

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

FRANCE.

The Emperor Napoleon has not displayed less than his habitual skill in the manner in which he has prepared the annunciation of the September Convention, and eased off the evacuation of Rome. It was a delicate task, and has been cleverly performed. It cannot be said that he is yet out of the wood; it was premature to shout for the triumph; but still much has been done, things have gone very well as yet—as the French say, *le gros de l'ouvrage est fait*. The Emperor is skilful in playing his fish, and most ingenious in his choice of baits and of soothing delusions. Out of regard to the susceptibilities of his pious wife and of the Catholic party in France, he to the last moment forbore to dispel the doubt many entertained whether his part of the Convention would really be fulfilled, and his flag removed from Rome, and also from Civita Vecchia. So far was this reserve carried that General Montebello began to chafe in his harness, and to believe that the final order of evacuation would come too late for his men to depart by the prescribed date. The Flamy mission was another tub to the flurried whale. Although the Convention itself, according to the French interpretation of it already evinced, the temporal power with protection and safeguards, assurance was to be made doubly sure, and a special envoy was sent to Florence to restrain Italian ardor and provide for Papal security. There was no need to put on the screw. Ricasoli, as Prime Minister of an Italy all but complete, could afford to be forbearing, and showed a pliancy probably unprecedented in a man so long noted as stubborn. Negotiations with the Vatican were at once to be resumed, and the announcement was accompanied by that of extraordinary concessions, and by the assurance that Italy was far from desiring that the Pope should quit Rome. All this was soothing and encouraging to the alarmed friends of the Pontifical Power. There was yet another card to play still more to calm anxiety, and especially to allay that naturally felt by Pius IX. The report, first set afloat some three months ago, that the Emperor of the French would visit Rome was revived, and, if it has as yet received no official or positive corroboration it has been sufficiently countenanced to give it weight and value. When it has served its turn and helped to tide over a difficult moment, in its turn it may be allowed to subside into oblivion. It will have done good service if it assists in detaining the Pope at Rome until such time at least as circumstances may allow the Tuilleries to contemplate his departure with less discomposure than at present.—*Cor. of Times.*

Napoleon III. has had his day of prosperity and glory like his uncle before him. Hitherto everything has succeeded to his utmost wishes. This time last year he was in the zenith of his power, and gave the law to Europe and part of America. But M. Bismarck and President Johnson have checked him in his mid career and thwarted his ambition.—*Cor. of Weekly Register.*

The French Government is greatly irritated against the *Journal des Debats* for giving the passage, where the Holy Father alludes to the Emperor's health.—The Paris papers have been ordered not to reproduce it; and one journal in particular that had the paragraph already in print, was obliged to put it aside. *Times Cor.*

In the speech spoken by M. Haussmann, Prefect of the Seine, at the grand banquet at the Hotel de Ville, the other day, and which, amidst self-congratulations on the present condition of Paris, expressed the most unbounded admiration of the Emperor and of all his acts, and the most enthusiastic devotion to his dynasty, occurred a few sentences which have puzzled the public. In his allusion to general politics he said that:—

'The very moderation of the Emperor was the principal cause of difficulties which the sword would perhaps have decided, but that the honour of His Majesty's Government has been, and will be, to solve them by means slower and more laborious. And, in effect, in the midst of the passions which most frequently agitate human affairs, and when wisdom makes itself understood and imposes its authority, it is doomed to see roared against it violence from the most opposite quarters which its interposition disconcerts and its curb irritates.'

People are curious to know what the 'difficulties' are to which the speaker alluded, and whence comes the violence which the Emperor's 'curb' irritates. These enigmatical phrases have excited not only curiosity, but a certain uneasiness which perhaps M. Haussmann never intended. The toast with which he concluded his speech were such as might naturally be expected from so high a functionary.—'The Emperor, whom may God long preserve to France! the Empress, whose heroic soul possesses all sorts of courage and devotedness! the Prince Imperial, on whom the destinies of our children repose!'

A report is current that one of the branches of the Government have decided to favor the proposed re-organization of the French army. It is thought that, in consequence of the opposition manifested to the measure both by the people and several leading statesmen, the Emperor will not favor its presentation by his War Minister to the Corps Legislatif.

Two Millions of Francs in Paris.—The population of Paris, including the arrondissements of St. Denis and Sceaux, according to the census of 1866, amounts to 2,150,916; which is an increase of 197,256 above the number given in the census returns for 1861. As the annual expenditure of the city of Paris now amounts to upwards of 20,000,000 francs, it follows that the total taxation is 10 francs, or eight shillings, for every head of the population.

A portion of the posterior half of Cardinal Richelieu's skull was recently discovered in France, and by the Government restored with great pomp and solemnity to the mausoleum originally erected in Paris to receive his remains. The Parisian sneer usual on all such occasions, found expression next day in the following *bon mot*: 'Ah! yes. We have half his skull. Would that we had half his brains!'

ITALY.

Piedmont.—It was related some time ago at Florence that a warm discussion, and even high words, had taken place between the King and General Fleury with reference to the eventuality of the Pope's departure, and that the substance of what passed, communicated to the Emperor, considerably alarmed him. From the same source I am now informed that it was afterwards clearly intimated to the Italian Government that if the Pope left the Pontifical States in consequence of internal pressure France would bring him back to Rome, as she did in 1849. But the Italy of 1866 is not the Italy of 17 years ago, and I greatly doubt that her Government—so long, at least, as Ricasoli is at its head—would tamely submit to such re-imposition of a departed Pontiff. It may be said that it would be madness for Italy to engage in a struggle with France; but we have lately seen that she can make alliances when she finds her too strong to cope with single-handed. It is necessary, however, to anticipate fresh European conflicts on account of what is now passing or likely to pass in Italy.—The Emperor has not risked, braving disagreements and offending friends, in order to leave Rome with the idea of returning to it in a hurry. Having got so far out of the scrape, it would be the height of quixotism: again to put lance in rest of defence of the windmills of the temporal power.—*Times Cor.*

The Movement publishes the following letter from Garibaldi:—

'To the Italians.—Lord John Russell is coming to visit Italy. I wish to make known to my compatriots that the illustrious statesman in 1860 threw into the scale of our country's destiny the powerful

voice of England against those who wished to interfere and to isolate in Sicily the movement for emancipation. Thanks to the generous idea of the deliverance of the Neapolitan continent was facilitated, and the union of the Italian family now so happily accomplished, becomes possible. To this noble person, then, the well merited expression of gratitude.

Capri, Dec. 4, 1866.

G. GARIBOLDI.

Rome.—The Pope has addressed an invitation to the Bishops of the Catholic world to assemble at Rome in the month of June, 1867, to celebrate the 18th centenary of the Martyrdom of the Apostle Peter and Paul, and the canonization of several Martyrs, confessors, and virgins.

Kingdom of Naples.—The military tribunals have proved guilty of a fresh enormity, which confirms the truth of our previous statement *a propos* of the Apostate Rotolo—namely, that the Piedmontese do not deal out even-handed justice, and that the deposition of a malefactor is sufficient to get the accused sentenced to hard labor. Within the last few days, Pietro Fria, and Santa Fria, a young girl sixteen years old, were tried before the third military tribunal, sitting at Martorana. They were brother and sister, and the former was charged with having been *caposquadra* (leader of a band), and the latter with having abetted the rebellion. There was no proof sufficient to sustain this twofold accusation, and the depositions of the witnesses were in favor of the parties; everybody was convinced of their innocence, and it was considered a matter of certainty that they would be set at liberty. But no; the tribunal chose to rely on the deposition of Gamfi, the informer, whose motive had been to avenge an old wrong, and the unlucky Fria was sentenced to twenty years of hard labor, while his sister got ten years of imprisonment. We might cite many such instances of Piedmontese justice, did our space allow. The truth is beginning to come out about the insurrection of September. The *Prescuratore*, a revolutionary journal, which has always been notorious for bringing the Clergy and people of Palermo into discredit abroad by means of its odious calumnies, has suddenly changed its tone, and solemnly retracted everything that it has said. We beg to call the especial attention of our readers to the following passage, which has been translated literally: 'The *Prescuratore* itself was among those who calumniated the country in speaking of fictitious outrages, of which the corpse of Bolla (the Commissary of Police who was killed at Monreale) was said to have been the subject; now it invents no more lies. It has slandered the people of Palermo, who, left to themselves, have not committed the twentieth part of the horrors that were perpetrated in 1848 and 1860. It has slandered the country by attributing to it a part of the reaction, which it never took; for it ought to be universally known that the movement of September was an explosion of discontent, that it was seconded by all parties, including that of the Government, but that no one party took the lead. We must henceforth come out of the putrid atmosphere by which we are surrounded. We must be guided by liberty and law, which must be respected even when we are dealing with enemies. This programme is the only safe one, and better is it to descend into the tomb than cry with the rabble, "Death to Jesus! long life to Barrabas!" This language appearing as it does in the columns of a highly revolutionary journal, amounts to a revelation which will enrage the organs of the liberal party in the Peninsula, for the infamous calumnies with which they have assailed Sicily are no longer unveiled to Europe by the Catholic Press alone, but by one of their most devoted partisans.

BAVARIA.

The relations between Church and State in Bavaria, and the degree of freedom which that Constitutional State, with its preponderantly Catholic population, allows in matters of religion, has been instructively illustrated by a recent transaction which has caused considerable commotion. It appears that since the autumn of 1865 several priests of the Society of Jesus have visited Ratisbon, some of them staying for a shorter, some for a longer period. During their visits which were often of brief duration, they resided either with the Bishop or in the Episcopal Seminary. From Ratisbon they frequently visited other towns and dioceses to preach missions to the people, and to give retreats to the clergy, and with the authorisation of the bishops shared in the ordinary cure of souls. (The number of parochial clergy in Bavaria is notoriously insufficient for the spiritual wants of the faithful). The right wing of the famous old monastery of the Scottish Benedictines at Ratisbon, concerning which a few years ago an interesting article appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, and which had been let as private residences was desisted by the Bishop of Ratisbon for the reception of these Fathers, and after the termination of the tenancy's terms and certain alterations and repairs, the R. R. F. Ehrenberger, Kohlschreiber, and V. Peikhoven, all three native Bavarian citizens took up their abode in it last October. In the same month they were joined by two priests of the Society (foreigners), and a lay Brother, and the six lived in community. It is also stated that the Bishop of Ratisbon destined one of the Fathers to undertake the direction of the Episcopal Seminary. Meanwhile, the municipal authorities had made no objection, but the Radical press commenced a frightful outcry, and demanded the expulsion of the Fathers.

The Government interfered on the ground that, by the Bavarian Constitution, no new religious societies and institutions can be formed in Bavaria without the co-operation of the Government and the express permission of the Sovereign. Accordingly the Ministry for Affairs of Religion and Education desired the Presidency of the province to inform the Bishop of Ratisbon with reference to sec. 76, tit. c. of the Appendix to the Constitution, and Art. 1 of the Concordat, that his Lordship's conduct had infringed on the Constitution and on the Concordat, and unless desisted from would necessitate legal proceedings against him. The Bishop of Ratisbon yielded under protest, and the Fathers have withdrawn. But it is stated in the *Augsburg Gazette* that his Lordship informed the Government that he reserved the question of legal right, and yielded to the demand for the sole reason that 'at a time when the existing condition of society made any weakening of the authority of the Government, especially undesirable, he was unwilling to create further difficulties for the Government in this affair.' There is no better barometer of Catholicism than the illustrious company of Jesus. Where they are honored, protected and loved, the religious atmosphere is calm and bright. When they are treated with coldness, hostility, or insult, the religious atmosphere is gloomy and ill-boding. What a situation for a country like Bavaria, with its great majority of Catholics! The Bavarian Government, instead of seconding the efforts of the Bishop of Ratisbon, and of at once supplying the permission, which they claim the legal right to accord or deny, actually compels him, by a threat of prosecution, to forego the services of the Jesuit Fathers, deprives his flock of the benefit of the arrangements which he had made for their spiritual welfare, and chases the willing laborers out of the vineyard of Christ.

RUSSIA.

A letter from Warsaw in the *Posen Journal* says: 'Russia is secretly arming to a considerable extent—the fact is undeniable. An incredible activity prevails in her arsenals; she is converting the old infantry muskets into needle rifles, and filling up the regiments in short, she is putting herself in a condition to be prepared for any event next spring. The superior officers believe they will be called upon to enter on a campaign at that period. However, it is only stating the truth to say that up to the present no change has been made in the cantonments of the Russian army, and that the military force has not been increased in the Kingdom of Poland.'

The recruiting which is to take place in Russia from the 27th January to the 27th of February, at the rate of four conscripts per 1,000 inhabitants, and five per 1,000 in certain districts, will produce 850,000 men. The Russian army at present numbers 800,000 men under arms; add to which the 850,000 produced by the new levy, and the round number is 1,650,000 men.

The *Globe* informs its readers that the Russian Government is bent upon converting the Polish population from the Catholic to the Greek Church, and it carries on its work of conversion in the same rough and ready fashion as Peter the Great adopted towards his Boyards, whom he taught civilisation by cutting off their beards and teaching them to dance. Indeed, this is much too mild a parallel; for in the Polish provinces at present, the work of conversion is but another name for persecution, and finds a just parallel only in the forcible means by which the Turks of old converted their European subjects from Christian into Mahometans.

A correspondent of the *Czas*, describing the state of matters in Lithuania and White Russia, says:— 'The peasant who resolves to baptise his child according to the rites of the Catholic Church is fined 30 roubles, while he who presents his child to a priest of the Greek Church for baptism receives a douceur of fifteen roubles. The Government officials and employes who refuse to adopt the Greek faith are pitilessly expelled from the service, without the least consideration for them or for their families; the funds belonging to the Catholic churches are being seized, and the ecclesiastics are deported, in order to accelerate the work of conversion.' An officer of the gendarmerie who was commissioned to assist in the conversion of the Catholic population in one of the parishes of Lithuania, gives the following account of the process:— 'When a considerable number of the peasantry were assembled in the Catholic church, a body of troops surrounded the edifice—the pope (Greek priest) chafes in hand, was brought in; and, while the congregation in silence awaited what was to follow, the pope went from one individual to another to dispense the Sacrament. If any one closed his teeth, and refused to accept the Sacrament, the soldier who accompanied the pope opened the mouth of the recalcitrant with his bayonet.' Such is the process of Muscovite conversion!

A new kind of Protestant or politico religious sect has sprung up in Russia, of which we find the following notice:—

The 'Nihilists,' who are now occupying so much attention, and against whom the Governor of Nijni-Novgorod, General Ogareff, has just published a formal declaration of war, have nothing in common with any of the political sects to be found in the West of Europe. This reflection must be gratifying to those thorough going Russians who hold that their country ought no longer to be indebted for the slightest thing to the West, and that, in the spiritual as well as the material world, it is bound to supply its own wants from its own peculiar resources. Political economy, for instance, is said by people of this way of thinking to be a very good thing for England, but quite unfitted for Russia. It was gravely asserted not long ago in a scientific journal published at Moscow that Russia had had enough of German physiology; and that it must have its own 'Russian physiology' now. The general division of political men into Liberals and Conservatives has long been objected to as suited only to the effete West, though in Russia, as in other countries, the political world is made up of those who wish to keep things as they are and those who wish to change them, as they think, for the better. The great merit of the Nihilist party seems to be that it has no principles at all. Not that a Nihilist is open to conviction—he is already convinced that there is 'nothing new, nothing true, and that it doesn't signify.'

Some notion of the difficulty of defining Nihilism may be derived from the fact that M. Schodde Perrotti, writing on the subject in his journal, has already published four long chapters without telling us what the thing meant. The Nihilists would be mortified if it could be proved that, instead of being an original Russian product, 'Nihilism' was only an adaptation of American 'Know Nothingism'; but there is a certain analogy between the two nevertheless. One of the first duties of a Nihilist, for instance, is to keep clear of foreigners and to ignore foreign influences. Indeed they ignore everything—even crinolines, which the female Nihilists of Nijni-Novgorod, to the rage and indignation of General Ogareff, refuse to wear. Call 'Nihilism' the negation of all that now exists in Russia, and we get at what is probably the truth of the matter—that the Nihilists are a party of extreme Radicals or Revolutionists, whose first step, if they had the power, would be to make a *tabula rasa* of all political, social, and religious institutions. 'Non credum in nunc Deum' is said to be the first article of this nice little belief, of which taking it altogether, it would be unfair to contest the originality.

'In the streets of Nijni-Novgorod,' says General Ogareff, in his order on the subject, 'ladies and young girls are seen attired in a special costume which the women of the sect of "Nihilists" have appropriated to themselves. This costume is, for the most part, as follows:—A round hat, beneath which the hair is cut close to the head, green spectacles, hoods, no crinolines.'

After this strange description of what is certainly a very strange costume, General Ogareff goes on to say that, since the crime of the 4th of April, the party to which the malefactor belonged has been stigmatised in the eyes of all right-minded persons so that the public exhibition of the costume adopted by the women of this party can only be looked upon by the guardians of Public order as an act of insolence, deserving not only blame, but also the most prompt repression. Accordingly, he directs the police to 'pay attention' to all women dressed in the costume indicated, and to summon them to the police office, where they are required to sign a formal promise to adopt forthwith another and more suitable garb. In case of refusal or of subsequent contravention, they are expelled from the provincial, and, moreover, placed under the surveillance of the police, who will observe 'their modes of life, their acts, and their conversations.'

This order has been published in the official journals of the province of Nijni-Novgorod, and has naturally caused much excitement and alarm. It is asked in virtue of what law General Ogareff forbids women to wear green spectacles, and compels them to wear crinolines. As long as his edict remains in force any lady who may chance to appear in the streets of Nijni-Novgorod without enough crinolines to satisfy the taste of the police exposes herself to insult and arrest. General Ogareff's order is clearly a plagiarism from those issued by General Mouraviev, at Wilna, and Count Berg, at Warsaw, in respect to the mourning worn by the Polish ladies during the late insurrection. Nihilism may be a very foolish and injurious thing; but edicts imposing the use of crinolines are worse. The introduction into Russia, proper of the system of oppression, applied with so much severity in Poland, is very significant, and shows that when the Russians have 'learned to practise tyranny in one part of the empire they are not likely to continue it in another.—*Full Mail Gazette.*

TALK OF THE ARDENNES.

'The cow must go, Marguerite! it is better for the children to do without milk than to be turned out of doors, and that we certainly shall be if the rent be not paid on Monday week. Pierre can come with me to the fair on Wednesday and lead her there, and if we get a good price for her, we may do yet. But sell her we must, it is our only chance.'

Jacques Maillard was a farmer, and lived on the outskirts of the Forest of Ardenne. At one time he had been very well off, and being active, industrious, and religious, the good cure had thought it a very happy thing for Marguerite Lessins, a poor orphan,

when Jacques proposed to him that they should become man and wife. But they had a numerous family. Marguerite's health became delicate, and a fever which attacked her husband and several of her children once exhausted the little ready money they had hitherto saved. Even after his recovery, it was long before Jacques was fit to resume his work. Everything was done in consequence of a bad season; their neighbors were nearly as ill off as themselves; and the cure, though he did what he could, had too many poor to be of much assistance to them. The landlord, who generally lived in Brussels, employed an agent to receive his rents every year, and this agent had no pity for the poor farmers in distress. Besides this, Jacques had less to expect from him than any one else, having had a quarrel with him a year or two before on account of a poor man he had turned out of his farm; and report whispered that a cousin of his was anxious to get possession of Jacques's farm, if any plausible excuse could be found for forcing him to quit it. The rent fell due about this time; and by selling the greater part of his sickle the poor man had made up the sum. One cow a favorite of his wife's, was all he had kept; but another bill for physic required during his illness having come in, the sum prepared for the rent had to be broken in upon. The agent refused to take anything less than the entire sum due, and as we have seen, poor Jacques had now made up his mind to part with Marguerite's old favorite.

The fair-day arrived only too soon, and many tears were shed by poor Marguerite and her little children as they saw their pet led out by Pierre, before proceeding to the fair. Pierre himself was as sorry as any of them: for it had long been his occupation to go out with her among the lanes to look for grass. In Belgium, as in Germany, everything is put to use, even the way side grass. It is either cut down and brought home for the cow, or, as in the family of Jacques Maillard, a little boy or girl is sent to lead the animal by a rope, and while allowing her to pick up all that would otherwise be wasted, prevent her destroying the fences or young trees. But though Pierre had become very fond of his charge, he remembered that he was the eldest of the family, and bound to show a good example, and that it would not be manly for a boy of twelve to cry like little Suzette or Mimi; besides, he was not going to lead the cow all the way to the fair? and then the fair itself! What beautiful things would he not see there! what long stories would he not have to tell the children when he came back about all the wonders he had witnessed; and perhaps if the cow sold well, his father would be able to spare him some times for gingerbread, which he would bring home to the tears of the little ones. Consoled by these thoughts, Pierre once more kissed little Mimi, the youngest of the children, and promising her a double share of ginger bread if she were good, and did not cry till he came back, he manfully trudged off beside his father.

It was a long way across the forest, before they reached the little town where the fair was held, and Pierre had often to get his father's assistance to bring on the cow; for the poor beast did not understand why she was not allowed as usual to stop where she liked and pick up the sweet grass. Jacques himself was very quiet and sad and though little Pierre had a great many questions to ask, he soon saw that his father's mind was fixed on other things than his replies to him. 'You are turning a great boy now, Pierre,' he said at last, 'and I think a good boy. If anything were to happen to me, your mother and little sisters would have no one to look to but you. Would you not be very kind to them?'

Poor Pierre was now indeed very like to cry.—'Oh, father,' he said, 'to be sure I would; but why do you speak that way? why should anything happen to you? what would become of us all without you?'

'God would take care of you, Pierre. I do not know exactly why I speak to you this way; but it is good always to be prepared for death, and somehow I do not think mine is far off. You know I went yesterday to confession, and this morning to early mass to communion; and yesterday M. le Cure bade me come into the sacristy after mass to day to speak to him. Well, he asked me if I had a miraculous medal, and when I said I had not, and asked what it was, he told me that it was a medal with a figure of our Blessed Lady on it, and a prayer to her, and that whoever wears it is under her especial protection. M. le Cure said that many people have been preserved, by wearing this medal, in the greatest dangers; and that even should it not be the will of God that the body should be saved, the Blessed Virgin will reward those who trust in her and wear this medal in her honor by being near them when they die, and helping them to make a good and holy death. M. le Cure gave me a medal this morning; for he said in our misfortunes I needed all the help I could get; and he has promised to give them to your mother, and to you also. But I think I should like you to wear this one now; and so saying, Jacques put the ribbon to which the medal was attached round Pierre's neck.

'But, father,' said Pierre, quite frightened, 'is there any danger now? and if there be, why do you not keep the medal yourself?'

'I do not know of any danger, Pierre,' said Jacques; 'but I have heard it said that God sometimes warns people before they are going to die by making them think of death very much. And if he be his will that I should die soon, I hope I am prepared to do so by the holy sacraments I received yesterday and to day. But, any way, I wish you to wear the medal; and, dear Pierre, pray very often to the Blessed Virgin, that she may help you to prepare well for your first communion, which, you know, M. le Cure intends you to receive next Easter.'

By this time they had arrived near the town where the fair was held, and as a great many people were on the road, the conversation was dropped. For some time Pierre was silent and thoughtful, for he could not get out of his head what his father had said to him; but by degrees the novelty of all around him raised his naturally gay spirits, and he amused himself perfectly. The fair, however, was not a good one, owing to the bad season; there were too many people in the same situation as Jacques—more sellers than buyers. As the cow was a very fine animal, many people came to ask her price; but no one would give what Jacques knew to be her just value, and as the agent refused to receive anything less than the entire rent, a smaller sum would have been useless to him. With a heavy heart he saw one after another of his hoped-for purchasers turn away, and at last almost all the business of the fair had been transacted, and the sports were about to commence, and still poor Jacques was in the same situation.

Quite worn out, and almost despairing, he called Pierre, and was on the point of quitting the fair and leading his cow home, when three men came up to him and asked the price of the animal. Jacques mentioned the sum that was necessary to him, though with scarcely any hope of receiving it after his bad success during the day. But to his surprise the men made no objection; on the contrary, they said she was a very fine animal, and worth the money, and at once closed the bargain. The cow was delivered, and the money paid; and now Jacques, whose spirits were raised by his success, allowed Pierre to amuse himself for an hour longer, and gave him a whole franc to spend in presents for his little sisters.

At last, about five in the afternoon, they set off on their return home. Pierre loaded, with a great cake of gingerbread, so heavy that he was much tempted to eat a piece to make it lighter. At first Jacques was in good spirits, but after some time he became silent and grave as in the morning. They had eaten little all day, and about six they stopped at a small suberge on their way to take some refreshment. While it was getting ready, Pierre looked out of the window to watch what was going on outside. 'Oh, father,' he cried, 'there are the men that bought our

cow; but how odd it is, she is not with them! 'Come away from the window, Pierre, and eat your supper,' cried his father; 'we have no time to lose, if we would be home before dark.'

Their simple repast was soon finished; but before it was done, Jacques took an opportunity, when nobody was in the room, to tell Pierre they would change burdens for the rest of the journey, that he would carry the gingerbread, and that Pierre must take charge of the money. Fortunately part of it was in gold, so the weight was not so great as if all had been in five-francs pieces, as is often the case in Belgium; and, invigorated by the refreshment they had taken, they marched stoutly on towards home.

They had now come to a very thick part of the wood, and as the evening was advancing, everything looked very gloomy, and Pierre involuntarily pressed close to his father for protection. And there was some reason for his fears; for suddenly three men with black masks, and dressed in the ordinary blue blouses of the country, leaped upon them, and attacked Jacques. The poor man had merely time to say to his child, 'Run, Pierre; I command you run!' when he was knocked down; one of the ruffians was pulled to the ground with him, and while the others were occupied trying to disengage him from Jacques's grasp, Pierre set off as fast as his heels would carry him by a side path of the wood.

How he ran, this poor child! It seemed to him that he still heard his father's groans, and every moment he looked round expecting to see some of the murderers in pursuit of him. At this moment he remembered his medal, and all that his father had told him about it in the morning. 'O my Mother,' he cried; 'I am your child, and wear your medal, and I am in great danger—save me, as you have promised to do!'

By this time he was nearly exhausted; his excessive terror alone gave him strength to continue his flight; but happily he saw before him an opening in the wood, to which he directed his steps; and what was his joy when he reached it to find a house! He ran up to the door, which was fastened, and knocked loudly; in a few minutes it was opened by an old woman, who scolded him at first for making such a noise; but when she saw the state he was in, and when he had told his story, she desired him to come in and rest himself. She also gave him some soup from a pot on the fire, and told him he should lie down on her son's bed to recruit his strength. The poor boy could scarcely swallow anything for his tears, for he had no hope now for his father; but he thankfully accepted the old woman's offer of a bed.

'So these wretches gained nothing by the murder,' she said, as she conducted him up a ladder to the loft where she told he was to occupy was placed.

'No,' said Pierre; 'as I told you, my father had given me the money we got for the cow, and he took the gingerbread. Ah! perhaps if his hands had not been filled, he might have defended himself better and escaped. But still, God knows best; and if he had not given me the money, it might not have been saved for my mother. But, oh, how fortunate I am to have got here! I could not have gone much further; and they would have come up to me and murdered me also.'

'Yes,' replied the old woman, with a peculiar smile, 'it is very fortunate that you have come here. Lie down now, and rest yourself.'

Pierre willingly obeyed her, and in spite of his grief, his fatigue was so great that he knew he would soon sleep. Before closing his eyes, however, he took out his medal, kissed it over and over again, thanked his dear Mother for having preserved him hitherto, and implored her to bring him back soon to be a comfort and a stay to his remaining parent.—Then making the sign of the cross he was soon fast asleep.

It might be about two hours after he had laid down, that Pierre started up, alarmed by hearing a knock at the house door. It was immediately opened, and then he could distinguish men's voices. It was now quite dark, except that the moonbeams illuminated one corner of the loft through a small window. The poor child was in so agitated a state after all that had befallen him, that he felt he could not go to sleep again; and he sat up in bed trembling and listening. Just then a cow lowed, apparently in passing across the yard; and what was Pierre's amazement, when he thought he recognized the voice of his own old favorite who had been sold that day at the fair. He rose, and climbed up to the window to look out, and there he saw she was, and one of the men who had bought her was tying her up. 'I can't sleep any more,' thought the poor boy; 'and I am frightened to stay up here alone, so I shall go down beside the people of the house.' He had taken off his shoes before lying down, and could not find them in the dark; so, without spending more time in the search, he proceeded to the door at the other end of the loft which led to the ladder.

Just as he was about to push the door open, Pierre impelled by a feeling for which he could not account stopped to listen and look through a broken pane.—The man who had been fastening up the cow had now come in, and all three were in the kitchen with the old woman; but what was Pierre's horror to see pieces of black rape, like what the assassins of his father had worn, lying beside them on the table as if just thrown off, while one of the men was washing bloody stains from his face and hands!

'So the boy escaped with the money, after all?' asked the old woman, with a mocking laugh; 'and you have a murder on your conscience for nothing! Clever fellows, you are, to be sure!'

'Yes,' replied one of the men, with a horrible oath; 'if I had caught the young rascal, he should have suffered for this class he gave me. While Robert who had no marks of the work on him, went back to fetch the cow, Guillaume and I searched every part of the wood; but the young devil escaped us, after all.'

'Well, well,' said the old woman, 'I who staid quietly at home have made a better day's work of it than you three with all your trouble, for I have caged the young bird. He came knocking at the door to ask for shelter, told me all the story, and how he had the money instead of his father; and he is now sound asleep in Guillaume's bed at the far end of the loft.'

'He is here, then,' cried one of the men running towards the ladder. 'He shall soon sleep sounder still,' then; and he was on the point of climbing up, when Guillaume called him back.

'Can't you stay till after supper?' he said; 'here it is all ready; the boy can't escape us now; and we may as well make ourselves comfortable.'

At the moment when the men seemed on the point of coming up, Pierre had once more pressed his medal to his lips; and, oh, what a fervent prayer did he offer up internally to the Blessed Virgin to finish the work she had begun, and save him once more from the hands of these cruel men. Then, seeing that they had sat down, he slipped quietly back towards the window, and examined it to see if there was any possibility of escaping.

As the house was low, Pierre saw that by tying the bed clothes together, he could easily let himself down to the ground, where he was once outside. But the window was so narrow, it was almost impossible to get through. 'O Mother, help me!' he cried; and then lying all the money in his hankerchief, he pushed it through first, and stripping off his coat, he with the greatest difficulty managed to get through the opening.

Once upon the ground, all his fatigue seemed gone; he ran on as far as he could, judge in the opposite direction from that by which he had reached the house. 'O Mother, I have your medal! save me!' he cried, and still he ran on. But now all his previous fatigue began to tell on him; his limbs tottered, he thought he should fall; and just then he heard the sound of a horse's foot. It might be his pursuers; they had missed him, and there was no chance of