

RUSSIAN HOME ATTACKED

OWNER'S VALIANT FIGHT.

HUNS' TERRIFYING METHODS.

SYDNEY, Saturday.

Dvr Romashkevich, who has joined the Australian forces, has received a letter from his brother, who is a staff-captain of artillery in the Russian Army. He dates his letter from Petrograd, and tells a terrifying story of the attack of the Germans on their ancestral home and the killing of his brother and his food. He writes to ask for 25 roubles toward a fund for purchasing a house for the widow.

"Our brother Andrew was killed by the Germans," he says, "and all our possessions in Deubowe were burned to the ground, even to the fruit trees in the garden. Only a few days ago I got to know all this, for after I was severely wounded in battle at Przemysl I spent about six months in hospital on the verge of death. I have been promoted to the rank of staff-captain, and was awarded for valor the Cross of St. George of the fourth degree. Lately I met a friend, Dr S. Narbut, who came straight from Switzerland. Although he lives permanently in our neighborhood, he is a Swiss subject, and can easily cross the border. As a friend of our late brother he was often in Deubowe and told me the story of the

a friend of our late brother he was often in Deubowe, and told me the story as an eye-witness.

"As the people were forced to retreat, Andrew's wife left for Riga, where her relatives are, and took with her all valuables, etc., of the household. Only Andrew and the servant remained at home, and soon afterwards the locality was seized by the German soldiers. The officers took Deubowe for their quarters. They ate and drank and interfered with girls and women without shame. They took anything without asking—the best horses, cattle, and poultry. They also got, by threatening Andrew with internment, all silver (some 500 roubles) and copper. When departing from Deubowe they left some papers, stating that the German Government would pay after the war. They also took with them all people who were able to work—even girls were taken—and all who now remained in Deubowe were Andrew and his old servant Remis.

"Another party of German soldiers arrived and invaded the parish of Karkinovo, so Deubowe got new visitors, whose division was headed by Officer Schmidt and a sergeant-major. Again they commenced doing as they pleased and plundering everything. This time they got every horse, all cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry: even the bedding was taken. At this juncture the officer made a call on our brother, and again the plunderers demanded money and other valuables. Andrew refused because he had nothing to give. The reason Schmidt

ables. Andrew refused because he had nothing to give. Thereupon Schmidt, pointing to Andrew's gold ring and watch said, "Why do you lie, you Polish pig? Perhaps you are a spy of the Russians?" As our brother thought they intended taking his jewellery by force, he took his watch and ring and threw them into the river (Nieuwiba). Thereupon he told the officer he would not submit to his brutal check, and that German friendliness did not concern him in the slightest.

"I hate the Prussians for their tyranny to him and to the whole community—for their robbery and their scandalous behavior toward unarmed women and children. The angry wild German officer struck Andrew in the face with all his might and the latter being old—over 36—and not very strong, fell motionless to the ground. In the meantime surprisingly like an agile tiger, Andrew sprang from the ground and with a great swing to the left he struck the officer right on the nose, so that the former rolled down apparently dead.

"The soldier near by rushed at Andrew and struck him in the chest with the butt-end of his rifle, and felled him to the ground. The blood began to stream out of his mouth. Those who stood on the opposite side of the river thought he was dead. Then the German officer rose from the ground, and, coming to my brother, kicked him in the head while lying motionless. The German's heel kick was so strong that it cut his face with the spurs as with a knife. Then the blood flowed and covered his face. But Andrew

flowed and covered his face. But Andrew revived again. He promptly got an automatic revolver from his waistcoat pocket as quick as lightning, and, lying where he was, fired a shot in the breast of the officer and killed him. Thereupon the sergeant-major who stood near by drew his sword and cut Andrew's head clean from his body. All unnoticed up till now, came rushing from behind a tree the old Lithuanian servant and faithful friend—John Reinis. He rushed toward the sergeant-major with a large open pocket-knife, which he thrust into the chest of the German, killing him. Then the soldiers threw themselves like wild beasts upon the old servant. They stabbed him with their bayonets and struck him with stones. Long after they were dead the Huns practised their cruelty on the bodies of our brother and Reinis. Then they set fire to all the buildings in Deubowe—the old estate which has stood for ages, and had seen so many generations. On the other side of the river a number of neighbors pleaded in vain for the old oak building that has been famous in all the surrounding districts. But nothing could stop the wild soldiers.

"The whole estate was destroyed. The orchard, which beautified the river and the whole place, was cut down to the last tree. So, dear brother, the beautiful estate and the home of our forefathers and ourselves—the magnificent trees under which we spent our childhood, are now destroyed by the German hand. Shall we not have revenge?"

"I know that you have joined the Aus-

we not have revenge?

"I know that you have joined the Australian military forces and that you are anxious to learn flying. I hope you will succeed in your wish, and that you will make your presence felt by the enemy.

"I do not believe that you have heard of the awful death of our fourth brother, Ignatius. He was on his way home from America to join the Colors in the Russian Army, when his boat was destroyed by a German submarine. Now the whole of the surrounding population is sorrowing for the tragic end of our two brothers and old Reinis. I cried also when I heard the news, although I am an old soldier. Andrew's wife is so affected that she is severely ill. The citizens of our locality have contributed 25 roubles each for the erection of a house for her."