SS SS ES VER RLD ve lions i, and put on, thing is coftened or ladies' as in per-

not con-He has a

tridge when te from the my rifle is box con-ross an one sition ready artridges in great emer-pid firing is the its ten est of the ermans is etachable as artridges in-Mauser,

GOA

72

ary different tor-cars, and tead of the stead of the are placed in British motor being roads have been midred yards illes of these agh not comfeeneally, a air of wheels by macadam, there is no land, though up through have notice French word down "—on

a member diversor be tional prayer in connection Qualtrough and blasphemy amendment: lmighty to be a world as He ution was

bread made

Mr. Frank

the assistant b-inspector of found on the Bruce Grove

THE SILVER DAGGER

R. A. J. WALLING,

Author of "Flaunting Moll," "A Sea Dog of Devon," &c.

CHAPTER IV. WHICH TORFREY TELLS THE STORY OF THE SHRINE.

Upon this amazing discovery, a distressing agitation seized Torfrey. Pushing by Mr. Radford, he knelt down beside the body. "By Heaven!" he exclaimed, "it's not cold. He's still living, thank God! Run down to the house at once for help. Get them to bring up something we can use as a distocher: and bring some brandy." tretcher; and bring some brandy."
Lucy ran off in the direction of the house.

"A strange encounter," said Mr. Radford, be a little sharp, though getting old. He might have lain or days, I daresay, if I had not noticed the disturbance of the bushes,"
"Yes," replied Torfrey. "I should never

One gets into observant habits when one has lived in wild countries," said his com-

panion.

A little procession, advancing from the house, interrupted the conversation. Lucy led the way, followed by men who bore a tresle-board on which some cushions had been placed. The servants were a little frightened as they looked upon the silent form of Tom Gannett. Torfrey spoke a few words to his sister in a whisper. "I'll have him taken to he went on. "Wo'll not take him to the honse, for the sake of the girl. Mr. Rad-ford, you will excuse me. If you will walk, back with Lucy, I'll follow when I've seen

that can be done for the poor chap."
The group divided, two men carrying the body towards the cottage of Torfrey's keeper, and their master walking beside them, while the rest of the party went back to the house. Torfrey saw Tom Gannett safely deposited in Mrs. Ross's best bed-room, sent a messenger to Charlie Pudifin his doctor friend, and awaited their He informed them of the circum-of the discovery, and learnt from Moskings's brief examination that the man was suffering from a severe concussion, the result of a blow at the back of the head, but that he might recover. He invited the two to follow him when all had been done uld be done, and walked slowly back

to the Villa Zamora.

Torfrey was sick at heart. An indefinable sense of horror and sadness came upon him. The mystery of this affair seemed to grip his mind, and his depression was all the greater in contrast with the elation of greater in contrast with the elation of restorday. Arriving at the house, he found his sister with Mr. Radford in the library.

"Here you are, Mat," said Lucy.

"How is poor Tom? Will he get over it?" "Hoskings says—Hoskings is a doctor to is staying with Charlie Pudifin—Hos-

kings says that he has concussion of the They will be coming along presently.' Meanwhile we can do nothing more?" "Nothing that I can see. I can't discover anything that gives a clue. There must have been somebody in the woods last night, who first frightened the girt, and

then struck down Tom as he ran to her rescue. As to Polly, it will be better not to cross-examine her till the police come to

"You laughed at her idea, Torfrey," ob-served Mr. Radford.
"Of course. I thought it was the fancy of a silly girl. I had not heard that Tom was missing; in fact, nobody missed him because he was supposed to have started on

a journey early this morning."

"I never laugh at 'the idea of anything unusual," said Mr. Radford, "whether natural or supernatural. There is generally comething at the bottom of these fancies. And that is a particularly cerie place for dark happenings at midnight. By the way, Torfrey, you promised to tell me the story."

"Yes, it won't take lang. It may help "Yes; it won't take long. It may help to lift our minds off this mystery for the

time," said Torfrey.
"I am most anxious to hear it," Radford remarked. As he spoke, Pudifin and his friend Hoskings were announced, and made their report of the condition of the patient. "Martin is going to tell Mr. Radford the ory of the Shrine in the Wood, Mr. Pudia," said Lucy. "You have heard it, of

"Not in detail," the curate answered, "Not in detail," the curate answered,
"and I am sure Hoskings would be glad to
make one of the listeners."
"This house and this estate," Torfrey
began, "owe their origin not to the Torfreys, but to a family which has now been
dissipated over the face of the earth. I
think it was in the sixteenth century
that one Gomez—of a refugee family of
Spaniards—settled in this part of England
and began to build up a new line. At first and began to build up a new line. At first they had little wealth, but in the course of generations a great fortune descended to them from the old stock in Aragon. They them from the old stock in Aragon. They were owners of mines, I believe; at any rate, when fortune did commence to accrue to them it accumulated very fact. As time passed, they had become almost English, marrying and intermarrying among our people. It, was a Gaspar Gomez, who, at the end of the eighteenth century, added a great purchase to this estate, and built the Villa Zamora—house its foreign-sounding name. This Gaspar was a fiery fellow—a Spaniard more Spanish than any of the line had been before since their settlement in Devon—and before since their settlement in Devon—and what is more, he married a Spanish wife. le was a reckless man, and he came to loggerheads with loggerheads with my great-grandfather, Septimus Torfrey, who was a lawyer in Exeter, and owned some land here which is how part of the estate. My own opinion of that great-grandfather of mine is not very exalted."

"Bit of a shark, perhaps?" said Mr. Radford.

"You shall see. He managed to get Gasper Gomez involved in a lawsuit which dragged on for years, and eventually ruined him. He bought the estate over his head, and never allowed an opportunity for humiliating him to pass. The feud grew more bitter. Collecting the remnants of his humiliating him to pass. The feud grew more bitter. Collecting the remnants of his fortune, Gomez went to the other side of the river to live in the cottage that stood or the site of the very place you now occupy, Mr. Radford. Septimus Torfrey, then a widower, came to reside here. Gomez died swearing that Torfrey had swindled him out of his property, and passing on as a legacy to his son the task of wreaking vengeance

to his son the task of wreaking vengeance spon the usurper.

"Then," Torfrey continued, "a curious thing happened. My great-grandfather became obsessed by an insane passion for the widow of his former enemy. She was a Spanish seftora of nearly fifty, but retained her beauty longer than, I am told, these dusky graces usually do. She had imbibed all her husband's hatred for the house and the name of Torfrey. She spurned his suit, and devoted her remaining years to inspiring the same hatred in the breast of her son. But her dislike and scorn made no difference to Torfrey's passion—he was mad with it. Misfortune after misfortune fell upon the house of Gomez. Something went wrong with the mines, their income ceased with it. Misfortune after misfortune fell upon the house of Gomez. Something went wrong with the mines, their income ceased altogether, and they were reduced to extreme poverty. The little estate across the river was sold. Torfrey offered to buy it and make her a present of it; but she would not hear of consenting. He did not buy the estate, but when their effects were disserted to but the total to be the total to be the total to be the total to be the total total deep in the total to be the total total total deep in the total total deep in the total total total deep in the total to

persed, he bought a lot of things, including a portrait of the senora—"
"There it hangs upon your wall, I perceive," said Radford.

ceive," said Radford.

They all turned to look where he pointed.

"Yes, that's it. Did you guess?"

"Oh, the resemblance to the statue in the chapel is so complete," replied Radford.

"Well," Torfrey resumed, "the widow died cursing Torfrey, and transmitting the curse to her son for avenution. The hey was curse to her son for execution. The boy was taken away by some relatives in Spain, and the direct line died out from this neighbourhood. I believe there was a branch founded by a cadet of the family in another part of the country, but I have lost trace of that. The curious part of it again is that the death of Seuora Gomez did not affect the passion of my great-grandfather. He still worshipped her. He had bought at the sale a locket containing a tress of her hair and a miniature. It had belonged to her husband, and appears to have been included accidentally among the jewellery sold. It was that tress of hair which he held in his dead hand, and which now lies with him in his coffin. The locket with the miniature was buried with him."

"A strange old fetish-worshipper!" said

Mr. Radford.
"Yes," Torfrey replied, "as mad on this
"Yes," That," he conpoint as mad could be. That," he concluded, "is the story of the Shrine in the Wood. The Torfreys have always been warned of the curse which rests upon them; but they are not superstitious, and so many years have passed years have passed without a sign to show whether the family of Gomez still exists that I do not think we need fear being dis-

turbed by its fulfilment."
"I would not be too rash if I were you," said Mr. Radford. "These Spanish families have a habit of lingering on and suddenly reasserting themselves. I know something of them, for I have travelled a good deal in Spain, and in Mexico, too. You never in Spain, and in Mexico, too. You never know when the shadow of a Gomez may lie across your door,"
"They have lain perdu for a long time, at

any rate," said Torfrey.
"You a long time," Lucy remarked. "By "Yes, a long time," Lucy remarked. "By the way, what would they say for 'perdu' in Spanish, Mr. Radford?" "Perdu—concealed, hidden? Let me see, why, tescondido, I fancy. Why do you ask?"

ask?"
"Oh, merely a whim to know. I often think about them."
Lucy was busying herself with the tea things, which by general request had been brought into the library, when the arrival of the police-constable was notified to Torton the way and the police constable was notified to Torton. frey, who went out. Presently he returned to ask for the attendance of Pudifin and Hoskings, and the four were closeted for a long time in consultation with Polly. Mr. Radford had taken his departure before the interview was over, asking Lucy to apolo-

gise for him to his host.

"A strange business," said Hoskings to the curate as they walked up the hill together.

"Most strange. I don't know what to make of it. There is trouble in the air."

"You're as jumpy as Mr. Radford," said the doctor.
"Ah! What do you make of the new-

comer?" "A venerable-looking old chap—a wonder-ful constitution. Did you notice his skin and complexion?" "Yes. Did you notice his eyes?"

"Yes: strong and dark."
"Anything else, Hoskings?" "Nothing particularly."

"Nothing sinister?"
"No; I did not watch him closely,"

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH HOSKINGS MAKES A PROMISE. The diligent and intelligent police constable who guarded the peace in this large and scattered parish found himself posed by mysterious case. He sent for more gence and intelligence from headquarters,

but it also failed. Torfrey was more upset than he could exunder a sense of impending woe without having any definite idea of what he feared. In the meantime, Lucy wrote a letter to Diego. A good deal of it was of a private and confidential nature, very important to Diego, no doubt, but of no consequence to the current of the narrative. The essential part of it was this :-

"You know Spanish, Diego? I know few words. 'Senorita' is one: it means 'Miss' or 'young lady.' 'Escondida,' I find on inquiry, means 'hidden.' find on inquiry, means 'hidden.'
'Vamos,' I believe, is, in plain English,
'let us vamosse.' 'Playa'—does not that
mean sea-shore or beach? But what is

'Sabequien es'? I am curious to know.
You shall teach me Spanish.
"We are all in a terrible state of excitement about the Mystery of the Woods, which I have already described to you. At present I cannot see very much further into it than the policement. into it than the policeman. What do you make of it? We are thrilled at every turn. 'Visions is about,' as the poet says. We dream of brigands and burglars and midnight marauders, and life is become a delirious shilling shocker. Don't delay a day longer than you must, but com-and take a hand in the game." Before she posted that letter, Lucy re-

opened it to add a postscript:-"Yet another sensation. My letter will resemble a late edition of the evening paper. Last night, old Selwey's farm house—you know the lovely lane that leads to it, Diego—was burnt about his ears, and he just got his family out with their lives. It has been decided that this was the work of incendiaries, for when the fire was discovered, not only the house, but every rick and outbuilding on the place also was alight. There's not a

Here is more matter for our policeman and his attendant minions to break their heads on. Nobody saw anything sus-picious; there is no more clue than there was to the perpetrator of the wicked assault on Tom Gannett. Martin is distracted and desperate. A plague has broken out among his cattle, and you know how proud he is of his South

Devons.
"By the way, when a Spaniard wants to swear, does he say 'Por Dios'?" Lucy waited with a proper amount of eagerness for the answer to her letter, and when she received it she went out for a long ride, and a very hard ride. Her brother in quired that evening when Diego might be

expected.
"He has been called back to London, and shortly, The has been called back to London, and has to put off this visit," she said, shortly. Tom Gannett had recovered consciousness three days after he was discovered in the woods, but he had been terribly ill, and Hoskings had forbidden him to be bothered with questions of any sort until a fortnight had passed. It was two days later than the fire at Selwey's farm when he and Pudifin

'Right as rain," said Tom, with a weak

mile, and his visitors both laughed. "How did I come here, Mr. Pudifin?" "You're not to worry yourself about that "But I feel all right. What's wrong with

me is I can't recollect what happened."

"Can you remember the night when you were talking to Polly at the gate on the edge of the copes?"

"Ah!" said Tom. "Now I've got it.
Why, yes. I wanted to speak to Mr. Torfrey, and he was away at Haylands. I
waited till nearly cleven o'clock, and he
hadn't come back. I wanted to tell him I
was going to Westport next day to see my was going to westport here thay to see my brother, of course. And Polly walked along with me to the gate. And we stood there talking for a brave time—about one thing and another." "Yes, Tom; till nearly midnight. Polly

has told us."
"Then Polly's all right—it wasn't her?"
"What was not Polly?"
"It wasn't her they were murdering?"

"Who were murdering?"

"I don't know. Somebody. I was a bit of the way up the hill when I heard a spacech. I listened for a few seconds. Then I heard another screech. Of course, I hadn't got two thoughts in my mind but her voice. I turned and ran down the hill, and I heard the screeching again. I jumped over the gate and into the woods, and ran along the path. I fancied I saw a light just along there by that leery place where old Mr. Torfrey had himself buried, and I was rushing on when I heard a sort of a laugh. I turned round sharp and saw a man. the mischief are you doing?' says I. 'monkey trick's this? Who is it?' then I felt a crack on the back of the head, and saw all the lightnings of the sky-and that was all."

Pudifin and Hoskings looked at one another. The story corroborated what was already known, but it gave them no new

"Did you not see or hear anything or anybody before you heard the kind of "No," said Tom, "only the sound of my own feet hoofing it along the ground."

"Anything peculiar about the laugh?"

"No; a low sort of laugh; but any sound is strange in the woods at night, and I remember that I improve when I heard it.

member that I jumped when I heard it. I had no time to think. But what about Polly; it wasn't her that was screeching?"
"Yes, it was," said Pudifin. "She thought she heard someone moving, and saw someone in the bushes, and she was frightened, and screamed."
"She saw and heard somebody? But they didn't touch her. "That was lucky but

they didn't touch her. That was lucky, but they didn't touch ner. That was curious. I wonder. ."

"But I forbid you to wonder or to talk about it any more, now, Tom," said the poisoned."

Pudifin looked at Hoskings, and saw Pudifin looked at Toofrey intently. doctor. "You're not strong enough. You can puzzle it out when you get quite well. Polly will be glad to hear you are so much better, and we'll send her along to see you to-morrow."
Tom Gannett had to undergo the same

ordeal as Polly and everybody else at the hands of the police, but that was as far as they got. The affair remained mysterious, The Rev. Charles Pudifin, who had wished his friend Hoskings good-bye soon after Tom's recovery, and received the promise of another visit when Christmas had passed, was an observant person, and there were a good many things happening that he could not understand in that corner of his parish where lay the Villa Zamone.

where lay the Villa Zamora.

Although Lucy had chosen a lover elsewhere, Pudifin's affection-rarefied by the konwledge that he could never possess her—was none the less constant, and there was nothing that he would not have done to secure her happiness. was not happy; she was restless, and more than usually flighty. Further, Diego Holmes's business in London still prevented him from coming West.

Another feature of the life in

Another feature of the life in that corner of his parish was the condition of his friend Torfrey. Why the incident of Tom Gannett and the slight misfortunes which had occurred on his estate should worry a man like Torfrey as they did was hard for Pudifin to conceive; why he should allow himself to settle down in a sort of melancholy gloom from which no interest seemed strong enough to stir him, was equally difficult to comprehend.

It was clear that some occult influence and preying upon his mind. Radford, returning from a brief yachting trip, told the curate that he noticed the same symptoms, and begged him to induce Torfrey to take a voyage abroad if he could not be a properly to the curate that he noticed the same symptoms. awakened in any other way. But Torfrey would not hear of it. He denied that there was anything the matter with him, and said that now Radford was home again, and he had a congenial neighbour, he would not think of leaving the place. He did brighten for a few weeks, made a confidant of his congenial neighbour, and life resumed its normal course at the Villa

Zamora for all but Lucy.

Pudifin watched her quietly with a grow ing apprehension and sorrow, as he saw some of the light die out of her eyes. Diego did not arrive for Christmas; Lucy was out riding all day, and did not share the Torfrey pew in church with her brother and Mr. Radford, a fact which was observed and commented upon by the whole village.

The curate hailed with almost effusive joy the second visit of his friend Hoskings in the New Year to share his lodgings at St. Maurice for a fortnight. They sat late into the first night, smoking and talking. Pudifin waited almost anxiously for the talk to drift into the channel in which his own thoughts ran. It was soon there when Hoskings inquired after Tom Gannett.

"Tom's all right now," said he.

"Did they ever discover anything more about that affair," said Hoskings.

"Not a single thing," replied Pudifin, hastening to unbosom himself. "It was the

hastening to unbosom himself. "It was the strangest thing I ever heard of, and I can date from it a lot of sorrow. I don't think we've seen the last of it yet."

"Why, how's that, Charlie? What on earth's the matter? You look as melancholy as a Malahide cod about it."

"Of course, Dick, it must be difficult for you to see; but I assure you it's true. There's Miss Torfrey—you're rather interested in her?" ested in her?"

"Well—I gathered that you were; but it's the same thing. Yes; what of her?"

"She's not the same girl, Dick, since that

She's thoroughly unhappy. lover has not been near her time. months. She's oppressed in that dreadful place by the melancholia that's seized upon place by the melancholia that's seized upon Torfrey. I can't tell what she sees or fears; I do not ask her, naturally, but I believe it is what I see and fear—that some influence is working upon Torfrey which will ruin him. mind and body, if it is not crushed.

"And all this," said Hoskings, "dates from an assault upon a servant? My dear Charlie, it's preposterous."

"Yes—the whole thing's as preposterous as you please; but there are the facts. You find me an explanation and you'll do me a great service."

great service."
"You must have some theory—the facts have unfolded themselves before your eyes."

"I have a theory: it's so far-fetched that

was a case of touch-and-go, but you'll soon be as strong as a horse. You feel all right now, don't you?"

"Right as rain" and There is no be to be as strong as a horse. You feel all right now, don't you?"

"Right as rain" and There is no brother—and the influence he has over her brother—and the influence he has over

Pudifin got up and paced the room.

"If I could only dare to offer my help to "Do you think she wants it?"

"Can I offer it and yet appear to be dis-interested; in fact, am I quite dis-interested?" "My dear Charlie, examine yourself in this Jesuitical manner and you're well on the road to the lunatic asylum. Get rid of all these moonshiny notions, and tackle the subject fairly. I shall go down to the Villa Zamora to-morrow to renew acquaintanceship all round, and you may depend on me: I shall offer Miss Torfrey any help she wants, whether she like me or not

In pursuance of this intention they to the Villa Zamora the following day. They found Radford there, and Miss Hayland came in with Lucy soon after they had joined Torfrey and his new friend in the library. Radford talked pleasantly and jovially, describing some of his adventures in the Mediterranean during his recent expedition, and urging upon Torfrey the hygienic advantages of the sea-breezes. The talk distract this way and that till Radford said advantages of the sea-breezes. The talk drifted this way and that till Radford said

at last: "Why, Dr. Hoskings, I saw your patient this morning. He seems quite well now. By the way, I have not met you since that afternoon when we sat here listening to Torfrey's fascinating foundation of his house. A strange and interesting story, that. I suppose none of your hereditary enemies have turned up yet, Miss Torfrey?" when we sat here listening to

"If they have." said Lucy, looking up

"If they have." said Lucy, looking up from the low chair where she sat looking ont on to the lawn, "they have been well disguised."

"A cryptic utterance, my dear young lady," responded the old gentleman. "But don't make too sure: you remember what I said about the inconvenient knack of these Spanish families of rising out of their ashes? However, there's no clue to the person who gave Master Tom such an ugly crack. I presume. Torfrey!"

the person who gave Master Tom such an ugly crack, I presume, Torfrey?"

"None whatever—yet," said Torfrey, and was then silent, evidently desiring not to dwell on the subject. He became morose, indeed, from the moment it was mentioned.

"Ah, then," said Mr. Radford, "we must wait. Have you heard from London?"

"Eh? answered Torfrey, as one disturbed in a dream. "Oh, you mean about the in a dream. "Oh, you mean about the detective—yes, I heard this morning; the man is coming down to-morrow."
"Detective?" said the curate, inquir-

ingly.
"Oh, you didn't know, Charlie, that I took Mr. Radford's advice, and sent to London for a private detective to look into these things. My cattle are still suffering mysteriously. I believe they are being

that he was regarding Torfrey intently.
"Yes," said Mr. Radford. "All these "Yes," said Mr. Radford. "All these little things seemed to be worrying Torfrey so badly that I suggested the private detective. The police are all very well, but in a matter of this sort—if there is anything in it—you want real expert advice."
"I'm very glad," said Pudifin. "It's the right thing to do, if only to set Torfrey at

his ease."
They all seemed to be looking at Torfrey as a sort of patient who required coddling; and he took the treatment without a prospoke to Meg Hayland now and then.

"You're right, Pudifin," said Mr. Radford. "It's no good to let things drift.

I'm only sorry that I shan't be here to see the solving of the myster."

the solving of the mystery."
"Are you going away?" asked Pudifin.
"Yes—I came to say au revoir this aftermoon. I'm off to the Mediterranean this evening: the Castilian will sail at eight."

The two friends remained till Radford had gone, and then wished Torfrey goodbye. As they left the room, Pudifin received a signal from Lucy which made his

ceived a signal from Lucy which made his heart leap. It was the first sign she had given him. He could hardly contain his excitement when he was outside the house with Hoskings.

"She wants to speak to us, Dicky" said he. "We must wait about."

"By all means, old man. Let's take a turn or two along the edge of the garden."

"What do you make of it, Hoskings?"

"Radford? I don't know. I must see more. There's nothing apparent."

"You are blind! I see a ray of light." "Where?"
"The detective is coming to-morrow."
"Yes." "Torfrey has been induced to send for him by the advice of Mr. Radford."

"That shows a distinterested friendship on the part of Mr. Radford." "Yes; apparently so."
"Mr. Radford is leaving to-night—before

the detective arrives." "He is going in his yacht, and taking his whole establishment with him."

"Probably."
"The detective will have no more ground "I don't quite see what that signifies.

We are not detectives."

"My dear Dick, the whole thing is a

"My dear Dick, the whole thing is a blind."

Hoskings shrugged his shoulders sceptically, and they paced for Miss Torfrey. It was Polly who came to them, and said Miss Torfrey would be glad to see them in she took them by a devious way through the back of the house. The first moments of the meeting were awkward. Then Hoskings took the bull by the horns. He said:

"You'll excuse me if I am bluff, Miss Torfrey, but it's no use to beat about the bush. There is something wrong. We're here—we came down to-day on purpose—to here we came down to-day on purpose—to know whether you will tell us what it is, and to offer you our help in any practicable

"I'm glad you've spoken to the point, Mr. "I'm glad you've spoken to the point, Mr. Hoskings," said Lucy. "It was in order to try to enlist your help that I wanted to see you now. There is something wrong—very wrong indeed. The unhappy fact is that I don't know what is wrong, except that I see by brother sunk in a condition which gives me frightful pain, and that there are other things, which I cannot name to you, that have upset me dreadfully. However, the case of my brother is the principal thing. I am not a logical person: I'm not very deep anyway; but I can see things, and what is plain to my woman's eye is that all this vague misfortune and this depression in him is coincident with Mr. Radford's arrival, here. I mistrust Mr. Radford; I fear he is here. I mistrust Mr. Radford; I fear he is no friend to us."
"What did I tell you, Dick?" said Pudi-

fin.

"Miss Torfrey," Hoskings answered, "my friend Pudifin has been rubbing it into me that in some way Radford is a mysterious that in some way respectively. old man of the sea whose influence is wreck-ing the happiness of yourself and your brother. Candidly, I can see nothing in brother. Candidly, I can see nothing in him but a very ordinary, only a rather interesting, old gentleman. I admit that I may be quite wrong; I am open to conviction. Can you say anything substantial

him?"
"Frankly—no. Or very little. One or two things have happened to arouse my suspicion. He has a gang of foreigners on his yacht; they watch me about. Who he is and what, nobody knows, and he never says. But trust my instinct—he is dangerous, wicked. I can see it in his extraordinary influence over my brother."

"What can we do? Is there any way in I cannot declare it even to you. But I will say this much: all the trouble at Torfrey's has come upon him since his friend Radford arrived in the neighbourhood."

"I remember what you said of Radford the last time I was here. But an antipathy of that sort may often be the most unreasonable thing in the world."

"Miss Torfrey has the distinctive antipathy as well as myself. As I said just now, I can-

"There is, but it is such a strange and great thing that I do not care to ask it."
"Ask it, Miss Torfrey," cried Pudifin with
his face pale and drawn. Lucy smiled at

him.

"I would ask you, Mr. Pudifin, if it were possible that you could do it. But I think it is not. On the other hand, if Dr. Hoskings is sufficiently interested..." "You may command me absolutely, Miss

"You may command me absolutely, Miss Torfrey," said Hoskings.

"That is a rash promise," said Lucy.

"Take care what you say."

"I don't think you can ask me anything that I wouldn't do—if only to save Pudifin's sanity—" he added laughing.

"It is dangerous, but of course men like danger. It will require a sacrifice of time."

"I can avoning you the time."

"I can promise you the time. My locum tenens is as good for a month as for a fortnight. What is it, Miss Torfrey?"
"Think well before you answer,"
Lucy. "I want you to enter the lions' Lucy. "I want you to enter the lions' den. I want somebody to be on board the Cas-tilian to-night either hidden, or in disguise, and to worm out her secret and the secret of Radford's identity, his life, and his pur-pose—to go the voyage with him, and take every risk for the sake of the information with which I hope to be able to crush what

She had risen from her chair and stood facing them, flushing a little.

Hoskings and Pudifin stood staring at her for some seconds in gaping astonishment. The doctor was first to recover speech. He

do, Miss Torfrey," and held out his hand to her. She took it, saying simply:

"Thank you. I trust with all my heart you won't find that which wrecks my life while it saves his"

(To be Continued.)

RUSSIA'S GREAT ARMY.

When, in 1904-5, the Russian armies were

so disastrously defeated by Japan, it was freely asserted that she would not recover from the blow for half a century, and might, indeed, become a second-rate Power. The average person, however, has little idea of the tremendous military resources of the Czar's dominions, and, so crippled, it is estimated that with a revenue of at least £300,000,000 a year, a war reserve of about £165,000,000, and with her tremendous army of 8,000,000, and with her tremendous army of 8,000,000, men, which she has thoroughly recorganised and equip-ped since 1905, Russia, in the present con-flict, is well able to carry on her part for at least two or three years easily. Russia's army to-day, in fact, is far stronger and more efficient than it has ever been in the history of the Empire. If necessary it can put 12,000,000 men into the field, including what is known as the Opolchénié (Territorials), in which all men serve until the completion of their forty-third year. This vast army of men is drawn from milions of square miles of territory, and both in square iniles of territory, and both in regard to training and physique they compare very favourably with the best troops in the world. The standard in Russia as regards height is very low when compared with our own. It begins at 5ft. for infantry and 5ft. 3in. for cavalry. As the majority of the peasants are practically vegetarians, it is not an expensive business to feed the Russian army. The soldier's diet mostly consists of cabbage soup, porridge, potatoes, beans, peas, good wholesome ridge, potatoes, beans, peas, good wholesome rye bread, macaroni, garlic, fish, and various dainties cooked in sunflower seed oil, says the author of "The Russian Army From Within." The pay of officers usually averages from £3 to £10 a month, according ing to the standing of the regiment. The salary of a general is not extravagant and has been written about Many of these are freeholders and small farmers, who supply their own horse, uniform, and accountements. They have much greater political and civil freedom than the ordinary Russian citizen. The Cossack is generally taken to be a mounted soldier, there are regiments which also consist of infantry and artillery. Generally attached to bodies of infantry, they are used for scouting, foraging, keeping up lines of com-munications, and protecting the flanks of an army from sudden attack.

TENDING WOUNDED HORSES.

The veterinary surgeon at the front needs The veterinary surgeon at the front needs to be a brave soldier, for he has to "round up" panie-stricken horses whilst shells are whistling over his head. Unless a horse is too badly mutilated to stand, it generally rushes blindly about the battlefield, maddened by the main of its wound. It is these animals which the "vets." have to capture and place in special horse-ambulances. A soldier attendent generally give on the head soldier-attendant generally sits on the head of the animal te keep it tranquil. Horse-boxes are amongst the Army field equipment, but they have proved too lumbersome to move about with any speed. Motorto move about with any speed. Motor-ambulances, in which the horse is laid flat, are generally used for conveying the suffer-ing animals to the rear. The veterinary surgeon has amongst his equipment a bell-shaped gun, which fires a bullet into the snaped gun, which here a bullet into the brain of an animal whose sufferings are too acute to allow it to live. The military "vet." has to be somewhat of a strategist, for in cavalry charges and similar military movements the enemy's horses are especially liable to rush wildly all over the field of battle when their videos fall. At such times battle when their riders fall. At such times the veterinary corps capture all the animals they can, for horses are very valuable at the moment. For some years there has been a shortage of horses for the Army, a state of affairs largely due to the fact that over 300,000 horses were lost in the South African War, and also because breeding has lessened so considerably since the general introduc-tion of mechanical traffic on to the streets.

ABOUT "COLD STEEL."

The chief weapon in cold steel is the bayonet, several types of which are in the field. Our own is like a dagger, with a blade 12in. long sharpened on both edges and ground to a point. Slightly different is the French bayonet. Longer, and more particularly intended for thrusting, it is beloved by the little piou-piou, who affectionately calls it "Rosette"—from its colour after use—and is his most trusted companion. The Russian also differs from the British bayonet. It is triangular, with no cutting edge, and is solely for thrusting. This detracts somewhat from its utility, bebayonet, several types of which are in the field. Our own is like a dagger, with a This detracts somewhat from its utility, be-cause at close quarters an enemy can seize it without injury. On two occasions in Man-churia a Japanese officer caught hold of a Russian bayonet with his left hand and ran his sword through the man behind it. Next in importance to the bayonet is the cavalry sword. In our Army this weapon is intended chiefly for cutting, and is, therefore, absolutely straight, whereas the sword therefore, not the French Government is suitable for thrusting only. But usually military swords are so constructed as to be equally adapted for cutting or thrusting

At the funeral of Gunner Thomas Rourke, of the Tiger, at Manchester, the Lord Mayor was present. Six wreaths were sent by Admiral Beatty, officers of the Tiger, and by Admiral Beatty, of the ship's company.

Driving a German-owned car, which had been seized by the Government and not registered, a general's aide-de-camp was stopped by the police, and was fined at Bottisam, Cambridgeshire, for not having a driver's licence.

THINGS THOUGHTFUL

OUR MOTHERS.

The one who loves you most, the one who is the most loving, is the one who is the easiest to please. And that is the reason children can please their mothers when they cannot please anybody else; the mothers when they cannot please anybody else; the mother see something that nobody else can see. It is never difficult to please your mother, she loves you so.—Margaret Bottome.

ROOM FOR HAPPINESS.

There is room for happiness to those who have courage to believe that God is leading them, and that the things which are happening to them, even though they are visita-tions and judgments, are, in fact, blessings. Such persons may believe that "God is dealing with us as with sons." But how, and in what way? Surely in this way, that the security of our civilisation had led regard physical pain and distress as almost the greatest of evils, and ease and comfort as the greatest of blessings. We were sink-ing into materialism, which is the most deadly form of atheism.—The Bishop of

THE WORLD'S MUSIC.

Kind words are the music of the world. They have a power which seems to be beyond natural causes, as if they were some angel's song which had lost its way and come on earth. It seems as if they could almost do what in reality God alone can do to soften the hard and angry hearts of men,

Can neach renew lost bloom, Or violet lost perfume? Or sullied snow turn white As overnight?

Man carnot compass it, but never fear: The leper Noaman Shows what God will and can;

God who worked there is working here.

Wherefore let shame, not gloom betinge thy God who worked then is working now, -Christina Rossetti

GLADNESS AFTER PAIN. We are witnessing no irremediable tragedy. Happier days are yet to come. Wrongs have indeed been done which nothing can right; sufferings endured which nothing can repay. Yet the time will surely when Relegions come, and come soon, when wounds will heal, when, morally rially greater than before, she will pursue in peace her high destiny, strong in the memories of an heroic past, and in the affectionate esteem of all who love liberty and admire valour.—The Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour, M.P. (King Albert's Book).

No good custom is worth much till it has become incorporated. It is pleasing as an ideal. It is inspiring as an occasional effort in our lives. But it actually counts when it becomes a habit in our lives. Beginners in the art of running a motor-car are likely to be impatient with the rules of the road. Why cross only on the left side of the centre of a square, if there are no other vehicles in the square? Why always take the left side of a curve, if the right side is shorter and no other vehicles are in sight? The answer is that to follow strictly and invariably the law of the road implants that law in our very natures, makes it a habit, so that when varies from £300 to £500 a year. Much has been written about the redoubtable to think we shall nevertheless do the right has been written about the reductione to think we shall nevertheless do the right to think avoid a disaster. It is premost noted soldiers in the Russian army. cisely the same in the moral and spiritua value. Virtue is chiefly useful when it

SELF-COMMAND.

Self-command, which insists on a man's averting his thoughts from a gloomy out-ward present to gaze on God's loving pur-pose and unalterable veracity, is no small part of practical religion.—Dr. Alex. Mac-laren.

THE HERITAGE. No matter what my birth may be, No matter where my lot is cast,

I am the heir in equity Of all the precious Past The art, the science, and the lore the ages long since dust, The wisdom of the world in store,

Are mine, all mine in trust The beauty of the living earth, The power of the golden sun, The Present, whatso'er my birth, I share with every one.

As much as any man am I
The owner of the working day;
Mine are the minutes as they fly And mine the Future to bequeath

Unto the generations new; I help to shape it with my breath, Mine as I think to do. Present and Past my heritage,

The future laid in my control;-No matter what my name or age, I am a Master-soul! -Abbie Farwell Brown

INSTINCT.

There are two kinds of instinct-primitive and acquired. The first makes you wink your eyes when some object flashes too close to them; the second makes you rise to your feet when an aged or distinguished person enters your presence. Both acts are without conscious volition, but the first dates be to the beginning of the race, and is common to all mankind, while the second belongs to personal past. Our acquired instincts hold our history and tell of the route we have travelled. One need not be greatly con-cerned about "living like a Christian" if he has really become a Christian; despite mistakes and imperfections, no other kind of life will be possible.

A LASTING JOY.

An aspiration is a joy for ever, a possession as solid as a landed estate, a fortune which we can never exhaust, and which gives us year by year a revenue of pleasurable activity. To have many of these is to be spiritually rich.—R. L. Stevenson.

THE FUTURE OF AMERICA

The American people are now on the threshold of a great progressive era; they feel themselves within sight of the realisation of many of their ideals. They have been hampered badly by the trusts and the "bosses," and the corrupt police, but they are now proving that these obstacles are merely temporary anomalies, caused by the overwhelmingly sudden growth of population and prosperity. A few years ago it could with truth be said that material conditions were worse in the United States than in the Old World. But it has been clear all the time that the corruption existent in the country was truly foreign to the

country's temper.

"The common citizen is becoming the watch-dog of the police-service. Tammany has fallen. Women are getting the suffrage, state by state. The nation is unanimous in its cry for a pure state, a clean country, and an uncorrunted neonle."—Stephen