

a kitchen and a bedroom. The situation was more than embarrassing, but nothing short of obedience would satisfy. Whether it was the stifling atmosphere or the strange feeling of rest on a mattress, or whether it was the nocturnal disturbances—for the old man snored loudly—I don't know, but I never slept a wink. I was never so thankful to see the day break. I got up quietly, lit a pipe, and watched the sun rise, meditating the while on the kaleidoscopic nature of things human. I offered them a small consideration for their trouble. But no! "Pourvu que vous venez pour sauver notre France, nous ne pouvons tarder de faire tout notre possible pour les soldats anglais."

Here they look on things from another standpoint than that of the Old Country. One thing also will strike the stranger at the gate—the tireless industry of the women. There is nothing of the sluggard about them. They are up early and down late. They till the field; they are in every sense of the words hewers of wood and drawers of water. You ask the reason, and with a shrug they reply—"Pendant que l'homme est à la guerre, les femmes travaillent aux champs." All are out after what they call souvenirs—badges, buttons, wrist watches, puttees, anything, and I remember having difficulty in persuading one old lady that if I parted with my kilt I might have difficulty in satisfying the police. On the walls of every house and in every room of the house is the image of the Crucified Christ and the Virgin and Child. At almost all the cross-roads there is a small brick erection known in France as a *maison à prier* or *sainte chapelle*. Inside is a miniature altar lit up at night by an array of candles. This is designed for the benefit of wayfarers and sojourners. The French, in this part at least, are nothing if not devout, and it is a frequent sight to see peasants bow the knee in front of this sacred edifice, paying homage and telling their beads. But these are the homes of those far removed from the ravages of the Germans. A striking contrast presents itself if you chance to pay a visit to some of the battered homes, or what were once homes, around the firing-line. Their appearance beggars description. I remember one farm-house close to Ypres where there was all the