

PATROLMAN FERGUSON'S NEW YEAR'S EVE

By ROBERT R. FAXON.

PATROLMAN FERGUSON whistled merrily as he walked along his beat that night. He was unusually happy. And why shouldn't he have been? In two hours he would be through with his work and he could then go home to his family and stay many hours, for the next day was his day off. But there were other things which served to put Ferguson in an amiable frame of mind. His superior officer, when he reported for work after supper that evening, had complimented him on his work.

"Three arrests in one day isn't so bad," the policeman said to himself, reassuringly, "and all of them good ones, too. Getting colder," he added, as he buttoned his coat; "thankful I don't have to work to-morrow. It'll be the first New Year's I've spent with my wife in many moons. Guess I'll step in and get warmed up a bit."

There were several men congregated in the corner cigar store when Ferguson entered, and they were earnestly discussing some matter of general interest about that time.

"Here's Ferguson now," said one of them. "Was it you who arrested McCarthy?"

"Yes, why?"

"'Cause it was a low shanty trick, that's why. You had no right to do it in the first place. He wasn't doing anything, was he?"

"Who says I haven't a right to pinch anybody I want to?" the policeman retorted, angrily. "Haven't I instructions to land any crook I find?"

"Yes, if you catch them doing something, which McCarthy wasn't."

"No fault of his, probably. Lying around waiting for a chance, I take it."

"That's just where you're wrong, McCarthy. I admit, isn't just exactly the best sort of a person to have in the neighborhood, but if that he's not the kind of a man he used to be. He's reformed. Is good to his family now and was going to start in work to-morrow. But you come along and grab him up. He'll be in for two days at least, and his job'll be gone."

"You mean make me tired," the policeman muttered, as he turned toward the door. "McCarthy's a crook and is safe to hate around only when he's behind the bars. I know my business and can attend to it; you keep your noses out of it."

With that he was gone.

"Put a suit of blue clothes on an Irishman, sew on some brass buttons, place a club in his hand and a gun in his pocket and call him a policeman and it's all up with him," continued the man who was talking after the policeman had gone out.

"Who is this man McCarthy?" one of the others asked.

"Oh, he doesn't amount to much," answered the other. "He's a laborer by trade, but too lazy to work. Lives in a shanty around the corner with his wife and a lot of half-bred kids. Hung around with a tough crowd for a long time and was as bad as any of them, I guess. Been locked up any number of times, and once, I believe, was sent up for two years for robbery. But that's not what I'm kicking about. It's the blamed kids the cops have got into of snubbing him every time they catch him standing still. My wife went over there this afternoon to take the kids something to eat, and Mrs. McCarthy said Pat would be all right if the police would let him alone. She's more worried about him losing the job offered him than anything else, she says."

"I wonder if I did do wrong in locking McCarthy up," Ferguson said to himself after he had walked several blocks, thinking of the matter all the time. "Don't really believe I did. I've had orders to bring in all the suspicious characters I find during the holidays, and if McCarthy isn't one I don't know who is. Guess I'll go around and see the family anyway. Maybe they're in hard lines and need help," he continued, after a moment's reflection. "Funny that man should spring the same gag on me that McCarthy did about that job."

Mrs. McCarthy wasn't very deeply grieved that afternoon when one of her many children came running into the house and told her that a policeman had taken the father away in the patrol. It had happened so often before that the novelty of it all had worn off. But she couldn't understand what he had been doing, for only half an hour earlier he had left her as cheerful as could be over the prospect of getting permanent work the next day. He was only going over to the corner to get some tobacco, he told her, and would be back soon. Perhaps he got into a fight, she thought, and let it go at that.

Mrs. McCarthy had so much to do that she was kept up very late that night. Three of the children had the croup, which called for much dozing and rubbing after they had been put to bed; another of them hadn't a whole piece of clothing to his back, and the patient little mother was forced to spend considerable time patching and darning. In addition to this she was making a dress for a woman which had to be delivered the first thing in the morning. It was close on to midnight when she finished it. Just as she was putting away her work there came a rap on the door.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" she said when

she saw the policeman. "Well, you're too late. Some of your pads got ahead of you this time. He's gone. They got him this afternoon. For what I don't know."

"I didn't come to get your husband," Ferguson said. "I know where he is. I came to see if you needed help."

"We wouldn't need help if you'd let Mack alone. You mugs worry the life out of him and me, too. He ain't so bad as you think he is. Just 'cause he was once doesn't mean he's always going to be the same, does it?"

The woman was shivering with the cold as she spoke, and Ferguson noticed it.

"Did Mack tell you anything about going to work to-morrow?" he asked.

"Yes. He had a good thing offered him, but I suppose it's all off now."

As the officer's eyes were directed about the squalid, dingy room they rested for a second on the pile of ragged blankets in the corner which served for a bed, and they discovered that the fire in the little coal stove was almost out and that the coal box was nearly empty. Their own hearts were touched.

"Do you suppose it would do any good if I brought Mack back to-night?" he asked of the brave little woman near him.

"Could you do it?" she exclaimed, anxiously, laying her thin, withered hand on the policeman's arm.

"I think so," was the answer. "He hasn't been booked yet."

"Then, for God's sake do so!" she cried, breaking down and sobbing. "I can't do without him now," she continued later. "I'm almost sick. Besides, it'll encourage Mack. He means to do right now, I know, for he promised me he would, and I'm sure he'll keep his word if he's given a fair show."

"I'll do it," said the policeman, rushing from the room.

Half an hour later McCarthy was back in his home, and there was a bucket of coal and a basket of food there, too. Ferguson had hurried to the patrol box, called up the desk sergeant, explained matters to him and asked that the prisoner be sent home in the wagon.

"Put in a couple of coal, and a basket of grub, too," he added; "they need it. And to-morrow have somebody go around to see if anything else can be done. I won't be in to-night, bill. Happy New Year. Good-night."

"What kept you so late, Fred?" Ferguson's wife asked him when he reached home. "You said you would be here to watch the Old Year out with me, so I sat up for you. But it's after one o'clock now."

"I know it," he answered, "but I was unavoidably detained. Sorry, though. But you'll forgive me, I know," he added, "when I tell you that by staying I believe I have helped to give a man a fresh start on life. It's a good way to begin the New Year," he said as he put his arms around the little woman and gave her a violent hug.—Chicago Evening Post.

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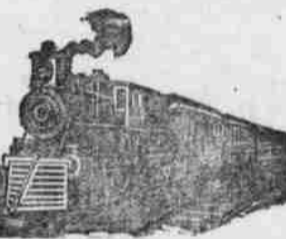
TIME SCHEDULES

DEPART	TIME SCHEDULES	ARRIVE
Chicago, Portland, Special 8:00 a. m. via Huntington.	Salt Lake, Denver, Ft. Worth, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago and East.	4:30 p. m.
Atlantic Express 8:00 p. m. via Huntington.	Salt Lake, Denver, Ft. Worth, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago and East.	8:45 a. m.
St. Paul Fast Mail 6:00 p. m. Spokane.	Walla Walla, Lewiston, Spokane, Minneapolis, Duluth, Milwaukee, Chicago and East.	7:00 a. m.

OCEAN AND RIVER SCHEDULE FROM PORTLAND.

8:00 p. m.	All sailing dates subject to change. For San Francisco—Sail every 5 days.	4:00 p. m.
Daily Ex. Sunday 4:30 p. m. Saturday 10:30 p. m.	Columbia River Steamers. To Astoria and Way Landings.	4:00 p. m. Ex. Sunday
4:00 a. m. Ex. Sunday	Willamette River. Oregon City, Newberg, Salem, Independence & Way Landings.	4:30 p. m. Ex. Sunday
7:00 a. m. Tues., Thurs. and Sat.	Willamette and Tan-Nill Rivers. Oregon City, Dayton & Way Landings.	8:30 p. m. Mon., Wed. and Fri.
4:30 a. m. Tues., Thurs. and Sat.	Willamette River. Portland to Corvallis & Way Landings.	4:30 p. m. Mon., Wed. and Fri.
Lv. Riparia 4:30 a. m. Daily	Snake River. Riparia to Lewiston	Lv. Lewiston Daily 9 a. m.

W. I. Lawrence, Agent, Biggs, Oregon.



Columbia Southern RAILWAY

Effective 12:01 A. M., September 9, 1906.

South Bound	South Bound	STATIONS	North Bound	North Bound
Daily Freight	Daily Pass.		Daily Pass.	Daily Freight
Arrive	Arrive		Leave	Leave
7:30 a. m.	1:35 p. m.	Riggs	11:25 a. m.	3:40 p. m.
8:00 a. m.	1:50 p. m.	Elkhorn	11:50 a. m.	3:12 p. m.
8:30 a. m.	2:14 p. m.	Wasco	12:15 a. m.	2:52 p. m.
8:45 a. m.	2:27 p. m.	Kloster	12:30 a. m.	2:40 p. m.
9:00 a. m.	2:43 p. m.	Summit	12:45 a. m.	2:30 p. m.
9:15 a. m.	2:58 p. m.	Millar C	1:00 a. m.	2:12 p. m.
9:30 a. m.	3:13 p. m.	Merfield	1:15 a. m.	2:00 p. m.
9:45 a. m.	3:28 p. m.	Bellevue	1:30 a. m.	1:52 p. m.
10:00 a. m.	3:43 p. m.	Moore	1:45 a. m.	1:40 p. m.
10:15 a. m.	3:58 p. m.	Krakov	2:00 a. m.	1:30 p. m.
10:30 a. m.	4:13 p. m.	O'V	2:15 a. m.	1:20 p. m.
10:45 a. m.	4:28 p. m.	Bourbon	2:30 a. m.	1:10 p. m.
11:00 a. m.	4:43 p. m.	Orville	2:45 a. m.	1:00 p. m.
11:15 a. m.	4:58 p. m.	Winton	3:00 a. m.	9:50 a. m.
11:30 a. m.	5:13 p. m.	Hanksville	3:15 a. m.	

D. J. HARRIS, Superintendent, G. E. LYTLE, G. P. A.

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