

**THE REWARD OF COLUMBUS.**

To Christ he cried to quell Death's deafening measure,  
Sung by the storm to Death's own charless sea;  
To Christ he cried for glimpse of grass or tree,  
When, hovering o'er the calm, Death watched at leisure;  
And when he showed the men, now dazed with pleasure,  
Faith's new world glittering starlike on the sea,  
"I trust that by the help of Christ," said he,  
"I presently shall light on golden treasure."  
What treasure found her? Chains and pains and sorrow—  
Yea, all the wealth these noble seekers find  
Whose foot's the mark the music of mankind!  
'Twas his to lend a life: 'twas Men's to borrow;  
'Twas his to make, but not to share, the morrow.  
Who in Love's memory lives this morn enshrined,  
—Theodore Watts in London Athenaeum.

**THE LOST MAIL BAGS**

It was evening in Vladivostok. Out on the harbor the dark waters of the sea of Japan reflected the twinkling lights from half a dozen vessels lying snugly at anchor, and westward behind the town the moon shone dimly on the snowclad plains and rugged slopes of the Sikota mountains, beyond which, across the frozen waters of the Amur, stretched for thousands of leagues the great Siberian desert. Vladivostok might almost be called the "jumping off place" of the world, lying as it does on the very eastern extremity of the great Russian empire.

A few years ago it was a barren spit of land, uninhabited and forlorn. Now the Russian drum beats at sunrise, and ships of all nations float their flags in the harbor.

On this particular evening, while in the narrow street of the town all was silent save for the occasional tread of a Russian sentry, sounds of mirth and laughter floated from the brilliantly lighted windows of the long, low garrison house, for the commandant of the station was giving a dinner.

It was quite a cosmopolitan gathering that filled the long table, for among the guests were Russian, French and English naval officers, and two or three Anglo-Indians who had come up from Shanghai on the mail steamer.

The last course had been removed, and the quickened conversation that comes with the cigars had just commenced, when the commandant was summoned outside, and, when he returned a moment or two later, the most observant of the guests detected a faint shadow in his face.

The assemblage broke up at a late hour, and as the guests passed out on the way to their vessels a young French officer cried out to the commandant: "What is the matter, mon capitaine? You look sad and depressed."

"It is nothing, Lieutenant Garceau," he replied—"nothing but the onerous burden of official duties. However, if you have on board your vessel a man with iron nerves and the bravery of an African lion you can send him to me."

The Frenchman, taking this in jest, laughed and passed on with a cheery "au revoir."

One young man, who had overheard this brief conversation, purposely lingered till the last, and as the commandant held out his hand to bid him good night he said:

"Captain Shanoff, pardon my intrusion. I heard your conversation with the Frenchman. I saw, though he did not, that you were in earnest, and now I offer you my services."

The captain looked at him in surprise. "You are one of the passengers by the mail steamer from Shanghai?" he said.

"You are correct," said the man. "My name is Luke Mowbray, of the Indian civil service."

"And what is your object in making this proposition?" asked the captain.

"I am fond of adventure and sport," replied Mowbray. "Since leaving India I have had a dull time of it, and my chance for excitement and change will be doubly welcome."

The Russian captain stood in hesitation for a moment, and then leading the way silently to an apartment beyond the dining hall he motioned Mowbray to a seat and sat down facing him.

"Now," said Captain Shanoff, "I will explain my conversation with the Frenchman as briefly as possible. Thirty miles from here, among the Sikota mountains, there is a small detachment of Russians engaged in mining operations. Mail bags are conveyed to them twice a week by a native, who makes the return journey in two days. A month ago the carrier left Vladivostok for the encampment. He has not been heard of since. Two weeks ago a second carrier started, and he, too, has completely disappeared. For more than a month we have heard nothing of our companions. It is a profound mystery. Tonight I learn that no one can be found who will undertake to carry the mail bag. The natives here are cowards, and what few men I have, while they are good soldiers, are not the men to unravel a mystery."

"What is your theory?" asked Mowbray. "Robbers? Wild beasts? Or could they have lost their way?"

"Wild animals are scarce," said the captain. "There are no robbers in this part of Russia, and the path, while difficult, is plain."

"When should the mail bag go?" went on Mowbray.

"It came by today's steamer, and should leave early in the morning," replied Shanoff.

"Well," said Mowbray, "the adventure promises well. I will undertake to reach the encampment with the mail bag."

Captain Shanoff at first refused to listen to his proposition; but Mowbray insisted so firmly that he at last gave a reluctant consent.

Although he hesitated to incur the responsibility that would assuredly fall on his shoulders in case anything should befall the brave young fellow, he was secretly overjoyed at his good fortune, for the strange disappearance of the two

**Rathmel.**

Our new school building is about completed.  
Wm. Lyle has moved into David Lyons house.  
Dick Hughes went to Adrian mines to work on Monday.

Grant Allen and Mr. McCullough have moved to our town.  
Dr. Hughes and L. L. Henry attended the Punksatawney fair last week.

R. L. Tenge, we are informed, will at an early date move his family here.  
The Dean school commenced Monday, Archie Smitten and Miss Reynolds are the teachers.

Rev. Geo. Statler on Sunday evening, Sept. 25th preached his farewell sermon to his flock in this place.  
Mr. Wagget and wife, of DuBois, spent Sunday in town, the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cameron.

Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Lending will commence housekeeping in the house of A. W. Mulholland in a short time.  
Sharp Armstrong and family spent last week visiting friends in Armstrong county and attending the fair at Dayton.

Our ball players appear to have received no calls since they sent the Reynoldsville team to the shop for repairs.  
Wm. and Dr. Henry, of Falls Creek, will move their mercantile business to this place as soon as they can procure a suitable room, so says report.

Dr. E. Q. McHenry and family will attend the Indiana county fair this week; they will also visit friends at Blairsville. They expect to be absent ten days.  
R. L. Tenge, our mine boss, has his arm on for the person that made the break in last week's issue of THE STAR in regard to the increased output of coal at Sprague mine since his administration began.

Quite a number of new dwelling houses are in course of erection in town at present. The B. L. & Y. C. M. Co. recently surveyed and sold another plot of very desirable lots which appears to have aroused the building boom.

John Wylan has the ground broken and foundation laid for a hotel building which when completed will be one of the grandest hotels in this section of the county. It will, we understand be fitted out with all the modern improvements.

H. E. Burton, the genial clerk in John Smith's store, will move in a short time to Patton, Cambria county, where he is engaging in the mercantile business. Although sorry to part with Mr. Burton and family all join in wishing them happiness and prosperity in their new home.

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