

7. THE SPIRIT OF RESISTANCE.

The great majority of the French have always been anti-German. After the collapse they were rather surprised to see that the occupying forces were trying to be friendly. Certain French people were then inclined to conclude that having been definitely beaten by Germany the only solution left was to reach an understanding with her, but they soon realised it was impossible. Behind their acquired veneer the Germans were found to be the same arrogant, brutal plunderers, sometimes under the appearance of the best legal forms, and most of all congenitally untruthful. However, the French were compelled by "force majeure" to conceal their genuine sentiments which they only expressed in private or clandestinely, with the result that it was almost impossible for people outside France to realise their true feelings. All the more so when all the means of public information - Radio, Press and official speeches - were under the control of a Ministry in favour of collaboration with Germany. Consequently, the general belief in many countries that the French have turned pro-German, is quite easy to understand.

Actually even in Vichy the French elements in favour of collaboration - at least those who are willing to play the German game - amount only to a few scores of men. The other officials, occupying responsible positions may be better described as "attentistes", that is, playing for time, rather than true "collaborationnistes". When a secret ballot was taken in September