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"OVER THE PARAPET."—Private George Sydenham (Royal Sussex Regiment), writing to his mother, Mrs. Sydenham, of Glendale, New England Road, Haywards Heath, states:—"I am still alive and well, thank God, after taking part in the recent great battle. It was a terrible affair, and I cannot describe it. Luckily we were in reserve this time, as the attack was on a very large front, and for a very important part, but we had to go over the top. I and three or four others went over the parapet together, with machine gun and rifle fire as thick as rain, to say nothing of the Huns' heavy shells shrapnel, Krupps, whiz-bangs, &c., bursting all around us. We were never intended to have to face such warfare. I expected to get blown to pieces every minute, and I think I should have been if I had stopped where I was in the trench before I went over, for when I got back the trench was blown in and dirt and chalk were piled up in a great heap where I had been sitting. We came back and stayed in those trenches all day, being relieved at night, and all that time we were dodging all sorts of devilish stuff. Our guns were simply awful to hear—you could not hear yourself speak—so I imagine that poor old Fritz must have 'copped it' badly. Well, here I am now in a Church Army hut, in a village not many miles back from the firing line, with the piano playing and all our boys singing and enjoying themselves. You would not think that a few days ago they were facing worse than death itself. Sergeant-Major Hammond, of Spring Gardens, I hear, was wounded, whether badly or not I don't know, but at any rate he will be out of it for a time. Good luck to him!"