

THE SECRET WITNESS

in pursuit of the fleeing Austrians. As a company captain passed he called out a name, and the officer, with a word to his lieutenant, galloped up and saluted.

"Is not that Schloss Szolnok, Captain Kotchukoff?"

"Yes, sir. You remember—the affair of Baron Neudeck."

"Of course. I have been watching it, as we came down the road. Fighting has been going on there for an hour or more."

"Fighting?"

"Yes. I don't understand. The Austrians were attacking it. I am certain for I clearly made out the kepi of the infantry."

"That is strange."

"Is it possible that some of our advance posts could have occupied it?"

"I should say that that was impossible."

"We must investigate. Detach your company from the command and bring your men up the road yonder. I will join you."

Captain Kotchukoff saluted, wheeled his horse and galloped at full speed down the road into the meadow, while Colonel Galenski trotted slowly down the hill until he found a ford in the stream, and then slowly rode up the hill beyond.

"It is very strange," he muttered.

As he reached the road above, the company of Captain Kotchukoff came riding up, but he gave the command to walk their horses, and slowly, Colonel and Captain riding in front, they approached the end of the long causeway which led to the castle. That he had not been mistaken in his observations was clearly to be seen, for several men lay either dead or severely wounded in