

JUDGMENT.

(Continued from Page 6).

Then he strode to the door. On reaching it he turned and looked back.

"All right, my lord!" he said, with a defiant laugh. "The first round is yours on points, but it is not the end of the fight by any means. You'll hear from me again."

Then he went out, closely attended by Mr. Montague.

A few minutes later the private secretary returned.

"Ring up the superintendent of Brixham prison," said the judge.

"Yes, sir."

"Instruct him from me that the prisoner Richard Foster is to be permitted to have no further communication with his legal adviser, Jacob Jole, of Convent Garden."

"Very good, sir," replied Montague, turning away.

"Wait a minute," said the judge. "Is the party from Brixham here?"

"Yes, sir; in the ante-room."

"Show them in, and see that we are not interrupted."

The private secretary crossed the room to another door, and opened it.

He thrust his head out and said something, and immediately afterwards three men entered the room.

Two were prison warders, and between them stood the tall, athletic figure of a young man, who still wore the military overcoat and the khaki uniform of the Australian soldier.

THE PICTURE ON THE WALL.

"Leave us, close the door, and remain on guard outside."

The judge addressed the words to the two warders.

The men withdrew at once, shutting the door after them.

Father and son were alone together.

The convict stood very upright, his head erect, his handsome face quite expressionless, his steady blue eyes betraying no gleam of recognition.

For some moments the judge surveyed him in silence.

"You know why I have sent for you?" he said at length.

His voice was hard and cold.

"No, sir."

"You are my son."

The soldier threw back his head with an odd jerk, so familiar that the old man winced.

"I have not claimed the relationship for ten years, sir, and I do not claim it now," he said, in a tone that was proud and yet respectful.

The judge frowned. He was relieved, and yet the young man's proud and arrogant bearing angered him.

"When you came to Rivercourt that night did you come to see me?" he next demanded.

"No."

"Ah! I had hoped that you came humble and repentant to ask my forgiveness for your folly and your waywardness and had hoped that, with all your selfishness and disobedience, you were at least an honest man. It was a vain hope. I might have guessed that one who behaved so shamefully as a boy could come to no good as a man. You have bitterly disappointed me, Jack!"

A flash of anger came into the young man's eyes, and he seemed about to make a bitter retort, but with an effort he checked it, and when he spoke his voice was quite calm.

"My name is Richard Foster," he said. "It is the name I have borne for ten years, and I propose to keep it."

The judge's face grew dark and threatening. He had not expected to find his son in this rebellious mood.

"What were you doing that night at Rivercourt?" he demanded sharply.

"I was on business of my own."

The curtness of the reply caused the judge's anger to overflow.

"Yes, the business of a thief!" he said harshly and contemptuously. "As you did not come to see me you could have had no other purpose. You had no business in Lord Haverham's house. I do not accuse you of the murder. I—er—I am satisfied that you did not kill Haverham. At the trial you were badly defended. But, nevertheless, the disgrace and punishment you have brought on yourself you richly deserve. Ten years ago you left your home, threw up your chance of a great career and became a vagabond. You thought you could manage your life better than I could for you. A pretty mess you have made of it. You did well in the war; I give you credit for that. But when it was over you went back to what was doubtless your old trade, and became once more a night prowler and a house-breaker."

Again the young man flung back his head with the haughty, defiant gesture, and seemed on the point of making a vigorous defence.

But as he raised his eyes he looked over

his father's head to the wall beyond, and saw there the portrait of a girl.

It was an oil painting by a famous artist, and it depicted Kitty in one of her most charming moods.

Her lips were slightly parted, her bright eyes were laughing, and she was leaning forward in one of her most characteristic attitudes, as of one who is about to dance from sheer joy of living.

The young man smiled, and all the anger died out of his eyes.

Then he looked at his father, and a feeling akin to pity took possession of him.

This man, whom he remembered as so strong, vigorous and masterful, looked old and careworn. He had won supreme success in his profession, but he had paid the full price for it.

And, moreover, he nursed a secret, in his soul which to the end of his days would rob him of happiness and peace.

And Dick Foster, knowing that secret, remained silent, and vowed he would continue to remain silent to the end, come what might.

"I was not charged with housebreaking, sir," he said quietly, "and I am not called upon to defend myself. You say I did not kill Lord Haverham. Then I ought to be free. Am I nevertheless, to remain in prison to the end of my life?"

"No," replied the judge. "I will do what I can for you, of course. In concealing your identity you showed some sense of decency. I will bear that in mind. I make no promises, but it is possible that you will be liberated after you have served two or three years in prison."

"Two or three years!" repeated Dick, and again his eyes wandered to the picture hanging on the opposite wall.

"A very lenient punishment for your offence," said the judge, in his most judicial tones.

Then suddenly the eyes of the two men met, and the old man broke down.

"Jack," he cried, rising to his feet, and clutching his boy by the hand. "I would do more for you if I could. God knows that's true! But only a new trial and all the shame and disgrace of a full investigation would do any good, and even then it might fail. Don't you see—"

"Yes, yes, sir, I see!" said Dick hastily.

"You are right. Get me out as soon as you can. If I could stick the last four years in France, I ought to be able to stand three years in an English prison. I don't blame you or anyone. It is just the luck of the game. Good-bye."

A few minutes later the warders were summoned.

They took charge of the prisoner and marched him away, and Sir John Millbank was left alone with his thoughts.

The ante-room which through the warders had to pass with their charge in order to reach the hall where Mr. Montague was awaiting them was a long, narrow apartment, with curtained alcoves on either side.

The room was so narrow that the party had to walk in single file. First came one of the warders, then the prisoner, with the other warder bringing up the rear.

So they moved until they were about way across the room.

Then suddenly all the lights went out.

Both warders were taken by surprise, but quickly they recovered their wits, and grabbed at their prisoner in the dark.

They soon secured him, and he remained quite passive while they conducted him out of the dark ante-room into the hall beyond.

The hall was only dimly lighter, but the figure of Mr. Frank Montague could be seen at the open door.

The warders hurried their charge out down the steps, and into the waiting cab outside, and then scrambled in after him.

"I thought you were going to give us the slip," said one of them, with a nervous laugh.

But the prisoner made no answer. His face was buried in his hands, and he seemed to be sobbing.

Half an hour later the cab drove into the prison yard at Brixham.

"Come along, mate," said the warder, springing out.

The prisoner, wearing a military overcoat too large for him, obeyed briskly.

Then he stood upright, and the light from a lamp in the yard fell full on his face.

It was not the face of Richard Foster.

"Here! What the—how—why—Who—who are you?" spluttered both warders together, amazement and terror in their eyes.

"Eh? Oh, my name's Peters—George Peters," said the young man innocently.

"I'm second footman at Sir John Millbank's, in Kensington Park Gardens, Why?"

"What the devil are you doing here?"

"I dunno. You brought me. I didn't want to come. I only know I shall get into a beastly row for being out so late. What do you want with me, anyhow? I ain't done nothing."

(Another instalment next week.)

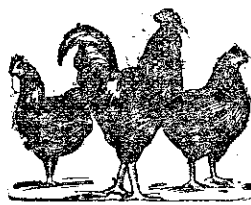
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POULTRY NOTES.

DRY MASH OR WET.

WHICH IS THE BETTER?

SOME INTERESTING DETAILS.

Mr. Rintoul, one of the Victorian Government Poultry experts, give some details of the feeding of the fowls at Burnley Egg-laying competition, and in relation to the above says: "The question is frequently raised whether the dry mash or wet mash system is the better. Each system has proved highly successful in the official egg-laying competitions. In the test for teams of six birds a score of 1667 was made one year in the wet mash section by Mr. J. H. Gill's team, whilst the following year Mr. W. N. O'Mullane's team in the dry mash section scored 1699, which is the world's record for a team of six birds. As these scores were made in different years and by different breeders, it can hardly be claimed that they proved anything conclusive. In single test the 300 mark has been reached in different years by both dry and also wet mash feeding in White Leghorns. The official world's record single test, 336, by Mr. Graham's Black Orpington, was made on the wet mash system."

GREAT SAVER OF LABOUR.

Undoubtedly the dry mash system saves an enormous amount of labour, so that even if it were a fact that on a flock average the dry mash system gave a dozen eggs less per bird, it is probable that it would still be quite as profitable, if not more so, than the wet mash. But it has not been proved conclusively that a flock will lay more on wet mash. In the writer's opinion, a hot feed at day-break during the winter months is conducive to better results. As far as the heavy breeds are concerned, there is with them a tendency to get over-fat on dry mash, particularly with big-framed, strong constitutioned birds, though less robust birds, lacking spring of rib, have been observed to do well with dry mash.

The practice is to feed as much wet mash as will be eaten up by the birds in a period of about twenty minutes, whereas the dry mash is available all day long. The usual custom in Victoria is to feed grain at night and mash in the morning. There is no necessity for this at all, and a certain amount of time would be saved, and the birds kept far more busy during the day, if the grains were scattered in the litter directly after breakfast, and mash fed at night. To warm the birds up in winter and take the keen edge off their appetites, about half an ounce of wheat per bird with an equal amount of water could be put on a slow fire over night and fed hot at daylight. The heat should just absorb the water without either burning or leaving any 'soup' over. The birds would then be ready to scratch for the dry grains in the litter between 9 and 10 o'clock in the morning.

THE BURNLEY MASH.

The rations as fed at Burnley for the competitions averaged out as follows:—

WET MASH.		Parts.
Wheat Pollard	...	1½
Wheat Bran	...	1½
Oaten Pollard	...	1½
Pea Meal	...	1
Wheat Meal	...	13

DRY MASH.		Parts.
Wheat Pollard	...	1½
Wheat Bran	...	2
Oaten Pollard	...	2
Pea Meal	...	1
Meat Meal	...	13

		Per cent.
Sugar, about	...	1

SOUTHLAND
EGG-LAYING COMPETITION.

FINAL RESULTS.

The winning pens in the Southland Test are as follows:—

Light Breeds.

1st.—T. Stratton	...	1364
2nd.—H. S. Woodnorth	...	1356
3rd.—T. Paul	...	1344
4th.—Mrs F. Gorinski	...	1338

C. Thomson's and E. Williamson's pens are disqualified owing to the eggs being under the standard weight of 23oz to the dozen.

Heavy Breeds.

1st.—Miss H. King	...	1098
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The popular caretaker (Mr. J. McNeil) of the Southland Competitions is now on holiday, and intends visiting the various competitions of the Dominion. Mr. McNeil will take a keen interest in the methods of the caretakers of the competitions; but, judging from the splendid results of the Southland tests, he has little to learn in the way of tending to the wants of the birds. We wish him an enjoyable trip, and trust that he will come back fit and well to commence another successful year for the Southland Competitions.

The Southland Utility Poultry Club has at least two members on its Committee of Management who are worthy of the "iron cross." Messrs. Rogers and Hill have been doing good work at the new pens and, with the aid of hurricane lamps, have been working well on to midnight spraying and cleaning the old pens in readiness for the coming tests. A few more helpers would be welcomed.

MARKET NOTES.

Messrs. Bray Bros., Limited, auctioneers, Dee street, report as follows:—

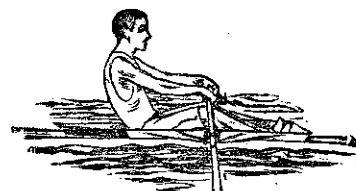
Consignments of potatoes have been heavy lately, and the market price is at present 13d per lb. Supplies of onions have come to hand and are selling at 13/- per cwt. Wheat is in small supply and is selling at 35/- per sack. Chaff is not at present over-plentiful, and prime quality realises up to £7 10s per ton. The price of straw remains at £4 10s per ton. We have small supplies of Meggitts linseed meal at 25/- per bag. We carry full stocks of oatmeal (5/- bag), sorrel (6/- bag), bran (10/6 bag of 100lbs), wheat pollard (12/6 for 100lb bag), and barley pollard (22/6 for 200lb bag).

Large quantities of fruit have passed through our hands during the week. Peaches have been fairly plentiful and prices ranged from 2½d to 5½d for extra prime quality. Apricots are now off the market. Plums sold at 2½d to 4d per lb according to variety and quality. Nectarine consignments were small and prices ranged from 4d to 6d per lb. Large supplies of tomatoes arrived from Nelson, and many cases were in bad order—prices ranged from 2d to 3d; Canterbury sold at up to 4d per lb, and Otago Central up to 5d lb for extra special quality. Hot-house cucumbers, 6/6 dozen; outdoor-grown, 3/6 to 5/6 dozen. Desert apples arrived in large quantities and prices ranged from 6/6 to 10/6 according to variety and grade. Cooking apples, 5/- to 6/6 case. Vegetables: Cabbages, 6/- to 7s sack; French beans, 2d to 3d lb; marrow, 8/- to 10/- cwt; cauliflower, 2d to 4d each; Lepp salt lick, 2/3 per brick; 24/- case of 24 bricks; cow covers, 16/6 each; horse covers, £2 7/6 each.

Furniture.—Our furniture department in Spey street have received supplied of linoleum, conglom, and sea grass and jute rugs. We also have supplies of wire-woven mattresses and Samarang kapok. We specialise in the manufacture of oak furniture to order.

NOTE.—On account of the Easter holidays we shall hold our weekly auction sale on Wednesday of next week.

The crater of Mauna Loa, Hawaii's famous volcano, is 20 miles in diameter. At times the stream of lava issuing from it is 50 miles long.



Rowing.

The following crews have been chosen to represent the Invercargill Railway Rowing Club at the forthcoming Queenstown Regatta, to be held on the 3rd April:—

Maiden Sculls.—S. Webb (stroke), S. Adamson.

Youths Fours.—W. Adamson (stroke), G. W. Kidd, A. B. Stapley, J. Brown.

Youths Double Sculls.—G. W. Kidd (stroke), G. Hamill.

Maiden Fours.—S. Knight (stroke), P. Garrett, S. Adamson, M. Lyttle.

Senior Double Sculls.—F. McKillop (stroke), S. Knight.

Junior Fours.—G. Webb (stroke), A. White, S. Webb, E. R. Latham.

Maiden Pair.—A. Crew: S. Knight (stroke), P. Garrett. B. Crew: S. Adamson (stroke), M. Lyttle.

Senior Four.—A. Crew: L. Cockroft (stroke), W. Adamson, P. Rice, R. Galbraith. B. Crew: G. Webb (stroke), A. White, S. Webb, E. R. Latham.

Youths Pair.—W. Adamson (stroke), G. W. Kidd.

Senior Pair.—A. Crew: J. Cockroft (stroke), W. Adamson. B. Crew: G. Webb (stroke), E. R. Latham.

All crews are now in solid training, but climatic conditions prevent the usual hard daily training.

Another severe drawback is the ever increasing scarcity of oars, some clubs having only one set of good racing oars whilst other clubs have only two sets, and the breaking of one oar (for some clubs) means that the crews will be unable to participate.

The railway Junior Four Crew, is still observed on the Estuary, putting in good work and should not be left behind at Queenstown as this crew has not yet been defeated in the South Island. Being foiled at Wanganui prevented perhaps another win to its record.

The annual general meeting of the Railway Club will be held in August of this year instead of September (as has been the practice in the past).

This club has suffered severely in regard to its members being transferred. The president Mr. R. M. Isaacs, chief clerk Traffic Office, being transferred to Christchurch, Mr. J. Connor of Workshops, vice-president to Addington and Mr. D. Rodie, who has been connected with the club for many years (being one of the founders) and vice-president and auditor for some considerable time past) has received word to transfer to Christchurch district, as Chief Relieving Officer, and transfers in the near future, his services will be greatly missed by all members of the club.

The single scull race is at a standstill owing to weather conditions.

MILITARY FUNERALS.

The continued failure of the Defence Department to provide a trumpeter to sound the "Last Post" at the funerals of returned soldiers was the subject of some what bitter comment at a recent meeting of the executive. The principle was laid down that if a returned soldier was entitled to a military funeral—to which the department agreed—full military honours should be accorded. When this matter was raised over the absence of military honours from funerals during the holidays the suggestion was made that a trumpeter should be placed on the district establishment. It was stated that this had not been done, notwithstanding the fact that the Prime Minister had informed a deputation that he saw no reason why it should not. It was decided to ask the Prime Minister if his wishes in this regard were not to be carried out.