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We have been notifying our Country Clients since 26th March that our Home and American Agents anticipated a serious decline in Rabbitskins. We passed this on to you for what it was worth. At yesterday's local sale prices declined 75 per cent. We therefore would like to to write us for revised price list. At the same time we would again advise you to accept ruling prices, as our Agents anti-cipate a further decline in the next London sales in June.

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General Birdwood's Visit.

WELCOMED BY THE DICCERS OF SOUTHLAND.

noon's express and was given a civic reception on the Rotunda by the Mayor (Mr J. Stead). Several thousand people assembled and in response to the Mayor's call, three hearty cheers were accorded the visitors.

the visitors.

The Mayor expressed the pleasure of the people of Invercargill that the Gencral had seen his way to visit this town.
He remarked upon the high opinion held by the diggers who had left invercargill for the front in regard to General Birdwood, whose qualities as a soldier and a man were always spoken of where the returned soldiers gathered. Britain never fought unless she realised that she had a just cause and when she decided on war she went into the matter thoroughly, war sne went into the matter thoroughly, though at the start there might be some slackness. The great European conflict had ended in victory for the Allies, and he thought he could claim that the New Zealanders did a fair share of the work which had been found necessary to bring an end to the struggle.

When General Birdwood stepped forward three hearty choers were again given. He said he was told when coming south that cold as it was he would have to wait till he arrived in Invercargill to ex-perience real winter, but when he reached the railway station he found that genial conditions prevailed. He said when he ivsited Dunedn he was among a Scotch people and he understood that in Invercargill the residents largely consist-ed of natives of Scotland or their descendants, but wherever he went it was all ants, but wherever he went it was all the same, hearty receptions being the rule, and no where more than in Otago and Southland. He told several humorous stories depicting the characteristics of the Scotsman, which caused much good-natured laughter, and said when travelling from Gore he learned that the cettlers of this district went in that the settlers of this district went in to a large extent for oat growing, and the Government seemed to have taken action in the matter of forest preservation. If they had not, well he would advise that a policy of this kind should be adopted. He praised the Diggers for what they had done on Gallipoli and elsewhere during the Great War, and said there were some who had come back not in the best of health, and he appealed to employers of labour to give them every chance of getting back to work again. They may after a month or two at an occupation require a rest, and he asked that every consideration should be given to the Diggers who had done so much for those who through no fault of their own, of course, had to remain behind while the boys were amid shot and shell and other perils of the field of battle. "Exercise patience," said the General, "and give the patience," said the General, "and give the young men every opportunity of rehabilitating themselves".—(Applause.) He wished to express his appreciation of what the Red Cross had done, also the Y.M.C.A., Salvation Army, and similar institutions, whose activities had done much to brighten the lives of the young fellows when they were in the thick of the struggle. The Mayor had said they were highly honoured by his (the General's) presence in Invercargill, but it was the other way about. It was he who was honoured by the privilege of meeting those with whom he had been associated on the field of battle, and the mothers and fathers who had to remain at home, but who had done so well in giving what assistance was in their power.

ously, however, General Birdwood humorously asked those children who wished a holiday to hold up their hands, with the natural result. He then asked parents to do the same but no hands were raised, much good humour prevailing amongst the crowd. The Mayor announced that the General and Lady and Miss Birdwood would be motored round the town that afternoon. The party then proceeded to their motor car, the 8th Regimental Band playing the National Anthem, and another three hearty cheers speeding the General along Dee street.

THE DINNER.

In the evening General Sir Wm and Lady Birdwood were tendered a dinner at the Federal when there were about fifty present, including a number of

Proposing the toast of "The General," the Mayor said he rogarded it as a privilege to preside at a gathering to do honour to such a distinguished soldier and popular man and Mr Stead referred to the splengid spirit that had existed and continued to last between the General and the Diggers. They honoured and revered him and the people also held him in the highest esteem knowing the fine qualities he had showed to their young men during an extremely trying time. General Bird-wood, he said, did not intend to deliver a speech. He had imposed the condition when he accepted the invitation that there were to be no speeches. However, he might be induced to talk a little though he had said that he saw no difference between talk and speeches. (Laugh-

On the General rising there was enthusiastic applause. He said he had let it be known that he did not wish to be called upon to make more than one speech while

General Sir William Birdwood, accom-panied by Lady and Miss Birdwood, ar-that if they had intended originally to rived in Invercargill by Monday after-have two gatherings that they might be the description of the shifting of responsibility, which he termed camou-flage. The General had other amusing stories to tell, laughter being general and hearty while they were being related and assuming a serious mien he expressed the pleasure he felt at seeing so many "Dig-geresses" sitting at the tables. He knew the men of Anzac and all who had taken a part in the war appreciated beyond words what these ladies had done for them and nothing he could say could express his own admiration for their selfpress his own admiration for their self-sacrifice and patience. In Lemnos, Egypt, France and Palestine the nurses had done work the value of which it was impossible to estimate. A particular painful oc-currence had been the torpedoing of the Marquette, the sufferings of some of the nurses until rescued from their terrible positions having been so great that it was a wonder they had survived the ordeal. What had the Naval men said of the nurses on that occasion? They could not say too much of the brave spirit shown by them and it was characteristic of the ladies throughout the campaign wherever they were He asked the re-turned men to always regard the nurses as comrades and not to forget the im-mense service they had done in the war. On the Home nurses the same high encomiums could be bestowed and the women of Britain as a whole had risen women of Britain as a whole had risen to the occasion. Their houses had been open to the colonial soldier and he thought the Anzacs and others far away from their native land were grateful for the hospitality extended to them. The people of Britain had entertained those men in a liberal spirit, and there was hardly a home from the there was hardly a home from the King's palace to the humblest cottage that had not one of them. Sir William said a record of the achievements of the Diggers should be handed down to their children and their children's children. He did not believe in boasting, but this should be done as showing a noble example. There had been some who had described the British people as decadent and there was an inclination to decry what they themselves had done and belaud the achievements of others. This was a trait in their character, but when analysed fairly it could not be gainsaid that the Britisher had no peer in the realm of arms or peace.—(Applause). The French or peace.—(Applause). The French seemed to have a greater appreciation of Britain's deeds than had the British themselves, and Marshal Foch was never done praising their courage, initiative, and the other good qualities that had shope out conspicuously during the one shone out conspicuously during the op-erations in France and elsewhere. Sir William referred to the little Army that crossed the Channel when war was declared by Britain. He said it had only two machine-guns to a battalion, but the Germans were deluded into the belief that there were fifty or sixty. This was that there were fifty or sixty. This was because of the deadly nature of the rifle fire of the British. As to the Navy its great part in shaping the end of hostilities was recognised by all and he thought the world have been considered. thes was recognised by all rind he thought it would have been a very difficult task to have struggled through only for its great strength. Some had said that the Gallipoli campaign had been a failure, but it had been a decided success, because the flower of the Turkish troops had been destroyed paying the year for and fathers who had to remain at home, but who had done so well in giving what assistance was in their power.

The General remarked upon the number of school children present and asked the Mayor to use his influence with the authorities to give them a holiday. Previtable of the provided hypersupply hypersupplies hypersupplication hypersupplies has a de grateful for the cordiality of the weicome they had received in Invercargill.—(Applause).

SMOKE CONCERT.

About 400 were present in King's Hall later in the evening, when the R.S.A. entertained the General at a smoke concert, most of those in attendance being Diggers. The Hibernian Band and Orphans' Club Concert Party contributed musical items, Mr J. E. Taylor rendered a song, and Mr Haigh gave a recitation, all the items being highly appreciated, Shortly after the time appointed to commence the proceedings the General appeared, and four returned soldiers carried him shoulder high along the hall to the seat that was waiting for him. Very hearty cheering marked General Birdwood's arrival, and "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" was sung with great gusto.

The President of the Returned Soldiers' Association (Captain D. Rae), who was in the chair, proposed the toast of "General Sir Wm. Birdwood."-(Cheering and ap-The Chairman said the General plause.) was one of the most distinguished soldiers the war had produced. He had rare qualities and had the happy knack of applying little touches of comradeship that had won for him the love of the Dig-General Birdwood and Sir Ian Hamilton hod both made their reputa-tions before the Australians and New Zealanders established themselves as soldiers to be reckoned with, and General Birdwood had early realised, probably because of his experiences in South Africa, the latent possibilities in the men from Australia and New Zealand under proper

officers realised the all-important value of officers realised the all-important value of discipline, but General Birdwood was able to secure that essential quality in a soldier besides showing a personal interest and comradeship. Consequently there was created a bond of sympathy between the leader and the mon. The people of Southland recognised that this had been the ease and as the General had observed Southland recognised that this had been the case and, as the General had observed that day, they appreciated very highly the fine spirit he had shown towards the men under him. He hoped the General would be pleased with his visit to Invercargill, and that that would not be the last they would see of him, that he would again some day come in this direction.—
(Applause.) (Applause.)

General Birdwood, who was loudly cheered, the company also singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow," commenced by addressing himself to his "Digger comrades," and went on to say that he wished he could find the words to properly express his feelings for being received the way he had been. He felt it very much, especially as he was afraid many had not actually been with him. In Wellington, Christchurch, Oamaru, Timaru, and other places he had come into contact with a Gallipoli and those who were in Gallipoli and those who went with the first contingent to France. It was a very real grief to him that he had to sever his connection with that excellent Division. He had done his best to avoid it, recognising the value of the New Zealanders in Gallipoli, but the time came when the authorities made certain plans. He had hoped they would form one force of New Zealanders and Australians, and when that was refused, and the New Zea-landers had to leave his (General Birdwood's) immediate command, he was ex-tremely sorry. He had followed the Division everywhere, and was proud when he saw that they went from one action to another without a single failure. He had always done his best to let people know the value of that Division, as it had been one of the best self-contained and fighting divisions they had had. It was esfighting divisions they had had. It was essential that Australia and New Zealand should see eye to eye in regard to defence in this part of the world, as what affected one affected the other, and each should know the exact power of the other. Australians and New Zealanders had worked together, recognising that what happened to one affected both and they showed how one could depend on the happened to one affected both and they showed how one could depend on the other when it came to hard fighting. This same spirit should prevail in time of peace. It had been said that day by the Mayor that he (the General) had conferred an honour in coming to Irvercargill, but the boot was on the other foot. He considered it a very great hon-our to be received as one of themselves in the way he had been received that night.

The General then stated that many stories had been told about him, some true and others far from fact. He had noticed that the Sydney "Mail" had held a competition for the best story in regard to him, and he had seen them all, but had not recognised a line of the incidents related.—(Laughter). The story tellers used their imagination. This reminded him of a visit he made to the front lines when he asked the men how front lines when he asked the men how front lines when he asked the men how they were getting on? How many Turks had they shot? One replied that he had bagged two or three, and others had met with about the same results. A half Chinaman named Sing who was a very good marksman, had claimed to have shot 238, and he (the General) said: "What about Sing's 238? How do you account for his success?" The reply he received was it was because some men were greater liars than others. It had were greater liars than others. were greater liars than others. It had been a great pleasure to him to see that the returned boys were doing well, and it appeared that employers and the Government were doing what they could for them. They were good soldiers and it was only to be expected that when they returned they would prove good citizens and they should be given every chance when they came back. Addressing the Diggers the General said: "You were comrades in war, and I hope you will be comrades in peace. Every man who wears a badge should regard it as a sign of freemasonry, and no one passing another wearing the badge should do so without bidding the time of day. He asked them to extend the hand of comradeship to any of their British comrades who might settle in New Zealand. Population was a need of New Zealand, and he was sure if people in the Old Land were induced to come out to the Dominion much good would be done. He would give them two words as their motto: "Comradeship and battle-fitness." In conclusion the General hoped they would retain that fitness in civil life that had obtained in the war and that the Diggers would have all happiness and good health for many years to come. He would be very grateful if they would give him the privilege of shaking hands with him as he was leaving the hall.— (Applause).

Other toasts were: "His. Majesty's Forces," by the Mayor, responded to by Major Glendining and Colonel Bowler; "The Empire." by Mr Hall-Jones, responded to by Hon. J. A. Hanan, and "The Ladies," by Mr Alex. Glass.

The General then proceeded to the exit of the hall and shook hands with the Diggers as they left the building.

At the great Russian fair of Nijni-Novgorod, goods used to be bought every year to the extent of £16,000,000.

London is no longer the most populated city in the world. Greater New York, ac leadership. In those early days it was a fortunate choice of the Supreme War Council when they appointed the General to command the Anzac soldiers. Imperial 7,400,000 of Greater London. cording to the latest returns, now claims over 8,000,000 inhabitants, against the

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