

## An Immortal

By Sidney Benson Thorp

THE dusky little row comprising No. 79 quivered like a jelly as railway or post-office vans, making a short cut between two principal thoroughfares, roared over the boulders of Wickham Road, N.W.

To the left front shone a public-house, another to the right. Before each an Italian musician had set up his rest (for it was ten o'clock and a fine, warm night), and thence, reckless of unhappy beings at the confluence, in friendly rivalry they teemed forth contradictory tunes. From a neighbouring street floated tepid air charged with the vibrations of inflated brass; the voices of the inhabitants, seeking on their doorsteps comparative cool at the close of a tropical day, fantastically varied the echoes. Linked bands of frolicsome youth patrolled beneath the window of No. 79, shouting a parody of Wagner wedded to words by an imitator of Mr. George R. Sims—the latest success of the halls. Splutters of gurgling laughter betrayed the whereabouts of amorous pairs.

And the man staring from the open window of the first-floor front neither saw nor heard.

Within the room a pale circle of light fell, from beneath the opaque shade of a single candle, directly upon a litter of manuscript and a few odd volumes of standard literature. The feebler rays reflected