A Modern Mercenary.

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BY E. & H. HERON.

tries. International affairs are now, how-ever, at a critical stage, and the little state seems about to be swallowed up. Germany is represented at Revonde, the capital, by one of her shrewdest statesmen, Baron von Elmur. England's influence is felt to be great, and the presence of Major Counsellor means much. It was through Counsellor that John Railywood, a fellow countryman, had served seven years in the Massau fronhad served seven years in the Mansau frontier cavairy. Rallywood is about to resign
his commission when Selpdorf, the chancellor and "man of the hour," sends for him
and makes him a Gentleman of the Guard.
During the visit to the palace Rallywood
meets Von Elmur and Valerie Selpdorf, the
chancellor's daughter. The Gentlemen of the
Guard, object to the appointment of Rallywood, and Unziar, one of the leaders and a
Buitor for Valerie's hand, plans to kill the
stranger. At the palace ball Rallywood
meets Valerie, who knows his danger.
She promises him the last dance,
which will not take place until after the
"affair" involving the honor of the guard
has been settled.

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CHAPTER V .- (Continued.)

Good Luck and a Firefly.

Rallywood did not dance again; he contented himself with following the movements of the black domino. After a time she joined a little group of people, with whom she stood talking. One of the group presently detached himself and glanced round, as if searching for some one. It was Unziar of the guard. He quickly perceived Rallywood and at once came toward him.

"Allow me to recall myself to your memory, Captain Rallywood; I am Unziar of the guard," he said, bowing, both voice and bow touching that extreme of punctillousness which in itself constitutes an insolence.

"The guard are said to have long mem ories. I hope in that particular at least, if in no other, to support their traditions," replied Rallywood, with an air of cool and serene indifference said to be impossible to any but men of his race.

"That is-something," rejoined Unzlar with a smile that belied his name. are somewhat exigeant in the guard. We ask for more than a long memory—a long pedigree, for example, and a long sword," "I have heard that also."

Unziar glanced sharply at him out of his pale, keen eyes. The fellow was too noncommittal to please his taste. To hound a coward out of the corps promised infinitely less difficulty and enjoyment than he had hoped for when he pledged himself to rid the guard of the Englishman. For perhaps the only time in his life he wished he were any uniform but the telltale green and gold, for he knew of the guard that it was often their "great name that conquered." Spurred by this thought, he looked Rally

wood very straightly in the face and the gleam of his eyes reminded the Englishman of glacier ice. "Knowing so many of our peculiarities

perhaps Captain Rallywood may no longer care to join us?" said the guardsman. Rallywood laughed with absolute good "I both care and-dare," he said, pleas-

Unzlar's face cleared. "I am forgetting my errand," he said, with a slight change of tone. "I have been

sent by a lady to bring you to her. Will As they approached the group the shorter of the two black dominos spoke. "You need not trouble to introduce Cap

tain Rallywood, Anthony. We are already friends; are we not, monsieur?" The sweet high voice and the inconsequent childish laugh came upon Rallywood with a

slight shock. "I could hardly have dared to claim s much," he said, "but I cannot forget that Mme, de Sagan-"

She laid her hand with a suspicion o caressing familiarity on his arm. 'Hush, then! Do you not know that it i inadmissible to mention the name of a

emasked lady until the clock strikes midnight? Captain Rallywood has been stationed near the castle at Kofn Ford. We have therefore met-occasionally," continued the lady, addressing herself to Mile. Selp-Captain Rallywood is luckier than mos

of us," interposed another voice. "He seems to have an enviable facility for appearing where we others in vain wish to be. Only last week-" tall Mephistopheles in scarlet silk,

whose high shoulders lent him added height, had foined them. His peaked cap and feather sparkled with lurid points of fire. Countess Sagan turned upon him. "But, baron, where is, then, your domino!

It is not yet midnight," she exclaimed, her hand still remaining on Rallywood's arm. 'Listen!" Von Elmur raised his hand "The happy moment arrives when the beautiful faces we long to see-" He gave the rest of the sentence to the ear of Mile Selpdorf, who stood silently looking on at the little scene. At this moment the music broke off with

a sudden clang; the dancers paused where they stood, as the great bell of the palace tower sent its strong, mellow boom of midnight out over the frost-bound city.

Rallywood, on looking round an instant later saw that masks and dominoes had disappeared. Opposite to him stood Valerie Selpdorf in a dress of some deep velvety shade, which bore, wrought upon its texture here and there, tiny horse shoes em bossed in iridescent jewels. A diadem of guard the same shape crowned her dark hair. Yet too old to act any longer as its real coman the richness and delicacy of the blended odd remembrance-his own boot heel outlined in Revende mud upon a long suede them! But look at me! glove. The same association apparently occurred to Baron von Elmur. His glance fled from Valerie to Rallywood, and he smiled, with some malice.

"What have we here, mademoiselle? The stamp of some idealized cavalry charger?" he asked. "I should be eternally grateful if only I were—of the cavalry!"
"The guard—" But the girl cut him

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she paused, then went on without taking her Maasau is a little duchy in Europe which has thus far maintained its independence because of the jealousies of the large countries. International and the same paused, then went on without taking her eyes from Elmur's face—"or the cavalry. One has illusions, doubtless, but none so entirely absurd! I have identified the same paused. One has illusions, doubtless, but none so entirely absurd! I have idealized my own decided might mean so much or so little.

words in English, smiling back at Elmur. The baron bowed. He was not beaten yet. "That is well," he exclaimed; "since the

"Provisionally, yes," said the girl. "Mile, Selpdorf has already given this waltz to me," said Unziar, stepping for-

the baron's ready arm. "Later, Anthony," she answered. - "His excellency deserves a consolation prize, since

She turned away, and with her the group

CHAPTER VI.

things to live forever. Meanwhile, can you

spare me another dance?"

"After all, it is little to promise, and I

may not need your friendship for very long,"

die quickly before life grows stale!"

was the flavor of life.

The Cloister of St. Anthony. The night was drawning to a close. The long supper room was almost deserted. Amongst the lingerers were a few officers But Mile. Selpdorf placed her hand within in the uniform of the guard, who stood talking together in one corner.

"The fellow has given you no Adolf was saying gloomily. "Have him in here! Kick him in here if

"I don't think you will find him reluctant,"

front of him with a grave expression. Well of unalterable good feeling and mutual loy- a brilliant light and while the other two as she desired yet. It was but a matter of a slight inclination of the head.

"I think you may count upon me," said The three men accepted, but there was a little stiffening in the attitude of each, for marked Adiron. Rallywood at last. He believed in her, which was good; moreover, he meant what Rallywood had friends here who were rehe said: yet the speech was wholly lacking solved, if only for the boner of the frontier in the flavor which to the Countess Sagan corps, to see their comrade through the com-

ing trouble. Before the wine filled the glasses Adolf was already deep in the story of Unglar's

she replied, plucking a glittering firefly shooting match with Abenfeldt, from her fan and laying it on his sleeve "Allow me the honor of drinking with with her sweet, light laugh. "Like a fireyou, monsieur," said Colendorp to Rallyfly, I shall dance out my short night and "It was in truth a notable performance; we have never had even in Rallywood took out his cigarette case of guard a surer shot than Unziar," he added, Alfaun leather-work and dropped the firealluding to the anecdote.

fly with its sparkle of diamond dust into it. "I don't like to hear you say that," he Rallywood had just time to make up his said in his quiet way, which the listener mind and determine upon his course of

The glasses clinked together and then their heels upon them. Then Rallywood lence, turned to Unglar:

"I compliment you, Lieutenant Unzlar," a swordsman not easily to be matched, since, in fact, the little affair at Alfau, when I had the pleasure of acting as your second. But the pistof is, I venture to say, another matter.'

Unziar set his shoulders back with an indescribable suggestion of scornful defiance. approaching him, said: "May I ask you to state precisely what you mean, monsleur?" he answered.

"I mean that although a man may shoot any number of swallows of a morning be-

alty. Ungiar included Rallywood with the seconds went to fetch their respective printwo officers beside him in this invitation, by cipals to the spot Adiron and Adolf exchanged a word or two as they waited. 'The Englishman took it very well," re-

"Devilish well," Haped Hitle Adolf; "he made rather a favor of it, just to satisfy Unziar, you know! He's too sure of himself, this Rallywood. If he kills Unglar, which is unlikely, I shall have to finish the affair myself!" with a frowning importance that sent Adiron into one of his ready roars of laughter.

The cloister was still echoing with the sound when Rallywood, accompanied by Jenard, arrived from the other side of the palace, where the state rooms were situated. On the way Jenard explained to Rallywood that the procedure decided upon as being best suited to the requirements of the case

was simply alternate shots at twenty paces. Rallywood and Unziar being placed, one of the men sent a coin spinning up into the clashed upon the floor when the men set air. Then followed a long minute of si-

St. Anthony's cloister looks inward to ward a quadrangle; the outer side border-"I already knew that you were ing the river has been glazed in, but in the interval of waiting Rallywood could hear the water plashing and sobbing against the foundations of the old walls, and the wild song of the tsa, sweeping down from the snowy frontier above Kofnford, as it wailed and howled dreartly along the dark water. He almost started when Adiron,

You have won the first shot, Captain Itallywood."

"Then I am afraid I must beg of you to do me the great favor of rearranging the affair," replied Rallywood; "for if I should be unfortunate enough to kill Lieutenant Unziar, or even to disable him, the question at issue between us must remain undecided for at the best an indefinite time, and possibly forever. If you recollect, the matter over which he was pleased to differ with me was my expressed opinion that though a good shot may bring down swallows to perfection, he might miss a man at moderate

"You have won the toss," remonstrated

"Yes, unluckily. But I feel sure that Lieutenant Unziar will be kind enough not to hold me to that, since it is evident that the first shot should be his." Adiron grinned. It was his way of show

ing many mixed emotions. "I like your way of conducting a dispute, Captain Rallywood," he said; "but as your second I must warn you that it is the worst luck in the world to refuse luck. You have won the tess. In declining to profit by it you are paying court to death. Rallywood shrugged his shoulders.

"I may prove my point," he retorted, "As for that, it might be decided on a different basis later on," urged Adiron.

For the second time that night Rallywood looked at his watch. "I have an engagement in seven minutes," he said. "I shall be glad if you will convey my meaning to Lieutenant Unziar."

"As you wish," said Adiron; "but in case of accident I should wish to take the opportunity of saying to you now that in the whole range of my experience I have never derived more pleasure from the attitude of a principal than I have on this

Adiron concluded with a bow and recrossed to the other seconds. Since the Englishman was determined to go to his grave in so excellent and gallant a fashion, by heaven, it was Victor St. Just Adiron who would excert him to its brink with all the honors of a fine and hereditary courtesy! He was a man quite capable of losing himself in a cause; therefore, as he approached the other seconds, he came as a partisan of Rallywood's, resolved that his man should have his will in spite of all or any oppo-

"My principal," he began, "hes just pointed out that this meeting is rather of To him she was a woman worth talking to the nature of the justification of an opinion than a quarrel in the ordinary sense;" then, repeating Rallywood's contention, he added: will see that it remains for Lieutenan Unziar to prove himself in the right." Colendorp threw out a bitter oath, Adolf

objected softly, and Jenard stood silent and in dismay. What could Rallywood mean by throwing away his life? But Adiron backed up Rallywood; he was going to bring this hing to pass! Rallywood should have a last satisfaction in this life, because he was worthy of it.

"If Lieutenant Unziar chooses to withdraw his opinion," he said, "of course Captain Rallywood will not go any further into the matter. For the rest, he has an appointnent in less than seven minutes. On his behalf I can but insist that his suggestion affords the only possible way out of the difficulty."

Reluctantly the other men yielded. Rallyyood had gained a moral advantage. If he were destined to die, he would die in a manner that would go down into the history of the request of Rallywood the change of procedure was explained to Unziar. The two opponents stood absolutely still,

Rallywood's face wearing the expression of one who is politely interested in something that is happening to somebody else. At the signal Unziar raised his pistol and

Rallywood stood in his place for some thirty seconds, while there was a sound of guard!" said the old soldier; then he bowed splintering glass as the bullet rushed out into the darkness above the river; then he any symptom of having recognized Rallyadvanced, smiling. 'It seems," he said, "that I was right."

Unglar stared at him. Rallywood handed his pistol to Jenard. and, bowing to the assembled men cere-

moniously, he went on: "I hope we may consider the affair con-

that is about to begin, I trust you will ex-And, with another bow, he was gone. one spoke for a little while, then Unziar walked toward the others with no very

pleasant face. That Rallywood had done a thing above reproach, and in a manner above reproach, made it none the easier for his pride to accept the result. But he was above all considerations true to himself-to An-"Captain Rallywood has made his point and a reputation," he said at last. "I think,

men of honor we must consider the matter "And in Captain Rallywood's asked Colendorp, suddenly. What do you say, gentle-"Certainly.

Colendorp, you will agree with me that as

nen?" Adiron spoke with warmth. "I suppose we must concede that it was neatly done, and that Captain Rallywood deserves his success," agreed Adolf with some

Unziar's generosity rose to the occasion. "Our gain in the guard is your loss in the cavalry, Colonel Jenard," he said, hand-Jenard acknowledged the implied compit-

nent and went off, leaving the three guardsmen together. 'We shall have to swallow the Englishnan after all," said Cotendorp blackly. 'How came you to miss him, Unziar?"

"Who can tell? Luck, I suppose," reolied he. 'But I, for one, am not sorry. The man's worth keeping." "He shapes well," commented Adolf, "But

Unziar raised his eyebrows.

how will the chief take it?" "I am going to find the colonel and tell him what has happened." said Unziar. "I don't know how you fellows feel about it but I say for myself that the guard might have done a good deal worse.

Colonel Wallenioup was at that moment engaged in promenading the ball room with Valerio Selpdorf on his arm. She belonged to that sufficiently rare type of girl whose

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and watch the current of younger life sweep by them, men who are in no sense gallants, but who find a strong attraction in talking to a young and clever woman on all kinds of subjects that too often lie outside the domain of the thoughts of youth. Youth, engrossed in the problem of self, persistently ignores those far more varied and profound problems to be found hidden in more experienced hearts and lives.

Wallenloup, who distrusted all women and who was accordingly disliked by not a few always claimed a waltz with Valerie when ever he had the good fortune to meet her first, and a pretty girl afterward.

Their dance having concluded, Wallenloup walked down the room with his partner, convery silent, but the colonel had more to say than usual, and his subject happened to be very scathing condemnation of outside in erference with the affairs of the guard. Valerie listened without words. Perhaps her heart beat more quickly and there may have been more anxiety in her mind as to the final upshot of the case in point than her companion could have guessed. But she showed a flattering amount of interest in his opinion, although she was well aware that the question was probably being settled once for all, as far as Rallywood was concerned, in St. Anthony's Cloister, without the help of Colonel Wallenloup.

Suddenly she leaned a little more heavily on his arm.

"My dear mademoiselle, what is the matter?" exclaimed the colonel. "You are pale. What is it?" "I am tired and the saloon has become so

the guard. Hastily and in accordance with hot, but-thanks, I see my next partner coming," she answered as Rallywood came toward them. Wallenloup looked down at her with some reproach.

"This fellow?" he said. "But why not?" she replied with a little

smile. 'Is he not of the guard? Can I aspire to anything higher?" "Captain Rallywood is not yet of the coldly and turned on his heel without giving

wood beyond his scornful words "I have come, mademoiselle," said Rallywood. The girl's pale cheeks were now touched with a delicate carmine, such as shines be-

tween the fingers of a hand held up against a light. The flush seemed to heighten and cluded, and as I am engaged for the dance enhance her beauty, or rather it lent her a novel, kindling charm that struck home upon Rallywood's mood. "What have you been doing?" she asked

with interest. "Breaking glasses with the guard," he re plied. "That ceremony occasionally includes the

use of a sword or a pistol." "I have used neither," he replied. "Are you then also a diplomatist?" she asked with quick scorn.

Rallywood pulled his mustache. He did not pretend to understand women, but that Mile. Selpdorf should now despise him for escaping a danger she had half an hour ago trembled over and prayed to avert seemed at best rather inconsistent. "I have attempted to be diplomatic

and then, perhaps," he said, "but not always with conspicuous success." "Diplomacy was never meant," she said looking frowningly at him through her

black lashes, "never meant to be a private

virtue. Its only excuse lies in a national necessity. "M. Selpdorf instructed me to avoid a quarrel," rejoined Rallywood. "What do you suppose he meant," she

asked bitterly, "knowing you had to deal with the guard?" "Ah!" and a slow smile dawned in his yes; "now I wonder what he meant knowing I had to deal with the guard?" Valerie frowned again; her words were

not particularly expedient under the circumstances, but she disliked having them flung back at her. 'I beg your pardon. Of course I know nothing of-of these things. The matter

concerns you only. But I thought, and I am sorry for the mistake, that you looked There was a fingle of spurs behind her as she was about to turn away and Colonel

Wallenloup strode up hurriedly. "Captain Rallywood, why are you not wearing the uniform of your regiment-of

the guard?" he asked in a loud tone. There was a stir amongst the people about society is sought and enjoyed by those older 'them; many stopped and drew nearer to hear

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cannot attach it. 'No, Colonel Wallenloup; that should rather be my duty," said the Countess

"As the wife of our colonel-in-chief, madam, I feel sure your kindness will be

Mme. de Sagan's blue eyes glanced up into Rallywood's face as her fingers touched his breast

"No, as your friend," she said softly. Then all at once Rallywood discovered

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desire merely. I want good luck. I am "We must all go out some time, I sup-Good Luck!" She spoke the last two pose, but one always wants the beautiful

cavalry and guard are disowned, it means that the good luck is for the poor diplomat!'

ward.

man language. parted and scattered.

my reading of 'Good Luck' is not in the Gernecessary!" said Colendorp. drawled Unziar. "I have spoken with him fore breakfast, it does not follow that he

Rallywood stared. The countess spoke with whom you find yourself when midnight guard has up to the present day been able said, gently. with partners-my cousin, Anthony Unziar, dorp with a sour glance at Unziar. "Has neighborhood was listening, from the other who desires perhaps herself, but most cer- his excellency the chancellor thrown out too side of the Hall they looked, no doubt, like tainly her fortune, and our delightful Ger- powerful a hint about the fellow? I saw a group of tail men engaged in the ordinary man minister, who uses all means that mademoiselle dancing with him this evencome to hand to win Maasau for his mas- ing-I mean a hint too powerful to be dister! But I should not say these foolish regarded by those who wish to retain the that Unziar was a little more deprecating things to you, who are of the other party."

They were dancing by this time, her head near his shoulder, her voice soft in his bending ear. "Of the other party?" he repeated.

voice said passionately in his ear, "and my Unziar's fingers. husband-Rallywood almost lifted her clear of force of her appealing beauty as he had felt to be obliged to act so carefully as we have it intermittently for some months past. It been advised to do in this case?" touched him for the moment, but he was apt

"Count Sagan is colonel-in-chief of the a stifled voice after a slight pause. guard?" he asked, and the question seemed o fit in with her train of thought. She made no immediate response, but with taken place. light touch on his arm led him to a few couples were scattered in various convenient nooks. She sank upon a seques-

"Yes, he is colonel-in-chief of the because they think him Massau and the most unequaled sportsman. He was all these things, and I am proud of

She rose languidly and stood before him. Rallywood saw a slight woman, tall and exquisitely fair, who carried her small head with its gleaming coronet royally. Her skin and her soft flushed cheeks had the pure he said. evanescent quality of a child's complexion. Moreover, her chief charm was perhaps her air of childlike innocence. Isolde of Sagan Rallywood. As an agent secretly accredhad seldom looked more lovely; she was itted by the court of St. James', he must honestly touched by self-pity and was posing | hold aloof and neutral in all personal quaras the proud yet disillusioned wife of a rels. He appreciated the tact with which

softly, her eyes filling with tears, "but I dared to doubt the worthiness of an Englishwas?" Rallywood's face altered. Like any other man in such a position, he felt immensely sorry for her. She saw the advantage she had gained and at once the oquette awoke in her.

that view of her lot.

'Captain Rallywood," she sank down beside him again, "I need a friend in whom I | cool nod. can trust, who will ask nothing of me, but who will give me all the things I most want.

The interpretation of this enigmatical speech was left to the ear, for the young ounters was gazing at her big black fan. where luminous fireflies hung tangled amongst the dusky feathers. Quickly with some dissatisfaction she became aware that Rallywood was not looking at her-as he should have been doing-but staring in and breaking the glasses afterward as a sign thony had been lit up from end to end with

MADAME DE SAGAN'S BLUE EYES GLANCED UP INTO RALLYWOOD'S FACE, AS HER FINGERS TOUCHED HIS BREAST

what he said." "Then why haven't you arranged it? Tonorrow he joins-and he must never be per-"Do you not know," she added, "that the mitted to join the guard! We might have wood, with a smile. ustom in Revende helds you to the partner asked Abenfeldt to remove him, but the Valerie Selpdorf is embarrassed to set its own house in order," added Colen-

good opinion of M. Selpdorf!" Unglar scowled. "I permit no one-not one of my own regiment—to insult me," he rejoined with a flattered myself that you said something else the wine in his hand trembled. Adolf

"We are losing sight of the main quessome crowding couples, and then gently re- Colendorp, who happened to be the captain about to accept when Captain Adiron interleased her. In a vague way he felt the of his own squadron, "that it is unusual

Colendorp's dark face grew darker, but to forget both it and the very existence of the honor of the guard overrode all perthe woman herself directly he parted from sonal considerations. "I have been hasty, Unziar," he said in Unglar bowed and continued as if the interlude with its covert allusions had not

"It has been difficult to get at Rallywood lower-banked apartment, about which a this evening. Yet let us see how he shoots my friend, Colonel Jenard." before we conclude that he has any rooted and find the Englishman." He had already walked toward the broad

appepared. One was Counsellor, in his blazing red uniform, beside him Rallywood's teen, looked almost black.

Behind them again appeared other faces. "Well, goodby, major, since you are going. I will turn up tomorrow as early as I can," Counsellor understood also. In his position it was impossible to do anything for man hopelessly older than herself and for Rallywood dismissed him from a scene which the time being she believed earnestly in promised to be distinctly awkward, but his band itched to shoot down the flower of the "All these things have been," she added guard of Massau for the insolence that

Can I ever be satisfied with what only man of birth to hold a place among them. "Goodby, Rallywood," he said gruffly, and turned on his heel to find himself face to face with Baron von Elmur and one or two officers of the frontier cavalry. "There is about to be a storm, major,"

observed Elmur, passing Counsellor with a

"So it seems. A storm in a teacup!" retorted the major derisively. Meanwhile Rallywood, with the men the cavalry, his old brother officers, behind him, advanced to meet Unziar. "We of the guard are hoping to break

contingent in Massau of taking wine together

"You are very much interested; is it not already this evening and I-ah-rather liked can hit a man at, say twenty paces." Rally wood spoke deliberately. The whole group of men listened silence. Then Unziar leaned toward Rally-

"We can but try, Captain Rallywood," he Although every one in their immediate conversation and common amenities of soclety, the only noticeable difference being

and low-voiced than usual. Elmur, standing near by, filled his glass and drank, with a silent nod at Unziar. "I shall be delighted to assist you in set white blaze of anger on his pale face, and tling the question," returned Rallywood then, consulting his card, he added, " I find suddenly stretched across to take up a de- I have an engagement for the last dance

"Yes, a friend; but I made a mistake-I canter, and catching the glass with the some twenty minutes hence. May I rec have none—no, not one true friend!" the edge of his heavy epaulet, knocked it from ommend the interval to your consideration?" The two frontier men stepped forward simultaneously to offer their services to tion," he said. "May I suggest, sir," to Rallywood. He thanked them and was

> "If either of these gentlemen will resign in my favor I shall feel it an obligation, as I can then offer myself to Captain Rally wood as one of his seconds." Courtesy demanded that Rallywood and his friends should fall in with this proposal

and Rallywood, replying to Adiron, added:

"You have heard exactly what passed be

tween Lieutenant Unziar and myself and I

am sure I cannot do better than leave the

matter in your hands in conjunction with

Colendorp and Adolf, as representing objection to handling a pistol. I agree Unzlar, accompanied Rallywood's seconds tered settee, and made room for him beside with Captain Colendorp, that the affair to make the necessary arrangements. her. gallery above the ball room and looked down at the dancers. He could not see arched doorway, when among the palms and Valerie, but he remembered Selpdorf and mandant. He was the first soldier in the hangings which shrouded it two men his injunctions to avoid a quarrel and smiled as he thought over the words, since the chancellor must have been perfectly tall figure, clad in soft brown tones of velve- aware that he had pushed an unwelcome foreigner into a position that could only be held by force of arms, even in the case of a Massaun candidate of noble blood. At that moment he saw his own position considered unit in the big game of diplomacy that was being played over his head and he remembered that the day of human sacrifices is not yet, as many suppose, quite a thing of the past. The gods are changed or called by other names and the high priest no longer dips his hands in the actual blood of the victim, but the whole deadly drama goes on repeating liself as it always must while the generations of men have their being under various modifications of the primeval system of the strong hand. his life might be deliberately requisitioned by Selpdorf to forward some secret policy of his own was by no means an impossible suposition. Rallywood glanced at the clock In another quarter of an hour he must either be dancing with Valerie Selpdorf or Anthony, which overlooked the river, and

> much the same circumstances. Rallywood laughed again and turned on his heel. At that period it did not seem to matter greatly which way it ended, but glasses with you genelemen of the cavalry he was going to carry the undertaking before the night is over," began Unziar, ai- through with what credit his wits afforded luding to a fashion amongst the military him.

where many another man had died under

In the meantime the cloister of St. An-

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the end of this unprecedented conversation. "Because I intend to resign my commission tomorrow, sir," replied Rallywood haughtily.

"On the part of the guard, I beg of you to consider that decision," urged Wallenloup. He shook hands gravely with the young man, then, detaching a star of gun metal from his breast, he awkwardly attempted fasten it to the lapel of Rallywood's coat. I see you have not the star of the guard. May I give you mine? Unziar, see to this;

Sagan, who happened to be standing by. Wallenloup grunted.

appreciated," he said grimly.

how numerous were his friends and wellwishers in Maasau. He was overwhelmed with congratulations and introductions, but the memory of that night which lingered longest with him was the tall figure of Valerie Selpdorf standing uside and looking coldly on. She expressed no pleasure at the turn events had taken; she offered no congratulation, but she met Unniar with what was only too plainly a macking comment on the little scene and the next moment was floating down the long room in the young Maasaun's arms to the music of the last walts.

(To Be Continued.)