

SOLDIERS' LETTERS.

FROM THE FRONT AND ABROAD.

Extracts are given below from letters received by Broken Hill residents from soldiers and other friends abroad.

PRIVATE W. DORFMAN.

Some time ago an appeal was made for residents in Australia to write friendly letters to some of the soldiers at the front who had no friends with whom to correspond. Master R. Hooper, of Bagot-street, North Broken Hill, responded to the appeal, and he has now received the following interesting letter from Private W. Dorfman, No 4477, A Company, 54th Battalion, 14th Infantry Brigade, A.I.F., who is a native of Roono, in Russia. Writing on April 24, 1916, Private Dorfman says:—

"My Dear Friend,—I was deeply touched by your kindness at writing to me, and I can assure you it was deeply appreciated. It was the first letter I had received from Australia since leaving there, and it is very hard to stand by and see your friends getting letters when you are not getting any yourself. I have no relatives in Australia to get letters from, as all my people are in Russia, in a small town called Roono. Although it is only a small town it is strongly fortified, and has withstood a three months' bombardment by the Germans. I was born in this town, and I am feeling very anxious about my people there, as I have not had any word from them for seven or eight months. This fact worries me a great deal, as anything might have happened them. I have travelled through a good bit of the world, having been in Germany, Austria, United States of America, China, Japan, and the Phillipine Islands, and happened to be in the latter place when war first broke out. I then came to Australia, and spent a few days in Sydney. I then enlisted and spent some months in camp. I would have got away before were it not for the evacuation of Gallipoli. I eventually sailed from Sydney on February 16, in the s.s. Ballarat, and we called at Melbourne and Colombo on the run to Suez, where we disembarked and journeyed by train to a place called Zeitoun, where the camp was. This

place is seven miles from Cairo, and just adjoining Heliopolis, where the big hospitals are. We stayed at Zeitoun only ten days, when we were all removed to our present camp, which is on the Arabian side of the Suez Canal, and is in close proximity to the scene of the early canal fighting against the Turks. The whole company that I came over with was transferred into the 54th Battalion. The few days spent at Zeitoun were rather interesting, as we were allowed to visit Cairo every afternoon after 4 o'clock. I saw a fair amount of Cairo, and was impressed by its beauty. It has several fine parks, and a few fine streets; but the native quarters spoil the effect a great deal. The natives here are not too clean either as regards their places of abode or personally. Everyone there appears to be anxious to rob you if they get a chance, but the money system is very easy, as it is all piastres—worth 2½d. each. Heliopolis is also a fine city, and has some very fine buildings. The camp we are in now is about 70 miles from Cairo, and is not as pleasant as Zeitoun. We are on the edge of the desert, and almost on the banks of the canal, which is rather fortunate, as bathing in the canal is the only means one has of washing himself here. Drinking water only is supplied. There are several thousands encamped here, and there is plenty of drill, which is very strenuous, being out on the desert all day in the broiling sun. The Prince of Wales is here, attached to the Headquarters' Staff, and holds the rank of lieutenant. He is a great centre of attraction, and looks very boyish. We expect to go to France at any time now, and all the chaps seem anxious to get away. I am sending you a photograph of myself, but it is not at all a good one, having been taken by an amateur. I will send you another, and I will write to you again from the trenches. I must thank you for your kindness in offering to send me cigarettes and tobacco, but I do not smoke, which is rather unusual for here, for a man not to smoke. Your kindness in sending me the books is deeply appreciated, but

they have not yet arrived. They should arrive shortly, because, as you know, parcels always take longer than letters to come. I shall be very pleased to receive the photos of yourself and

letters to come. I shall be very pleased to receive the photos of yourself and family, and will take the opportunity of sending one of these to a Russian paper with a request to insert it in the paper, and also point out the kindness which is being shown by Australians towards unbelieved soldiers. My right hand was hurt last week on one of the punts which cross the canal conveying the vehicular traffic. I got it jammed between a rail and a cart wheel, and it caused me great inconvenience to write, so I have got a friend to write for me as I dictate. I will look forward to seeing you on my return from the front, if I am favored by such good luck, and will hope to see you a school teacher imparting to your scholars things useful to them, and also impressing on them the many valorous deeds done by the Australian soldiers on the dark shores of Gallipoli. Kindest regards to yourself and your father, mother, sisters, and brothers. Yours very sincerely."