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Last Saturday morning, at the Craven county courthouse, employees were going about their usual chores in air conditioned comfort. There was activity in the sheriff's office, the tax office, the auditor's office, and in the offices of the register of deeds and the clerk of the court.

There wasn't supposed to be any activity in the courthouse upstairs, but there was nevertheless. As a matter of fact, what was going on unknown to the outside world was far more interesting than some of the dull civil cases we've been forced to listed to, not to mention quite a few political speeches spouted in the past in this ancient but now renovated courtroom.

Had you tiptoed to the door on the morning referred to, and peeped inside, you would have seen two of the busiest little girls you could possibly imagine. They were playing court with all the complete seriousness that youngsters with vivid imaginations are capable of when they indulge in make believe.

This, to say the least, was no small undertaking, seeing as how just the two of them were assuming the roles of judge, jury, lawyers and defendants. They not only had to have nimble wits to keep up with the lines improvised on the spot, but nimble feet as they scrambled alternately from the judge's bench to the jury box and down into the shoals in front of the bench where attorneys and their unhappy clients are seated during an honest to goodness trial.

Taking part in the delightful fantasy were Marion Brinson, 11, whose father writes our Mirror Meditation each week, and her cousin, Paula Wyrick, 14, of Winston-Salem, who has been visiting Marion this summer.

They held not one but three trials before adjourning court shortly before noon, and each was a murder case that would have made even that grand master of horror and mayhem, Alfred Hitchcock, slightly envious.

In fact, it is probable that Hitchcock, coupled with others who contrive gruesome television violence, inspired the game that Marion and Paula had come up with to ease the monotony of a sultry July day. At any rate, their courtroom procedure was flawless. For example, when Paula as an attorney offered an objection to certain solicited testimony, Marion as the judge at that moment looked down her pretty little nose and intoned in her best judicial manner the words—"Objection overruled."

In the first trial, Marion wasn't lucky enough to be the judge. She was charged with murdering a man with what she admitted was a "22 double-barreled shotgun." We're not acquainted with a weapon of this description, but it was sufficiently lethal to bring death to the unsuspecting victim.

Paula, in the second trial, was convicted of violent death even more gruesome. It seems she was a mentally unbalanced woman who owned five cats and five dogs. She had ten cradles, and affectionately tucked the cats and dogs in their individual cradles each night.

With evil cunning, she taught her pets how to commit murder, and one of them—a fox-gray cat, invaded the cradle of a sleeping baby and killed it. The woman, brought before the bar of justice, was given her just desserts. How such a story ever entered the minds of two little girls who couldn't be gentler or sweeter we'll never know.

In the third trial, Paula's husband was the murder victim and she was the chief prosecuting wit-

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EVER THE SAME—Children are children the world over, and these Berne youngsters viewing a miniature reproduction of the Swiss Alps could easily pass for some of our New Bern small fry. Like the many other Mirror murals pub-

lished of our mother city, this photo was flown to us from across the sea—a friendly gesture on the part of Berne officials.

New Bernians Are All Set For Second Convention Show

Most New Bernians of voting age will be gazing intently at their home television screens Monday, when the Republican National Convention gets underway in Chicago.

Having eased their bleary eyes to some extent since the Democratic doings recently concluded in Los Angeles, local citizens are all set for still more late viewing and the incessant windy speeches that are bound to come in a metropolis already famed as the Windy City.

For the relatively few citizens who aren't intrigued by political antics, watching the convention will be a matter of last resort. They'll grumble and complain because the networks have been taken over by something less appealing than the shows they usually enjoy, but as confirmed TV addicts they are apt to stick by their sets like the rest of us.

It should be quite a show, an amazing one in fact, if convention planners make good their promise to keep the aisles cleared. Managing this stupendous feat wouldn't necessarily prove that the Republicans are better qualified to lead the nation than the Democrats, but it would indeed indicate that the age of miracles hasn't passed.

For our part, we're not anticipating too much order, although the nomination of Vice President Richard Nixon as the GOP's presidential standard bearer appears to be thoroughly cut and dried. If there's no honest-to-goodness excitement to be had, a reasonable fascimile thereof will be phoned up by the

powers that be.

As a matter of fact, the delightful candid camera glimpses frequently projected on the screen during the recent Democratic get-together were a highlight of the convention coverage. It didn't leak out incidentally, until after the convention ended, that many of them were taped for later insertion rather than show at the instant the camera focused on an interesting subject.

You may rest assured that the networks will continue to use this method of keeping the vast tele-

vision audience amused during dull spots that crop up in convention activity.

It would be difficult to determine at the present time, with any degree of accuracy, how many New Bernians will bolt the Democratic Party in November and vote Republican. However, there is sufficient open talk from the man in the street to indicate that the possibility of both New Bern and Craven county going Republican is by no means remote.

A vast majority of the local voters so inclined will be watching

the convention with hopes that Nelson Rockefeller will somehow nose out Nixon for the nomination. Rockefeller's chances are so slim that he has all but admitted he is out of the running, but locally there's a great deal of wishful thinking.

It is no secret that Nixon is quite unpopular here. If this were not true, things would look even more gloomy to a lot of Tar Heel politicians who have admitted privately that the Democratic slate is facing tough sledding. These seasoned observers are counting on Nixon's lack of appeal in these parts to save the day in North Carolina and much of the South.

In short, the votes cast for Nixon will for the most part be anti-Kennedy support, and not a tribute to the Vice President. And, of course, in almost every instance in New Bern and Craven, an anti-Kennedy vote is going to be an anti-Catholic vote.

Although Kennedy in his acceptance speech picked up quite a few wavering voters here with his statement on the religious angle of his public life, it nevertheless remains a fact that he will not be accepted by some Democrats.

Religious bitterness is a tragic thing to behold. In America it is doubly tragic, but bitterness lies ahead as surely as tomorrow's dawn. No matter what your views, and our views might be, heated controversy and rash emotionalism won't help matters.

How we worship and how we vote is a choice we are privileged to make ourselves. Let's keep in mind that our neighbor has the same privilege.



FREEDOM'S REMINDER