

went on pined for home ; and the idea of being incapacitated for future labour, with the extremely small pensions allowed by the Prussian system, seemed to pray on their minds. Their superior education was very striking ; the sick men were trying to learn French, studying maps of the country, &c. One day an infirmier besought me to come to a wounded German who he felt sure was mad, or "communicating with spirits, for he was making cabbalistic signs." I found a young fellow repeating his Euclid by heart, and making the figures in the air as he went on.

The extreme ignorance of their enemy shown by the French people and army alike was such that the men were almost paralysed at finding the Germans, whom they had been taught to despise, were better soldiers than themselves. It is necessary to turn back to the dismal tragi-comedy of the French newspapers after the puerile attack upon Saarbrück to realize the state of feeling at the beginning of the war. "The backs of the Prussians was all that they allowed us to see of them." "They positively ran at the first discharge of the mitrailleuses," was repeated in every variety of jubilant key. It was so self-evident a truth that a Frenchman must beat a German, that when Paris heard of a battle it was taken for granted that it was a victory. After the engagement at Wörth, a friend of mine, a gentleman arriving from its neighbourhood, found the Rue de la Paix dressed with flags, and a crowd marching about with songs of triumph for "a great victory." "But," observed he, "it was a great defeat ; I was there." No one would listen to him and he was advised to hold his tongue, it was not safe to hint at such an opinion, he would be taken up as a Prussian spy. The system of illusions and delusions was carried on from the highest to the lowest ; things were "made pleasant" to the Emperor, but they were equally "doctored" before being made known to the Paris mob. "How can you put news in your paper which you know to be perfectly false ?" was said to a French editor. "*Il leur faut absolument des victoires, il n'y en a pas, il faut que je leur en fasse,*" was the answer, and accordingly they were manufactured to order in every variety. Nothing was too wonderful to be believed. "The Crown Prince had been taken with half his army !" "Two corps d'armées, 40,000 Prussians, had fallen into the quarries of Jaumont, shot down and buried under stones hurled in by an indignant peasantry," the veracious narrator declaring that "the groans still filled his ears ;" a splendid coloured print was publish-