

## FROM THE TRENCHES

The letters home are on the same reserved but natural note. Professional information being barred, the soldier has had to fall back on the few conventional phrases to express personal feelings, which our tongue-tied nation allows itself. They are learned in childhood, and so come easily.

It was often the same scene. In some deserted little village, dusty, sun-white, and shuttered, the glimpse of a khaki coat and a sun-red British face has cheered and checked us as we ran through.

Pleasant to hear the broad easy tongue; and we retire to the one little wine-shop, that still keeps open because it is near a base-camp.

The rumour of English newspapers in some unaccountable way gets abroad. Soon there are a dozen or more khaki caps crowded in the little room. The few peasants left drift in there too. The usual long handskakes, absurd French tags of talk. The soldiers are plundered of their last emblems, as mementoes. Not a village