

and bullets was falling, from which the soldiers were sheltering themselves under the walls of the houses, swearing, half starved, furious, and miserable—the variety of hideous noises, the hurtling bomb of the cannon balls, the hissing of the shells, the peculiar and terrible sounds of the mitrailleuses,—the dreadful smells, the bones and entrails of dead horses lying about in every direction, the ribs showing raw and bloody, their flesh having been, the instant they fell, cut off by the soldiers—who could get no other food; if they could manage to cook it they considered themselves lucky, if not, they ate it raw—the whole scene utterly wretched and hopeless.

The wounded began to arrive at the church; but the few matresses were soon exhausted, and they were laid on the floor, on the benches, almost on each other, with a little straw under them, and perhaps a hymn book under their heads; some sat on the pulpit stairs. Instead of the twenty-five patients prepared for, one hundred and seventy were sent in during the course of the day and night, and were laid down in the schoolroom, the little yard, the sheds; the altar was seized as an operating table by the military surgeons, of whom at first only one could be spared for the work, and the three sisters of the pasteur dressed the wounds as well as they could, and helped to pull off the shoes and wash the feet of the men, which was some refreshment, but pretty nearly the only relief which they could give. No food was to be had for them except a few cases of chocolate and Liebig's extract until the next day, when the Intendance sent in the soldiers' meagre rations; these were cooked in great caldrons in the open yard by the ladies and distributed by them. Two shells burst one after the other over the church and the presbytère, and the surgeon insisted on the wounded being carried into the crypt, where the children of an orphanage had, however, already been taken, and it was represented to him that the men would be stifled. "Then," said he, "we will be buried alive under the ruins, *tant vaise crever*." The prospect was not reassuring, but there was nothing to be done. A white flag had just been hung up as protection when a third shell struck the church; "Oh!" cried the women tumultuously crowding up from the houses near, "pull it down, it draws the fire, it is a mark." It was, however, their best chance of escape, the pasteur held firm, and the church was not again disturbed.

At first the French wounded were extremely depressed, but their spirits soon revived. The Germans on the contrary, as the time