

Book Notices.

Gibraltar. By HENRY M. FIELD.
Illustrated. New York: Charles
Scribner's Sons. Toronto: Wm.
Briggs. Price \$2.00.

This is a book to stir one's patriotic pulses. The battles and sieges of which the grand old rock fortress has been the scene present some of the most thrilling episodes in the chronicles of the Motherland. And in those memories all English-speaking people throughout the world have a share. Dr. Field, American as he is of the third or fourth generation, writes as enthusiastically as any British-born subject could desire. He describes first the present condition of the fortress, its remarkable picturesqueness, its motley population, its military parades, its great-gun drill, which shakes the old town to its lowest foundation. He recounts the stirring associations of some of the notable regiments which have left the bones of their dead in every quarter of the globe. "Was there ever," he exclaims "a Roman legion that could show a longer record of war and of glory?"

Dr. Field was evidently captivated with the genial English society which he met, not only at Gibraltar, but in almost every part of the world. He speaks with enthusiasm of the "brave-hearted English women who 'follow the drum' to the ends of the earth. I have sometimes thought," he says, "that their husbands and brothers owed part of their indomitable resolution to the inspiration of wives and sisters."

The story of the four years' siege of the grim old rock by the combined Spanish and French forces is one that makes the pulses throb. The besieged were at times put to the direst straits—half-starved, subsisting in part on grass and nettles and stormed at with shot and shell. Gallant "old Elliott" and his brave heroes still held out—the commander sharing the privations of

the humblest soldier. A lean turkey was sold for £3, and fuel was so scarce that the soldiers cooked their rations with cinnamon found in store.

When the supreme effort was made for the capture of the Rock, the Spanish grandees came by hundreds to witness the event. But the capture did not come off; the gallant little garrison, attacked by a vast land and sea force and by four times the number of guns, still "held the fort," sank or burned many of the enemies' ships; and, in the hour of triumph, performed prodigies of valour in saving the lives of hundreds of Spanish sailors from the burning ships.

Gibraltar is by far the strongest fortress in the world, and is doubtless impregnable. "To me," says Dr. Field, "who am but a layman, as I walk about Gibraltar, it seems that, if all the armies of Europe came against it, they could make no impression against its rock-ribbed sides; that only some convulsion of nature could shake its everlasting foundations. . . Of this I am sure, that whatever can be done by courage and skill to retain their mastery, will be done by the sons of the Vikings to retain their mastery of the sea. . . But while we may speculate on the possibility of a change in its ownership in the future, it is not a change which I desire to see in my day. I should greatly miss the English faces, so manly and yet so kindly, and the dear old mother-tongue. So while I live I hope Gibraltar will be held by English soldiers."

The cordial courtesies which were extended to Dr. Field at Gibraltar, and his generous tribute to British valour and moral heroism, will do much to show that there throbs in the heart of every English-speaking man a feeling of sympathy with the dear Old Mother Land—that her triumphs and glories are also theirs, that blood is stronger than water after all.