

FERGUSON'S BEAT

By F. D. BENNETT

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Every eye in the courtroom was fixed upon Richard Ferguson, reporter for the Morning Post. The young journalist stood facing the judge in silence.

It was the second time in a single day that Ferguson had emerged conspicuously from the ranks of his profession. The first occasion was in the morning when he scored a "beat" for his paper on the conviction of an accused millionaire, the events of whose sensational trial had filled columns of the press for many days. The jury had deliberated for three days and two nights and the defendant's fate had not been decided until the early hours of the morning.

The verdict was sealed and the envelope containing it had been left in the court vault. Yet the judge had read in his morning paper, two hours before he appeared in his chambers, the result of the jury's deliberation, the number of ballots taken and the way the jurors stood at each vote.

So positive had been the announcement in Ferguson's paper that there was no room for belief that he had made a lucky guess. His report was so accurate that it made the reading of the real verdict a farce. The judge looked sternly at the reporter, whom he had known for years.

"Did you write that article?" asked the court.

"I did, your honor."

"I shall demand a full explanation of you, and perhaps of other persons,"—the judge was severe now—"for there is something radically wrong here. I cannot cite you for contempt until I know more of the case. Do you object to replying to my questions?"

"Not in the least," replied Ferguson, in the best of spirits.

Representatives of the other papers had permitted admiration to take the place of envy and they crowded closer, in anticipation of hearing something interesting. The jury was present,



"Did You Write That?" Demanded the Judge.

all of the court officers were on hand, and even the night janitor had come in response to a hasty summons.

"What has occurred this morning?" began the judge, slowly, "is an imposition on this tribunal. These 12 gentlemen, pledged to secrecy by their oath, the bailiff in charge of the jury, and the officers who guarded the jury room are under a pall of suspicion.

"In some manner a representative of the press has obtained information from the sacred precincts of the jury room. Some person or persons must be guilty of contempt, if not a more serious charge.

"A point arises here which it has been my fortune never to have encountered personally before. There are limits to the latitude which newspapers can demand. Mr. Ferguson has expressed his willingness to answer truthfully the questions which I shall put to him."

The silence was oppressive, and the crowd surged against the rail, leaning over to catch every word that was uttered.

"Mr. Ferguson," the judge began again, "I know that you did not guess at this verdict?"

"I did not."

"Will you read the marked portion of this newspaper clipping and tell us if these are the words you wrote?"

Ferguson picked up the paper and read: "The first ballot was eight for conviction and four for acquittal; the second ballot was ten for conviction and two for acquittal; the third was the same, and at the fourth Juror Stephenson alone held out against capital punishment. Not until the fifth ballot did the jury agree to send the accused millionaire to the gallows."

"Did you write that?" demanded the judge, leaning far over the bench until he could look squarely into Ferguson's face.

"I did."

"When did you learn of these facts?"

"About 2:25 this morning. I barely

had time to reach the office and write it for the last edition of the paper."

"Did any of the jurymen tell you what had transpired in their room?"

"No, your honor."

"Did you contrive to overhear their deliberations and arguments?"

"That would have been impossible through an ante-room and three doors. I did not learn it in that way."

"Did any of the bailiffs give you information?"

"No, sir."

"Did you tamper with the envelope?"

"I did not."

"Who told you, then?"

"No one."

The judge was perplexed. He knew that Ferguson told the truth, and that he was endeavoring to keep the source of his information a secret. Suddenly an inspiration came to him and he smiled because he had not thought of it before.

"Did somebody write you the information?" The court was sure that this would bring the desired result.

"No one wrote it for me," replied Ferguson, "and no human being gave me the information."

A stir went through the courtroom at this announcement and the judge seemed completely baffled.

"Would you so state under oath?"

"Under oath, yes, sir," echoed Ferguson.

"No one knew those details at that hour but the jurymen and myself, and I may add that I have not exchanged a word, letter or signal with any of these 12 gentlemen."

The foreman of the jury was called before the bar.

"Mr. Tillotson," said the judge, pointing at Ferguson, "Have you seen this man before?"

"Yes, your honor, during the trial."

"Did you speak or communicate with him since the verdict was agreed upon or sealed?"

"I did not, and I can safely vouch for my colleagues, also."

"Well, then, Mr. Ferguson," said the judge, turning to the reporter, "will you kindly explain how you came into possession of this information?"

"I could refuse to answer on constitutional grounds—on the plea that I might incriminate myself," replied Ferguson.

"I will not do that, but I have a favor to ask. May I put to the janitor of the courthouse three questions?"

"Certainly," assented the astonished judge, and he called the janitor before him.

"When did you clean out the jury room?" asked Ferguson.

"As soon as the jury left it—about 2:20 this morning," was the response.

"Where did you empty the waste basket containing the jury's ballot slips?"

"In the alley, sir." The janitor looked apprehensive, as if he feared that he was about to get into trouble.

"Did you see a man out there?"

"I did."

"What did he look like?"

"Very much like you, sir."

"That's all," replied Ferguson, triumphantly.

MORE THAN HE DESERVED.

Careless Husband Tells of Experience with Wife's Money.

Frank J. Reed, general passenger agent at Chicago of the Monon railroad, was in Indianapolis the other day, telling a good story on himself. It had to do with his wife's bank account. "A couple of months ago," he said, "I was about to leave the house when my wife handed me her bankbook with \$300 to deposit for her. I promised to attend to the matter promptly.

"I went down to my office and forgot all about the errand I had promised to perform. Three weeks later Mrs. Reed said to me that she had some more money to put in the bank, and inquired what I had done with her book. My mind was a blank on the subject, but I lamely suggested that perhaps I had left it at the bank to be balanced. With fear and trembling I hurried off to the bank to find the book and was startled to learn that it was not there.

"All that I had ever heard about lost letters and careless husbands and such things flashed across my mind. I realized that I would have to make good in some way. Thinking the bankbook and money might be in my desk, I tore off to the office. In throwing off my overcoat I felt a package in one of the pockets. I had the contents of that pocket in my lap in a jiffy. It was my wife's bankbook and her \$300 just as snug and safe as if it had been on deposit with the trust company.

"During the three weeks' disappearance of that money I had traveled thousands of miles, checked that overcoat in ten or fifteen different hotels, had it checked in as many check-rooms and barber shops, had it brushed by hotel and Pullman car porters, and had jostled against hundreds of people. All this time that money rested there safely."

"Does Mrs. Reed know about it?" asked another railroad man.

"I should say she does," replied Reed, "and I can't get her to trust me with the mailing of even a post-card."—Indianapolis Star.

FRUGAL MR. GIGGS

GIVES HIS WIFE A LESSON IN ECONOMY.

But a Ruined Tree and Much Discomfiture Result from His Efforts to Save a Few Dollars.

The rustling of an evening newspaper as it was folded hastily and laid aside came from the head of the table. Mr. Giggs turned hastily in his chair and peered at Mrs. Giggs over his glasses.

"What's that?" he asked sharply.

"I was saying," Mrs. Giggs answered, as she poured the coffee, "I was saying that those trees in the front of the house need pruning. They're just too ragged for anything. Now tomorrow you call."

"That's it. That's it. Call up a tree trimmer, eh? More expense. I won't do it." Mr. Giggs' tone was spiteful.

"But John—"

"Don't John me, don't do it. Every time you look at me it's more expense. Don't you know anything but the art of spending money?"

Mrs. Giggs' answer was apologetic. "I just thought I'd mention it," she said.

"Yes," Mr. Giggs replied, "that's the way you always do. Now if those trees must be pruned, I guess it'll have to be done. But I'm not going to spend \$9.68 for some wild-eyed freak to job at those trees with a hack saw and then look wise as he takes the money. If any idiot's going to fool with those trees, I'll do it myself. Got a saw?"

"Nothing but that rip saw you got the other night."

"Nothing but a— say what do you want, a whole carpenter shop? Now, gimme that saw; I'm going to fix those trees."

An admiring group of neighborhood children gathered on the front steps to watch Mr. Giggs as he came from behind the house, saw in hand.

"Now," Mr. Giggs said, "the way to trim a tree is to trim it. Guess I'll climb the tree."

For about ten minutes Giggs was busy with his pocket knife cutting off small twigs and branches. Then he decided that the top of the tree needed attention.

"Takes up too much sky," he yelled to his wife from among the branches. "I'll just climb up and top off that top limb."

"O-h-h-h, John, do be careful."

"Huh." And the answer of Mr. Giggs was sarcastic. "Any old-time father don't know what he's doing—well, just call the hearse."

From limb to limb he clambered until finally he came within reach of the top branch.

"Hold below where you're sawing," Mrs. Giggs urged from the porch, "if you don't, you'll—"

"Shut up," Giggs answered testily. "Who's doing this, anyway?" Deeper went the saw into the wood. Suddenly, there was a crackling. The limb leaned far to one side and Mr. Giggs, horticulturist, went with it. But he didn't stop. Still clinging to the saw with one hand he went downward, through the branches of the tree, to fall, saw and all, upon the pavement. Slowly he picked himself up and jumped to the house.

"Mrs. Giggs," he began painfully. "Mrs. Giggs, I—"

A feminine shriek interrupted him. "John McNanny Giggs, you've gone and killed yourself—all because of that mean, hateful, parsimonious old nature of—and just look at that tree. Ruined. Every limb broken."

"Well, look at me," Giggs said plaintively, as he inspected a bleeding finger.

"Serves you right. That's just what it does. Yes, sir, it serves—well, Mr. Giggs, I'll tend to the spending of the money after this. Do you hear? Answer me—do you hear?"

But Mr. Giggs was silent.

Profound Sagacity of Rats.

The average rat possesses extraordinary sagacity. On a sailing ship bound to Calcutta from Cape Town some time ago it was decided to try to reduce the number of rats which had boarded the vessel at the latter port. The end of an ordinary cask was planned perfectly smooth, coated with grease, and a meat bait tacked to the center. The end was fixed on with two nails, balanced so that should anything touch it off the center it would go down. The cask was partly filled with water and buried in the ballast to within a few inches of the top. The first night over 200 rats were caught, the second night few, the third none was caught. It was found by the marks of rats' feet in the grease and the missing bait that they had discovered the exact center, and took the bait as they liked. Half an inch on either side of the center meant death.

Interruptions.

"I s'pose John is still takin' life easy," said the woman in the spring wagon.

"Yes," answered the woman who was carrying an armful of wood. "John has only two regrets in life. One is that he has to wake up to eat, and the other is that he has to quit eatin' to sleep."

Entirely Simplified.

Abstracted Theorist:—What do you think of the race problems?

Disgusted Gothamite:—Ain't no problem. What's the use of picking a winner if you can't put a bet up on him?

PERSONAL VANITY GREAT BOON.

A Blessing Vouchsafed to Man, Thinks Mr. MacBlink.

"The longer I live," said Mr. MacBlink, "the more I think that the greatest personal blessing vouchsafed to man is personal vanity.

"Do the mighty snub us? We smile and think that we are better than they. Are some men richer than we? Why, we know for some we could have made twice their money with half their chance.

"Are we homely? We think we are handsome. Why, the men we see, old and young, looking in the mirrors in the sides of the elevated cars are proud of their clothes, proud of themselves from their heads to their toes.

"They may live narrow lives, and if they only knew it, with no hope of ever getting out on the broad road; but they are satisfied with, more than that, they are vain of themselves. And what a blessing!

"Are we not content to wear cheap clothes because in our fond vanity we think that we ourselves give them an air of distinction? So in many instances.

"And does not the same hold true as well to our views of all our belongings? Do we not think that our broken down, rattletrap, dingy old automobile is really the fastest machine on the road if we would only once unshackle her? Don't we think that our lumbering old clumsy gaited six-minute horse could go in 2:22½ if we dared to give him his head? Don't we think that our yacht or our power boat could make anything else in the water look like 30, yes, like 20—or even 15 cents if we were once disposed to show what it could really do?

"Do we not think that our chickens are really the very best specimens of their breed, and do we not think that ours is the finest lawn? And our children, whatever they may be, are the finest children that ever were born?"

"Is is so of many things, and all these are cheerful, happy, helpful notions that even the most timid and shrinking of men may cherish. Our vanity is not only a protector and a shield, it is for us a castle within whose walls we can dwell in serenity and security, in sweet satisfaction with ourselves; and in a world so full of things that otherwise would jar us, is not this a great blessing? Many a man's lot in life has been softened, has been made happy, by his harmless personal vanity."

Fierce Hailstorms in England.

Large stories are told of the damage done by hailstones in Minnesota recently. However, Old England itself has some statistics to show. On May 30, 1857, a terrific hailstorm visited Seaford, Sussex. Some of the "bolts" measured 4½ inches in circumference, after lying on the ground for fully seven minutes. On June 24, in the same year, the most disastrous visitation of the kind in modern times ravaged parts of Essex and the adjacent counties.

Animals and poultry were killed and crops ruined. At Ingatstone the hall broke through a slated roof, and at Baddow it went through windows and cut the blinds to pieces. The damage in Essex alone was at least \$500,000.

The latest storm of exceptional violence occurred in Huntingdonshire on August 2, 1866. The "hail" consisted of hard pieces of ice, from three to four inches in length, and killed rabbits and other small animals wholesale.

Reval an Ancient City.

Reval, where Russian czar and British king met not long ago, is described as a curious outpost of the Russian empire. It is the capital of Esthonia and stands at the entrance of the Gulf of Finland, about 230 miles from St. Petersburg. The town is mainly German. Like all other towns in Russia's Baltic provinces, and is of great antiquity. In 1284 it acquired all the privileges of a Hanseatic city. According to an old saying, "Esthonia was an elysium for the nobility, a heaven for the clergy, a mine of gold for the stranger, but a hell for the peasant." Among the strangers who settled there and got themselves included in the Esthonian nobility were military adventurers whose descendants still exist under the name of Douglas, O'Rourke and Lewis. In 1710 Reval surrendered to Peter the Great, who provided it with a military harbor, and it is now one of the chief stations of the Russian navy.

Taxicab a Chinese Invention.

Few persons imagine that the taxicab is an ancient Chinese invention. A far eastern journal, the Ostsiasatische Lloyd, proves by drawings taken from a famous collection, the "Tsan-thu-hae," that vehicles kindred to the taxicab existed in China 800 years ago. The "gigigulicha" was fitted with an instrument which sounded on a drum every mile passed. Moreover, the Chinese taximeter was provided with a compass, a desirable adjunct when traveling in a country where routes are not indicated.

The Result of Association.

"That young man who comes to see you, Maud, has such an explosive manner."

"You must remember, mother, that his father was in the fireworks business."

The Knowing Child.

"Pa, when are you going to take me to the park?"

"Wait until the cool of the evening, my son."

"But, pa, 'spose there ain't any?"

The KITCHEN CABINET

WHEN THE MEN COME HOME TO LUNCH.



TELL you, we hustle to beat the band. When the men come home to lunch, we can't put them off in the usual way. With a hurry, a gulp and a munch.

If potatoes aren't left from the dinner before we slice raw ones, exceedingly thin. Add bread crumbs, milk and butter, too. And set them the oven within.

Not one ounce of meat! Never mind, there! eggs.

Or in haste we can borrow, if need be, just scramble a few—I'm sure this will do if the man of the house isn't greedy.

"There isn't a bit of fresh bread," you say? Fix some toast—bread he never will miss. Make drawn butter sauce from the old scraps of cake. And garnish the meal—with a kiss.

HOMELY GOSSIP.

To the woman who gets discouraged because she is "only a housekeeper," and spends her time in the despised "domestic ways," these words of John Ruskin will prove a comfort:

"What does cookery mean? It means the knowledge of all fruits and spices, of all that is healing and sweet in fields and groves, and savory in meats. It means carefulness and inventiveness and watchfulness and willingness. It means the economy of your great-grandmother and the science of modern chemists. It means much tasting and no wasting; it means English thoroughness, and French art, and Arabian hospitality; and it means, in fine, that you are to be perfectly and always—ladies."

When bread is like a honey-comb all through is the time to make it up into loaves. When the loaves do not retain the dent of the finger, they are ready for the oven.

When meats are put in to roast it is better to have no water in the pan. It may be added later, when the meat has begun to brown.

It is never a good plan to put both old and new milk in the same cake. Use either one, but not both. Better, at a pinch, add a little water.

Never stick a fork in a fowl or roast to turn it or to see if it is done. This allows the juices to escape. Take a small, clean cloth in each hand, and turn slowly to prevent spattering.

Put all meats in boiling water to retain the juices by a quick searing of the outside.

THE BACK PORCH.

CERTAIN porch, at the back, Seemed a cyclone's track; Boxes, barrels, a sack And a ladder. Old cans of tomatoes, A peck of potatoes— (The Early, or Late Rose, No matter).

Said the milkman, disgusted, "That porch railing's busted; It got me so flustered 'This mornin' I fell over the cat, Tripped on that old hat, Spilled cream on the mat Without warnin'."

Now that porch is swept clean, There's a hammock between A table and screen

And the owner, Miss Page, Hung up a bird cage, I've not seen, in an age. Things so cosy.

Now this is the moral, I'm sure we'll not quarrel, But crown with a laurel My neighbor:

A clean porch is good For a whole neighborhood, And nobody should Mind the labor.

Jellied Apples.

For this season when apples are beginning to be moderate in price, it is well to have a variety of recipes for their preparation. Select, for this style, large, firm apples; pare and core them, then fill the holes with currant jelly, sprinkle with granulated sugar and a little lemon juice. Place the apples in a pan with a little water and bake them until candied, but not broken. Preserved ginger will be found delicious in place of the jelly.

And—speaking of ginger—try a mixture of chopped nuts and preserved ginger in sandwiches. They are a pleasing novelty, but if found too dry, add some of the juice of the ginger.

Potato Flour.

This is something our grandmothers thought essential to good house-keeping. It makes breads, cakes and puddings more light and tender. It is prepared by allowing grated potatoes to settle and soak in water—changing the water often, and rubbing through a sieve. The farina must be then pulverized, bottled and tightly corked. A little of this is a wonderful addition to ordinary flour.

Beet Pickles.

One quart boiled beets, chopped very fine; one quart raw cabbage, chopped. Put in two cups of sugar, tablespoon of salt, one teaspoon black pepper and one-quarter red pepper. Add horse-radish or onions, as preferred. Cover with cold vinegar, and seal tight.

HOMELY GOSSIP.



PICTURE OF English farm life in the fourteenth century presents a striking difference from a chronicle of the farmer's needs to-day. The early writer says: "I have no penny pellets for to buy, nor neither geese nor pigs, but I have two green cheeses, a few curds and cream, and an eaten cake, and two leaves of beans and bran baked for my children. I have no salt bacon nor cooked meat collops, but I have parsley and leeks, and many cabbage plants."

Dried fruits, prunes, etc., are much better and require less boiling, if water is poured over them and allowed to soak over night.

In the morning boil in the same water until tender, sweetening five minutes before taking from the stove. The value of early sweetening is lost in the boiling.

Save the Cinders.

In cleaning the grate in the morning, you will find there is a quantity of coal which, burned on the outside, looks like cinders. To prove that this is not always so, take a lump of glowing anthracite coal, fresh and glowing from the fire. Throw it into water and it will look black and dead on the outside. Break it open with a hammer, and it is a red-hot mass within. This proves that time, and plenty of air are needed to burn out the coal, and what we call ashes and cinders are often excellent fuel.

Turbot.

This recipe will apply to any of the ordinary fresh fish. Steam (or boil) the fish until quite tender; take out bones and sprinkle with pepper and salt. For dressing, heat a pint of milk, and thicken with flour. When cool, add two eggs and a half cup butter, then season with very little onion and parsley. Put in a baking dish a layer of fish, then of the sauce, then one of fish, etc., until the fish is full, topping off with bread crumbs. Bake half an hour.

SIDNEY SMITH'S SALAD DRESSING

WO large potatoes, passed through kitchen sieve. Unwonted softness to the salad give. Of mordant mustard add a single spoon. (Distrust the condiment: which bites too soon.) But deem it not, though made of herbs, a fault. To add a double quantity of salt. Three times the spoon with oil of Louisiana crown. And once with vinegar, procured from town. True flavor needs it, and your post begs.

The pounded yellow of two well-boiled eggs. Let onion atoms lurk within the bowl. And, half suspected, animate the whole. And lastly, on the favored compound toss. A magic teaspoon of anchovy sauce. Then, though green turtle fail, thought venison is tough. Though ham and turkey are not boiled enough. Serenely full the epicure shall say, "Fate cannot harm me—I have dined today."

Fruit Frappes.

A nice dish for dessert (if unexpected company comes in), is a frappe of some sort of fruit. Of course, this presupposes that one is near an ice cream stand. In small frappe cups place some fruit—fresh or canned—add the ice cream, and on top put another light layer of the fruit. Sprinkle sugar over all. This is nice for an emergency, and if one cannot get the ice cream, make a soufflé by mashing the fruit, berries, bananas or chopped pineapple, very fine. To the well-beaten whites of two eggs, add sugar, and lastly the crushed fruit.

Ted's Favorite.

This is a pleasant change in the manner of serving the ever popular strawberry: Place alternate layers of strawberries and pulverized sugar in a glass bowl. Pour over them orange juice in the proportion of three oranges to a quart of berries. Let stand for an hour, and serve well sprinkled with powdered ice. Some use claret instead of the orange juice.

Simple Fried Cakes.

One quart unsifted flour, one teaspoon soda, two of cream of tartar, one of salt, one egg, and a little "shortening." Last, put in a cup of sugar and milk to make a soft batter. Fry in hot lard.

Home-Prepared Mustard.

Two tablespoons mustard, one teaspoon sugar, one-half teaspoon salt; boiling water to mix it well. When cold, add one tablespoon olive oil and vinegar enough to thin it. This will keep several days.

Try the Smiles First.

Tears are woman's reserve force, to be used only when smiles fail to win. —Chicago