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THE ALL BLACKS' THANKS.

GOING HOME WITH THE KING'S CUP.

PLAYERS' MESSAGES.

The following article published in the "Daily Mail," has been sent in by a returned soldier. The interest lies in the fact that it is a series of comments which have not been brought before the football fraternity in this country.

The victorious All Blacks XV., the winners of the King's Cup and the championship of the Inter-Services Rugby Tournament, will soon be leaving these shores for their own homeland. They are going back to New Zealand bearing with them many cherished memories and happy recollections, as the following messages to "The Daily Mail" indicate:—

J. RYAN (Captain of the Team).

"I would like to express to all those connected with the Inter-Services competition the heartfelt thanks of all our lads for the kind and generous treatment shown to us. The public, too, much as they would have liked to have seen the Home XV. win applauded us in great style. We certainly had to go our best to win that cup, and at one time I feared the team were sinking into a state of staleness. I think we were at the top of our form in the South African engagement. Riordan and Morkel were splendid.

"At Inverleith (against the Mother-country XV.) I never doubted our forwards' ability to win, but the game made things very tricky. The off-side rulings here puzzled us at first, but we soon got into the way of things. Several small improvements we have tried in New Zealand would open out the game more and improve it from a spectator's view.

"The Press have treated us well too, but I think their comparisons between the original All Blacks and our team rather unfair. The All Blacks of 1906 were the result of years of experience and training being, in fact, a team of captains, while we are all (except Wilson, Cain, and myself) newly developed players since coming over to Europe. We are please indeed if we have done well for the good old game since our arrival from the front, and will leave these shores with nothing but the best of recollections."

SERGEANT A. WILSON ("Ranji").

"Our two hardest games were against the Mother-country XV. and South Africa. We really played our best against the latter. The Army Rugby Union performed almost a miracle in instructing the competition, and we had some degree of luck in winning. The public treated us very well. The referees were very fair, but should pay more heed to the "advantage" rule. They order too many scrums. Our opponents have all been sportsmen."

J. O'BRIEN (Full Back).

"We are lucky to come out of the Army contests as winners. Your Home team took some whacking. I think they improved more in their play than we did. The great outstanding feature of the contests was the spirit animating everyone connected. When you find the captain of the losing side coming into your dressing-room to congratulate you, there is no fear for the game or the players. This happened on several occasions. The game with Australia was our hardest, especially on our pack. We hope for a great revival of the game in England."

W. FEA (Five-eights).

"South Africa gave us our hardest and best game, although the match at Inverleith was probably the most exciting. Brown, Usher, and Brunton, are great forwards, and Pym and Cullen troubled us most. The public have been very impartial towards us. The majority of the backs here run too much across field and seem to fail as straight-runners. I think the referees are a bit too exacting in such small matters as unintentional off-side and petty knock-ons. I quite failed to follow some of their rulings for some time, but latterly got used to them. The game here, if properly handled and controlled, should have a greater future than ever. The Welsh are hard players and fearfully keen on winning. Their back play resembles our style very much. We have been treated royally everywhere we have gone."

LIEUT. P. E. BOOTH (1905-06 All Black).

"My compatriots from New Zealand are highly elated at winning the Inter-Services tournament. They are unanimous on many points connected with it. . . . These embrace the impartiality of the general public; the exacting and scrupulous honesty of all the controlling referees and

the wonderfully fine sporting spirit permeating every game. By his presentation of the Cup the All Blacks consider the King the greatest of sportsmen, and the cap itself is jealously guarded by Major Cameron, our sports representative. . . . In New Zealand it will be valued more than any guns, medals, flags, or other souvenirs of the war, and will probably find a resting-place in the Houses of Parliament in Wellington. By winning the Army competition and then beating Wales on her own ground, thus revenging the defeat of 1906, the team are really carrying back in the King's Cup the ashes of British Rugby. This seems singularly fitting when it is remembered that New Zealand is the only country that recognises Rugby as essentially its national game."

SOUTH OTAGO NOTES.

BALCLUTHA, June 28.

Quite a gloom was cast over this district last week when it became known that Mr John Begg, of Pukeawa, had passed away after a short illness from pneumonia, following influenza. Mr Begg was chairman of the Bruce County Council and was also connected with numerous other local bodies and societies in Balclutha district. He was only 50 years of age and was a prominent and well-liked citizen. The funeral was one of the largest seen in this district and spoke of the esteem in which the deceased was held.

There is a good deal of sickness in the district at present. Influenza is still much in evidence, while mumps are also claiming a few victims amongst adults and children alike. The clear frosty weather we are having may clear the air a bit, however.

Owing to lack of interest by members of the Milton R.S.A. in their club-room it has been decided to dispose of the billiard-table and accessories.

A meeting was held at Kaitangata on Friday night last to consider whether the Pipe Band would disband or carry on. After some discussion it was decided to carry on for another three months at any rate, and should sufficient interest be taken the band will remain in existence. The band is an old-established one and it is hoped that it will not go out of existence.

Entries for the Kaitangata Poultry Show, to be held on July 7, constitute a record and a very successful show should eventuate. Mr Cunningham, of Invercargill, will be the judge. The newly-formed Clutha Poultry Club hold their show on the 16th inst., entries closing on the 7th.

A meeting of delegates was held on Friday to discuss the River Commission's report. It was thought that the proposals of the Commission were too comprehensive to tackle just now. A proposal to dredge the river at the mouths of both channels was brought forward and this scheme seems to be highly possible, and the meeting was adjourned to go into the question.

Messrs J. B. Waters and Jas. Begg (Dunedin) addressed a large gathering of farmers last week on the wheat question and appealed to the present to grow more wheat, pointing out that a grave shortage of flour would result if more was not planted. The speakers were listened to very attentively, and it is probable that good will result.

Football promises to be very exciting in South Otago before the end of the season. On Saturday Clutha defeated Clinton by six points to three, and the position now is that if these two teams win their remaining games, they together, with Crescent, will be equal for the banner and a final will have to be played. In the second grade Clutha are now leading and look like winners.

Next Saturday the South Otago representative team will journey to Tapanui and play the western district's representative team. The local team appears a strong combination and should give a good account of itself. On Saturday, July 17, the Southland western districts are sending a team to Balclutha to meet our team. This is the first fixture between these teams and the game will be looked forward to with keen interest. Next season the local team will journey to Riverton. Other representative matches to be played here are against Eastern districts v. Otago.

Kaitangata soccer team defeated Old Boys, the crack Dunedin team on Saturday, and are now leading for the Association Cup.

The use of dogs in warfare is not modern. In the days of the Romans the Molossian dogs of the ancient conquerors, with their spiked collars and suits of mail, whose primary service was to hinder the cavalry by attacking the horses, were factors in those old-time encounters.

CLERICAL WIT.

From the frequency and persistency with which Sydney Smith is quoted one would think he is the only wit the religious community has ever produced. What a pity a better record was not kept of the table talk of that prime wag, the Rev. R. H. Barham, author of the "Ingoldsby Legends." One who knew him observes: "He was learned with Bishop Copleston, humorous with Sydney Smith, jocular with Theodore Hook, facetious with Edward Cannon of the Royal Chapel."

W. S. Gilbert knew his "Ingoldsby," I feel sure, and picked up more than a trick or two from the reverend rhymist. Read the books of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, now enjoying a West-end revival, and you'll appreciate the fact that Barham was in the field before Gilbert.

And if 'mongst the laity
Unseemly gaiety
Sometimes betrayed an occasional
taint or two,
At once all the clerics went
into hysterics,
While scarcely a convent but boasted
a saint or two.

I don't suppose Barham's novels, "Baldwin" and "Cousin Nicholas," exist anywhere except in the British Museum Library. He was paid £20 for "Baldwin," and promise of "certain publishers' future advantages," which Theodore Hook wittingly designated as "contingencies that never happen." I wonder where one could get a copy of Barham's "Life," written by his son? There must be some gems of humour in it.

"I have been fortunate," says A. C. Benson, "in the course of my life in knowing, more or less intimately, several eminent priests." And yet he tells us not a word about the Temple, who followed his father in the arch-bishopric, and whom he must have met quite often. Many are the tales told of Archbishop Temple's grim humour. A familiar one is the sprig of nobility (I have heard it was Lord Randolph Churchill) who called on him one day. "Take a chair," said Temple, gruffly, on his visitor's entrance. (He was the Bishop of London.) "Pardon me, your Lordship," said the young man, a little hurt by this brusqueness, "but I am Lord ——" "Oh," was the retort, "in that case, take two chairs."

"Two things," once observed Temple, "I invariably encounter when I go anywhere for a Confirmation—The Church's One Foundation and cold chicken. And I detest both."

The present Bishop of London is the soul of frankness. To an audience he once remarked: "Because my official salary is ten thousand a year, I am presumed to be very well off. As a matter of fact, I am so short of money that I have been obliged to raise some on my life policy."

As for Spurgeon, an article could be devoted to his humour. I will content myself with giving one instance of his caustic wit. A young minister of great promise had preached, and afterwards Spurgeon congratulated him on his performance. Much elated, the young man observed: "And I composed my discourse in two hours, Mr Spurgeon." "Did you?" quietly remarked the great man. "It took me two days to compose."

PRUDENCE.

Prudence is dressed in a wonderful gray,
Cool as the clouds up above.
Prudence is careful—her feet never stray
Down in the courtyard with Love.
Waiting on Prudence, his kingdom might fall,
And Logic would reign in his place;
But Folly is reckless and comes at his call—
For Love has a beautiful face!

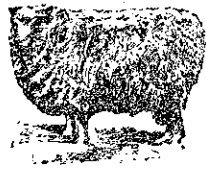
Prudence has wisdom, and Folly has art,
Prudence is placid and kind.
Prudence has virtue, but Folly has heart
Yet he who searches may find
That Prudence has envy of Folly so gay,
And wishes that she dared to race
Down to the courtyard where Love
holds his sway—
For Love has a beautiful face!
—Mabel Haughton Collyer.

Toads have long been thought to be venomous and poisonous, but, as a matter of fact, they are quite harmless when unmolested. This little animal conceals a scalding acid under its skin which it squirts out at an enemy.

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5/6.

BERNARD TREVES' BOOTS (Law-
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THE BROKEN FANG (Vel Key).

HON. ALGERNON KNOX (E. Philipps
Oppenheim).

THE HOUSE OF DANGER (Guy
Thrine).

GUILE (Heaton Hill).

THE LOST MR LINTHWAITE (J. S.
Fletcher).

THE CAMP OF FEAR (Leslie Howard
Gordon).

KATE PLUS TEN (Edgar Wallace).

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