

Görz remained throughout the three changes of masters, and are *still* there!

One curious defensive position was the ancient cemetery, where the Austrian trenches, barbed wire entanglements, etc., are still *in situ*. Heavy shelling of the spot broke open many of the old family vaults, and coffins are to be seen ripped open and still standing at all sorts of grim angles, reminding one forcibly of the Doré engravings of the Resurrection. In the middle, among old Italian and Slav graves and monuments, is one small spot devoted to the graves of officers and men of the Austrian force who fell in the early struggles on Podgora, a significant Slav name belonging to the lesser heights on the Italian side of the city.

This is not the place, even if expert knowledge were available, to enter upon the vexed question of whether the kingdom of Italy, or the newly formed Jugo-Slav state has the better moral or political right to the *majority* of late Austrian territory on the Adriatic, but there is no question that this country is *Slav*. One has only to look at the little low houses, with painted wooden decorations, or the more pretentious ones with projecting double windows, or at the people themselves, with the faces and costumes of South Russia, or to speak to them in any modicum at one's command of Russian or of Serbo-Croat, with which their own Slovene tongue is nearly identical, to realise this fact. Moreover, a little inn anywhere is labelled and called *Gostilna*, and not an *Albergo*. A shop-keeper is a *trgovec* and never a *negocianti*, and the village midwife advertises herself as a *Babica*, and not as a *Levatrice*.

On the road across the historic Carso, between Gorizia and Trieste, this is even more the case. The little ruined villages might have come out of a box of Russian wooden toys—they are tragic in the extreme, for the houses are mostly roofless, and the villages without a single inhabitant, except in a few cases where some brave spirits have returned to live in hastily-erected wooden shelters, and to rebuild their shattered homes.

When one remembers that within thirty or forty miles of this desolated Slovene country, lately Austrian territory, now occupied by Italy, but claimed by the Jugo-Slavs, those very Jugo-Slavs, Serbs, and Croats are fighting *one another* at Lubiano, one realises the thorny nature of the *problema Dalmatica*, now exercising the Council of Ten in Paris.

Hospital work here, of course, is not specially military just now, though the patients are mostly soldiers, except the out-patients. Medical cases include the usual typhoids, pneumonias, and pleurisies, with an occasional sporadic case of the terrible "grippe," happily in its less severe form. The surgical cases are almost entirely accidents, due to careless handling of the ubiquitous live bombs, or to reckless lorry driving; the latter are all too numerous.

The hospital was formerly a very well equipped Austrian one, and it is curious to be using enemy sheets, blankets, temperature charts, etc., though

in their flight they took away most of what was portable, *except* the patient! To their great haste at this particular spot is no doubt due the fact that the Officers' and Nurses' joint Mess still profits by their provision of mineral water, white flour and lump sugar—luxuries long unknown to most of us!

HENRIETTE TAYLOR.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"THE SPINNERS."*

As each succeeding novel from the pen of Mr. Phillpotts comes under our notice, we are struck afresh at the marvellous evidence of labour and observation which must have gone into its production.

Lovers of nature must ever have an inspired outlook on life, and Mr. Phillpotts is not only a student of nature but a master in word painting. But his talent is by no means confined or limited to this attractive feature. Industries of varied kinds have formed the basis of many of his powerful stories, and the reader cannot fail to be impressed by his close acquaintance with the subject he has chosen for his purpose. The title of the book under our notice this week speaks for itself. It describes the cotton weaving industry of the Dorset folk, and incidentally the habits and characteristics of the folk themselves.

Those who are acquainted with the author's works will recollect how often he writes of the lawlessness of men which is not to be limited to any county or any class. This tale is no exception to the rule. Henry Ironsyde had died leaving the mill and his money to his elder son, cutting the younger, Raymond, off with a penny. Daniel was a just and well-disposed man, and he kept the spirit of his father's wishes when he offered his younger brother a post at the mill at a liberal salary. Young Raymond must work for his money or be a beggar.

Raymond had spent his life thus far in a healthy and selfish manner. He preserved the perspective of a boy into manhood; while his father waited not without exasperation for him to reach the adult state in mind as well as body. Henry Ironsyde was still waiting when he died, and left Raymond to the mercy of Daniel.

Raymond accepted his brother's offer with the intention of doing as little as possible and getting as much enjoyment out of the life as he could. He was from the first attracted by Sabina, who was accounted the most skilful spinner at the mill. The girls, whose high task it was to spin, seemed to twinkle here, there and everywhere in a corybantic measure as they served the shouting insatiable monsters that turned the flax to yarn.

They, indeed, specially attracted Raymond by the activity of their work and the charm of their swift, supple figures, where, never still, they danced about with a thousand strenuous activities

* By Eden Phillpotts. London: Messrs. Heinemann.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)