

people know much about French homes, fewer still ever see inside them. In them the mother rules supreme, and French mothers, from peasant to duchess, are the best maternal race in Europe. Where good mothers rule, the nation will be sound. Governments may come and go, and their external forms may change, but the French and not the Germans are the heirs of old Rome, and their women are the true successors of those old Roman mothers, of whom their menfolk's highest praise was to say, 'She stayed at home, she span wool' (or, as we should say, 'she knitted socks').

From France the victorious Germans took in 1870 the very rich provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. This was no 'crime against nationality' or against history, as the partition of Poland had been. Both had been provinces of the old German Empire, and had been comparatively recent thefts by France, Alsace in 1648, half Lorraine in 1559, half as late as 1738. They were, and are, largely German in speech and race. Yet—what queer things national antipathies and national sympathies are!—their inhabitants were for the most part passionately attached to France, and if there was one thing they loathed in the world it was a Prussian. France had governed them most kindly, and had endeared herself to them by a thousand ties. Too well the Alsatians knew the cruel treatment they would receive from Prussia, and they were not wrong in their forecast. Something like one-quarter of the Alsatian population actually gave up their homes and settled in other French provinces, and for four-and-forty years Alsace has cried day and night to France to come and deliver her. You may have heard that over the Eastern Railway Station in Paris there stands a statue of the Alsatian capital city of Strassburg. Every year it has been