolver, and must needs fire it off at once, nearly shooting some of his own attendants. But just as all seemed to be going well he piercingly glanced at me and said:

"Surely, my brother, the Czar, would not send such gifts without sending a letter with them?"

"For a moment I felt cold all over, for then it seemed as if we were fairly caught at last, and I knew what mercy we might expect from these ruffians if once the trick were found out.

"I could see my Cossacks looking as blank as I did, but just then a bright thought struck me.

"About a week before, my brother in St. Petersburg had sent me a playbill of the Alexander Theater, with the program of my favorite play of Shakespeare.

"I drew it out of my pocketbook with a flourish, and said:

"The king hath spoken wisdom, and, lo! the letter of the Czar of

Ooroosistan (Russia) is before his sublime eyes."

"The Ameer looked at it, like a monkey at a Greek inscription; but the huge double eagle and the big 'Alexander' (the only word he could read) quite satisfied him.

"He dismissed me with rich presents, and gave me an escort from his own guard as far as the frontier, where I was mighty glad to find myself again.

"As for the precious playbill, it was laid up with all honor in the archives of Bokhara, and when our fellows took Samarcand, seven years later, they must have been rather astonished to find it there."—Golden Days.

## APT PUPILS, THE JAPS.

Quickly Learn Movements of Foreign Sailors.

The first steamship the mikado owned, the officer said, had been bought at Birkenhead second-hand from a mercantile company. They armed it any way at all and sent it to Japan with a British crew, says London Truth. The Japanese had closely watched the maneuvers and methods of the French and other squadrons that had come to Japan at consular calls. They seemed delighted with their bargain. In their impatience to handle the steamship they dismissed the sailors and sent on board a native crew. These men peeled off their clothes to work. They did fairly well in the landlocked Osaka bay. One afternoon the officers and crews of the French warships could not bake out why the Birkenhead steamship went around the bay, circling in a narrow course at the top of its speed, and when it neared the flagship the commander of the steamship called out: "Something wrong with the engine! We can neither stop nor slow down!" "Leave off coaling and keep circling around, but further off from us!" sang out the French captain. This the Japs did. When they stopped a French frigate towed them to their moorings, and they relished the compliments they received on the way in which they handled the wheel.

The mikado, hearing of the occurrence, asked the French admiral if he could arrange to afford the crew of the steamship some naval instruction. He courteously told off for that duty a lieutenant, a midshipman—now the old officer I talked to—and a dozen or so of engineers and sailors. They brought back every evening amusing stories about their pupils, who insisted on taking hot baths daily in swabbing buckets. They continued to cast aside their clothes when hard work had to be got through. However, their zeal to learn, their close application, their quickness, amazed their instructors. They went to their tasks with minds fresh and retentive as a child's and the reasoning powers of clever adults. In six weeks they needed no more teaching, and they could outstrip Breton sailors in baffling the fury of a typhoon.

## He Revised His List.

There is a little Irish tailor in Harlem who prides himself on a reputation for courage. The reputation, however, says the New York Times, was won and is maintained much like that of the tailor in the old story who "killed nine at one blow." Fortunately, this knight of the scissors has discretion.

One morning Mrs. Murphy, a customer, entered the shop, and finding the tailor busy with pencil and paper, asked him what he was doing.

"I'm making a list av the mln on this block who I can lick," said he, pompously.

"Have ye Murphy's name down?" asked she.

"Murphy heads the list," was his reply.

Mrs. Murphy hurried home with the news, and Mr. Murphy came down to the shop with fire in his eye.

"Me woman tells me," he roared, "that you're after making a list of the men you can lick, and that you've got me down at the head of it. Is it true?"

"Sure, and it's true. What of it?"

"Why, you good-for-nothing little grasshopper, I could wipe you out with my little finger. I could wipe the floor with you with both me hands tied."

"Are you sure about that?" asked the tailor, anxiously.

"Sure? Sure I'm sure about it."

"Well," sighed the tailor, regretfully, "then I'll have to scratch you off the list."

## Freshness of Youth.

He was a respectable-looking man, and, judging from his appearance, he was a butcher by trade, and this belief was verified a few minutes later. He carried a white apron under his arm, and as he entered the car a huge cleaver dropped from the bundle to the floor. A youth who had not reached the age of discretion sang out merrily: "Say, mister, you dropped your pocket-knife." The passengers laughed, but they could not help but think that the youth took a long chance on kidding a man with a cleaver.—Albany Journal.

Don't neglect work that is really important for reform work that doesn't amount to anything.

You don't have to be impolite to people because you dislike them.



Painting the hands with a solution of gutta percha in benzine or acetone is recommended for surgeons instead of rubber gloves. It does not impair the touch or flexibility of the skin.

The chemical factories of Japan, including paper and ceramic mills, are stated in a government report to number 840. Salt is made in 75, pharmaceutical products in 43, illuminating oils in 95, matches in 40, colors in 53, gas in 4, incense in 6. The employees number 38,591, of whom 19,583 are women.

Graphite deposits are not common, and since the failure of the old mines in Cumberland, England, worked for more than 300 years, the largest supply has come from Ceylon. Now, however, it is announced that an important deposit of graphite, worked during the past year on a slope of Mount Bopple, near the north coast of Queensland, gives promise of furnishing a large supply. Seams varying in thickness from one to six feet have been discovered.

A considerable industry has recently been developed in Sweden on the basis of an invention made by Joseph Phister, an Austrian, whereby coloring matter is forced into fresh-cut wood. It takes the place of the sap, and gives to the wood a brilliant color, which does not fade after the wood has become seasoned. Birch, beech, alder, maple, elm and basswood are the varieties most successfully treated. The dye can be forced through lengths of wood as great as 13 feet. When seasoned and polished, the colored wood presents a beautiful appearance, and is largely used for making furniture, and also for the fittings of ships and tram-cars.

Among the arguments used by advocates of the adoption of the metric system of weights and measures in the United States one of the most striking is that the change would save an enormous amount of mental waste. This argument has been especially pressed in Great Britain, where masters of schools have estimated that the metric system would save from one to three years in the time required for teaching. The mathematical master of the Edinburgh High School told Lord Kelvin that in view of the wearing out of teachers and scholars in obtaining a knowledge of the British system of units, the adoption of the metric system would cause not only a saving of time, but "an economy of mental effort which is incalculable."

The cavities left in bones after surgical operations have been a source of much trouble, discharges of pus usually continuing for months. Acting on the hint given by dentists' operations on decaying teeth, Professor Moorhof, of Vienna, about five years ago, began seeking a means of artificially filling the bone cavities and for a time experimented with a putty-like paste of iodoform. This failed to reach all parts of the cavity. A new filling has been adopted therefore, consisting of iodoform, spermaceti and oil sesame, and, as this melts at 122 deg. F., it is poured into the cavity in a liquid state, when it penetrates to every part. The filling is absorbed and replaced by granulation tissue so slowly that no poisoning occurs. This method has been applied in about 220 cases, and it is claimed that there has been no failures.

## LUCK IN LOTTERIES TOO LATE.

Strange Caprices of Fortune in Prize Drawings.

If men will go a-wooing Miss Fortune they have no right to grumble at her flouts and caprices; but it is a piece of cruel luck when she condescends to smile on a man and he never knows it until too late.

This has just been the experience of an Austrian workman called Mayer, says the Detroit News-Tribune, who some time ago became the owner of a Turkish lottery bond. Losing his employment shortly after, and being on the verge of starving, he decided a month ago to part with the bond for anything he could get for it, and started for the bank with this object. On his arrival at the bank the paper which was to procure him a meal or two was missing.

This was bad enough, but the crowning blow fell when he learned that the lost bond bore the winning number in the lottery, and that its owner was thus entitled to a prize of \$125,000. He is now advertising in the Austrian papers a reward for the restoration of the vagrant, which, if recovered, will make him a Croesus among his fellows.

This is just the kind of a trick fortune loves at times to play on foolish man. A similar story of lottery luck comes from Vienna. Ten years ago a merchant dreamed on several consecutive nights of a certain number. So impressed was he by these dreams that he bought a State lottery ticket bearing the number. At the next drawing he was unsuccessful; again he purchased the same number, with the same disappointing result. For ten years he persisted in his quest of for-

tune with tickets bearing the number of his dreams, but always failure resulted. Finally he died just as he was about to purchase another ticket, and a few months after his death it was announced that the ticket of the dream number had won a prize of \$25,000.

Not many months ago in Berun a workman stepped into the shop of a poor widow and asked permission to light his pipe. Drawing a piece of paper from his pocket, he made a spill of it, lit his pipe, and, throwing down the charred paper, walked away without a word of thanks. On the following morning the widow, while sweeping her shop floor, picked up the discarded and partly burnt paper, and, recognizing it as a lottery ticket, put it in her pocket.

She had almost forgotten the incident when she chanced to see a list of the winning numbers in a great lottery drawing; then it flashed on her that she had somewhere part of a ticket which might possibly be entitled to a prize. She discovered the crumpled paper, and to her amazement found that it bore the number to which the first prize of \$50,000 had been awarded. What the feelings of the workman must have been if he ever discovered how much that pipe had cost him may be left to the imagination.

In January of last year a murderer named Heifert had just been sentenced in Moravia to penal servitude for life when he learned that he had won a prize of \$10,000 in the State lottery, and a few weeks earlier Ernesto Hijar was buried in a pauper's grave at Barcelona on the very day on which a ticket found in his possession won a prize of \$40,000 in the Spanish national lottery.

## PRESIDENT'S RAPID READING.

He Is Fortunate Enough to Be a "Photographic" Reader.

I have no record of the President's recent reading, but it is not a secret that he is "keeping up the pace." Some of my friends are still "reading at" Morley's three thick volumes of Gladstone's "Life." The President, of course, read them promptly, gaining, I am told, not only a fresh, but a much more favorable view of the great leader, whom he confessed he had hitherto failed to understand. A publisher not long ago told me that Mr. Roosevelt seemed to have his eye on the authors of their house, and now and then a private letter, full of appreciation, would pass through the publisher's hands on the way to an author. In the thick of the campaign of 1904 I happen to know that he re-read all of Macaulay's "History of England," all of Rhodes' "History of the United States and Dickens' "Martin Chuzzlewit."

The other afternoon he was handed a new book—a not very long dissertation on a matter of current interest. That evening he entertained a number of guests at dinner, and later there was a musical party at the White House, at which he was present. At luncheon, the next day, the giver said to him: "Mr. President, of course you have not had time to look at that book." "Oh, yes," said the President; "I have read it." Whereupon he proved that he had done so by his criticism of the work. One day, lately, a book of short stories was sent to him; almost by return mail came a letter thanking the sender and saying he had already enjoyed the stories greatly in serial publication.

"How does he manage to do it?" All I know about this is that, in the first place, he has by nature or practice the faculty of extremely rapid reading. There are some men of letters and "general readers" who never have been able to acquire this art. Others can take in paragraphs or pages well-nigh at a glance. The President must be one of those photographic readers, who take almost instantly the impression of a whole paragraph or nearly a whole page, the eye running along the line with lightning-like rapidity, and leaping to the more important phrases as by instinct. I have known the following to occur: A Congressman makes a statement to him and hands him a typewritten paper. Almost immediately the President hands it back to him; whereupon the Congressman says deprecatingly: "Mr. President, may I not leave this paper with you? I am anxious that you should read it." "But," answers the President, "I have read it; you can examine me in it, if you wish."—Century.

## Thunderer and Poet.

An early copy of Swinburne's "Poems and Ballads" volume (1866) came into the hands of Dallas, then chief literary reviewer to the London Times, who, after ruminating on what we will call the pygmy poems, strode off to Moxon's with an ultimatum. Either, said he, let them withdraw the book or he would denounce it and destroy it. As they had no wish to be denounced or destroyed themselves, they preferred to accept the former alternative. John Camden Hotten brought out the book.—Fortnightly Review.

How often you hear the expression: "He thinks no one has any rights but himself."

If all men were wise the gold brick industry would cease to flourish.