

TESTING HER INNOCENCE.

The following touching scene recently occurred in a Parisian court of justice. A poor, pale, wan seamstress was arraigned for theft. She appeared at the bar with a boy eleven or twelve months old in her arms, her child. She went to get some work one day, and it was supposed she stole three coins of 10f. each. The money was missed soon after she left her employer, and a servant was sent to her room to claim it. The servant found her about to quit the rooms with the three gold pieces in her hand. She said to the servant, "I was going to carry them back to you." Nevertheless she was carried to the Commissioner of Police, and he ordered her to be sent before the court for trial.

She was too poor to engage a lawyer, and when asked by the Judge what she had to say for herself, she answered, "The day I went to my employer's I carried my child with me. It was in my arms as it is now. I was not paying attention to it. There were several other gold pieces on the mantel-piece, and unknown to me it stretched out its little hands and seized the three pieces, which I did not observe until I got home. I at once put on my bonnet, and was going back to my employer when I was arrested. This is the solemn truth, as I hope for heaven's mercy."

The court could not believe this story. They upbraided the mother for her impudence in endeavoring to palm off such a manifest lie for the truth. They besought her, for her own sake, to retract so absurd a tale, for it would be of no effect, but oblige the court to sentence her to a much severer punishment than they were disposed to inflict upon one so young, evidently steeped so deeply in poverty.

These appeals had no effect, except in strengthening the poor mother's pertinacious adherence to her original story. As this firmness was sustained by that look of innocence which the most adroit criminal cannot counterfeit, the court was at some loss to discover what decision justice demanded. To relieve their embarrassment, one of the judges proposed to renew the scene described by the mother. The gold coins were placed on the clerk's table. The mother was requested to assume the position in which she stood at her employer's house. Then there was a breathing in the court. The baby soon discovered the bright coin, eyed them for a moment, smiled, and then stretched forth its tiny hands and clutched them in its fingers with a miser's eagerness. The mother was acquitted.

A recent decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Index having placed upon the list of prohibited books, a work known as *Pomponius Letus, or Eight Months in Rome during the Vatican Council*, written in Rome, but published in Florence, and due to the pen of Marquis Francis Vitelleschi, Senator of the Kingdom of Italy. The 'Daily Telegraph' of London, with its usual respect for truth, announced the condemnation of the work, and named as its author the late lamented Cardinal Salvatore Vitelleschi, adding its comments upon the facts, etc. The three brothers of the deceased Cardinal, including the Senator, indignantly pronounced the assertion "an infamous lie," through the columns of the public press. Whereupon the 'Daily Telegraph,' in its issue of June 24, writes: "The declaration of the brothers Vitelleschi is perfectly consistent with our own! The Cardinal did not, nor could he have written the book, if he would not court the fate of Döllinger, but he furnished all the materials. The 'Voce della Verità,' referring to this persistency in falsehood, recalls the famous discourse attributed to Mgr. Strossmayer during the Vatican Council, a composition which first saw the light in German, then in Italian, and was finally translated into English. Mgr. Strossmayer himself, in the columns of the 'Allgemeine Zeitung,' solemnly declared the entire discourse an invention, but to what purpose? Barmby, a publisher of Leeds, still advertises at the price of three half-pence, *The Papal Pretensions Exposed by a Roman Catholic Bishop*, and on the inside of the cover we read: "The following discourse is translated from the Italian version, and was pronounced in the Vatican Council by Bishop Strossmayer!"—N.Y. Freeman."

The Toledo (Ohio) 'Commercial' says:—"Saturday night witnessed the wind-up of the Adelphi variety season for the summer, and the event was signalised by an event bordering on the tragic. Harry Devonport, a tight-rope performer and juggler, whose home is in Detroit, has been playing a two weeks' engagement. Among other duties he was required to give a free exhibition of tight-rope walking in front of the theatre every evening. The rope was stretched across Summit-street from the top of the Adelphi to the top of the Speyer block, at an elevation of some sixty feet, and was sustained by guy ropes held by men on the ground. Saturday night Mr. Devonport went through his performance as usual, winding up with a performance upon a trapeze, which hung down some sixty feet from the rope. He was preparing to do his last feat, which consisted of twisting both legs around the side-ropes of the trapeze, and dropping until he could touch the bars with his bent knees. He did this in one instance, and was preparing to repeat it with one leg, when he shot like a rocket head foremost towards the pavement. The crowd surged and gave way, and then the unfortunate man, whirling just before he had reached the pavement, struck with a dull thud the hard pebble-stone pavement on his right side. He was taken, apparently dead, into the Adelphi, and surgical aid summoned. An examination showed that he had escaped with a compound comminuted fracture of the right arm above the elbow and a fracture of the right wrist. He was taken to St. Vincent's Hospital, where he now lies, and his wounds were dressed."

Business is not very lively in Europe at present. In Belgium the coal and metal trades are drooping, and they affect all the other branches. In Germany the condition of affairs is even worse, and the Customs receipts of the first six months of 1876, as compared with the corresponding period in the previous year, show a deficit, and exports are diminishing daily; whilst in France accounts show that there is a slackness in affairs generally.—Galigiani.

WAIFS AND STRAYS.

A capital anecdote of the late Sultan is told. He was very fond of gossip, and sent for the banker, Abraham Beg, to learn the scandal of Pera and Stamboul. As Abraham was being conducted to the presence by the Master of the Horse, that functionary begged him, should the Sultan question him on the subject, to say that the funds were at thirty, his Majesty having been so informed by his Ministers. Poor Abraham consented. He had not been long with Abdul Aziz when he was questioned as to the funds, and replied as he had promised. To the horror of the banker, the Sultan expressed himself delighted, and handed Abraham a large bundle of bonds to sell for him. Abraham sold at twelve, and paid Abdul Aziz thirty. It is not often that a Jewish banker tumbles into such a pitfall.

The learned astronomer and philosopher, Lalande, gave himself out as an atheist, and attracted attention by eating living spiders before ladies. On one occasion he told them that his spiders had a slight flavor of nuts; upon which one of the fair spectators, who, although a lady of fashion, was not destitute of wit, remarked "Like atheism, which has a slight flavor of philosophy." Napoleon grew impatient of these follies, which were calculated to bring his Institute, of which Lalande was a member, into disrepute. Wherefore he wrote the following letter on the subject of his atheism and his spiders:—"I learn with regret that a member of the Institute, celebrated for his learning, but now fallen into second childhood, has not the prudence to hold his tongue, and is endeavoring to draw notice upon himself, sometimes by advertisements unworthy of his former reputation, sometimes by a loud profession of atheism—a principle destructive of all social organization, which robs man of all his consolations and all his hopes. My intention is that you assemble around you the presidents and the secretaries of the Institute, and that you instruct them to inform that illustrious body, to which I have the honor to belong, that it is to instruct M. Lalande, and to charge him, in the name of that body, to print nothing more, and not to sully in his old age what he has done during his years of strength to obtain the esteem of learned men; and if these fraternal invitations are insufficient, I shall be obliged myself, also, to remember that my first duty is to see to it that the morals of my people are not poisoned, for atheism is destructive of all morality, if not in individuals, at all events in nations."

The incident I am going to relate occurred over a hundred and fifty years ago, in a mountain district of France much infested with wolves and other wild animals. The little heroine was named Françoise Marie. She was left an orphan at the age of eleven years, with a little brother, four years old, to care for, and only a small cottage and a little farm to tend, but the neighbors used to work the fields for her. For three years she "kept house" with her little brother, knitting, sewing, spinning, and cooking for them both, and helping as much as she could towards tilling her little farm. One cold winter's day, when Françoise was fourteen and her brother was seven years of age, a great hungry wolf with five whelps approached the cottage. They were probably attracted by some loaves of bread which Françoise was baking. She was bending over the oven, with her little brother standing by her, when they entered the house. She turned and at once attacked them with a heavy stick. She had nearly driven the old wolf off, when she saw one of the young wolves attack her little brother. Françoise turned and struck it a severe blow, and, seizing the child, shut him up in a cupboard. But while she was thus saving him from harm she exposed her own life; the old wolf returned, and, seizing her by the throat, pushed her to the floor. The other wolves also attacked her, and in a short time had torn her to pieces. She had died, but her brother was saved. He remained locked in the cupboard for some days. There he found plenty to eat, and there he remained until released by some neighbors. He lived to be a very old man, and never failed, when occasion offered, to tell, with many tears, of the good sister who had died in saving him.

The first weed pulled up in the garden, the first seed put into the ground, the first shilling put in the saving bank, and the first mile travelled on a journey, are all very important things; they make a beginning, and thereby a hope, a pledge, an assurance, that you are in earnest with what you have undertaken. How many a poor, idle, erring, hesitating outcast is now creeping and crawling his way through the world who might have held up his head and prospered if, instead of putting off his resolution of amendment and industry, he had only made a beginning.

The *nouvelles couches sociales* of M. Gambetta (says the London correspondent of the 'Standard') are as industrious as ever. They are getting up what they call a working man's congress, which is to be held in Paris from the 2nd to the 20th of September. The committee charged with its organisation state that the congress will take the form of private meetings; but if necessary, and if the Government will grant the authorisation, a great public meeting will be held. The Congress will be composed of delegates from all the working corporations in France. The chief questions to be studied are—the position of the workmen, the organisation of the syndical chamber, the direct representation of the proletariat in Parliament, co-operative association, and the necessity of founding a society to keep up relations between the agricultural laborers of the villages and the workmen of the town. You will remark that the programme is a curious mixture of the social and political. No discussion we are told, will be allowed; each speaker will state his ideas and proposals, and it will remain with the audience to judge and decide. Of course the *République Française* approves of this congress, and hopes that it will succeed in making clearly known the just demands and aspirations of the working classes—a hope in which most persons may join, but which, judging from the political character of the organisers of the congress, is not likely to be realised in a satisfactory way.