

IN LIGHTER VEIN.

* * * A jury in the Paris Assizes rendered a Gilbertian verdict recently.

James Parker, 25 years old, born in Paris of English parents, disappeared from the Paris offices of the American Express Company last February. It was found he had stolen 475,000 francs (about \$30,000). He was arrested several months later and put on trial. He said frankly he had taken the money from time to time to the total charged, which he had spent in furnishing an apartment for his pretty French sweetheart and in having a good time in the Montmartre and elsewhere.

The prosecuting attorney demanded that the jury punish him severely, but Maître Hesse, for young Parker, observed that youth would be youth and then described the American Express as an enormously rich concern which had made much money exploiting people on French soil, which had made millions in exchange speculation at the expense of the franc, which did not sufficiently watch its employes, else Parker could never have taken so much, and finally as a company which had too much money anyhow.

After his address the jury deliberated five minutes and acquitted Parker with the admonition that he should pay back the money when able to do so!

* * * In *The Times* of 16th October, there is a report of an interesting case before Mr. Justice Darling and a Special Jury. It was a claim for damages for personal injuries received by a bridesmaid at a wedding reception in Stoke Newington. She had been singing on a platform, and in the act of descending therefrom she fell. The platform was reached by means of a ladder at an angle of 61 deg., with steps 4 inches wide. There were no handrails or side supports. The plaintiff claimed that by reason of the fall she was seriously impaired in health. The jury disagreed, and the case as reported is only valuable for the observations of the learned and witty Judge. Speaking of the allegation that the plaintiff suffered from neurasthenia as a result of her accident, Mr. Justice Darling said:—

“ Nobody had traumatic neurasthenia when I was appointed to the Bench, but it has come upon us with the march of civili-

zation. It is much more common since people have motor-cars which knock people down, and when they get up they have traumatic neurasthenia."

* * * A misplaced comma in a newspaper summary of the will of the late Mr. H. F. House, a former Indian civil servant who led a retired life in a London hotel, caused it to be understood that the will ordered the destruction of all Mr. House's books, including rare quarto editions of Shakespeare.

The sentence, as published, read: "All his editions of Shakespeare, with his MS. notes, shall be burnt." It is now explained that the comma after Shakespeare should be omitted, making the sentence read: "All his editions of Shakespeare with MS. notes shall be burnt. The editions containing Mr. House's notes are modern and of no special value. All the quarto editions and other treasures are now being catalogued, and will shortly be offered for sale."
