

NIBBLES FROM WELLS.

From "The Outline of History" by H. G. Wells, Parts 8 and 9. (On sale in Invercargill).

The true hero of the story of Alexander is not so much Alexander as his father Philip. The author of a piece does not shine in the limelight as the actor does, and it was Philip who planned much of the greatness that his son achieved.

To anyone who reads his life with care it is evident that Alexander started with an equipment of training and ideas of unprecedented value. As he got beyond the wisdom of his upbringing, he began to blunder and misbehave—sometimes with a dreadful folly. The defects of his character had triumphed over his upbringing long before he died.

It is from the festering humiliations of peoples that arrogant religious propagandas spring. To the triumphant the down-trodden can say: "It is naught in the sight of the true gods." So the son of Philip of Macedon, the master-general of Greece, was made to feel a small person amidst the gigantic temples. And he had an abnormal share of youth's normal ambition to impress everybody. How gratifying, then, for him to discover presently that he was no mere successful mortal, not one of these modern vulgar Greekish folk, but ancient and divine, the son of a god, the Pharaoh god, son of Ammon Ra!

Alexander married a daughter of Darius, though already he possessed an Asiatic wife in Roxana, the daughter of the king of Samarkand. This wholesale wedding was made a very splendid festival, and at the same time all of his Macedonian soldiers, to the number of several thousands, who had married Asiatic brides, were given wedding gifts. This has been called the Marriage of Europe and Asia; the two continents were to be joined, wrote Plutarch, "in lawful wedlock and by community of offspring."

One thing seems to support the suggestion of the great personal vanity of Alexander. His portrait was painted and sculptured frequently, and always he is represented as a beautiful youth, with wonderful locks flowing backward from a broad forehead. Previously most men had worn beards. But Alexander, enamoured of his own youthful loveliness, would not part with it; he remained a shaven boy, at thirty-two he shaved his face, and so set a fashion in Greece and Italy for many centuries.

No attempt seems to have been made at Alexandria to print anything at all. That strikes one at first as a very remarkable fact. The world was crying out for books. There was an urgent public need for notices, proclamations, and the like. Yet there is nothing in history of the Western civilisations that one can call printing until the fifteenth century A.D. It is not as though printing was a recondite art or dependent upon any precedent and preliminary discoveries. Printing is the most obvious of dodges. In principle it has always been known.

Right thinking is necessarily an open process, and the only science and history of full value to men consist of what is generally and clearly known; this is surely a platitude, but we have still to discover how to preserve our centres of philosophy and research from the caking and darkening accumulations of narrow and dingy-spirited specialists. We have still to ensure that a man of learning shall be none the less a man of affairs, and that all that can be thought and known is kept plainly, honestly, and easily available to the ordinary men and women who are the substance of mankind.

The Athenian democracy suffered much from that narrowness of "patriotism" which is the ruin of all nations. "Athens for the Athenians" was the guiding principle of her rule, and "tax the foreigner" her substitute for political wisdom.

The essential idea, the living spirit, of Christianity was, as we shall presently show, a new thing in the history of the mind and will of man; but the garments of ritual and symbol and formula that Christianity has worn, and still in many countries wears to this day, were certainly woven in the cult and temples of Jupiter, Serapis, and Isis, that spread now from Alexandria throughout the civilised world in the age of theocrasia in the second and first centuries before Christ.

The meeting of the Dominion executive of the N.Z.R.S.A. on Saturday expressed its entire accord with the principles of the National Defence League, and recommended members of the association to give all the support in their power to the league.

MOTORING NOTES.

HARLEY-DAVIDSON WINS BIG DODGE CITY RACE.

Great were the honours the Harley-Davidson annexed for itself in the big Dodge City Classic which was held at Dodge City, Kansas, July 5th, and conceded by all who know to have been the biggest and fastest motor cycle race ever staged by the motor cycle world. First of all, Jim Davis on a pocket valve Harley-Davidson crowned himself 300-mile champion by winning first place in 3 hours 40 minutes and 4 4-5 seconds, and by doing so established a new world's record for that distance on a dirt track. Not content with that, Maldwyn Jones piled up a couple more M. and A.T.A. records with his pocket valve Harley-Davidson, when he finished the first 100 miles in 1 hour 11 minutes and 12 1-5 seconds, and 200 miles in 2 hours 26 minutes and 48 seconds. By taking the 200-mile honours, Jones broke the world's record established for that distance by Ralph Hepburn, also on a Harley-Davidson, at Ascot Park, June 22, 1919. Finally, Ray Weishaar heaped more glory on the Harley-Davidson by capturing third place with his pocket valve.

Davis' winning of the 300-mile championship, makes the third successive time that the Harley-Davidson has won this much-coveted classic, and the third successive time that it has lowered the track record. In 1915, the second time the Dodge City Classic was held the Harley-Davidson took six of the first seven places, Otto Walker winning first place in 3 hours 55min 45sec, and lowering the time made by Glenn Boyd the previous year by 28 minutes 43 seconds. In 1916, Irving Janke captured first place again for the Harley-Davidson, this time in 3hr 45min 36sec. During 1917 and 1918, on account of war conditions, no race was held, and in 1919, the Marion, Ind., race promoters got ahead of the Dodge City organisation, by securing M. and A.T.A. sanction for the 200-mile International Road Race for the same date that the Dodge City race had been planned to be held.

METAL CEMENT FOR USE ON AN AUTOMOBILE.

An excellent cement for making spark plugs tight, for connecting pipes, etc., can be prepared in this way: Compound 4 part of fine iron filings, 2 parts of lime, 1-5 part of common salt, and mix to a paste with vinegar.

These ingredients are generally at hand and only a few minutes will be required to make the cement. When carefully mixed and applied, this cement will stand compression and heat, and can be air dried.

The inspection pit for a motor car should be 3ft 6in wide, 4ft 6in deep, and not less than 6ft long. Particular attention must be paid to the drainage, and steps should be provided at one end, if not both. Where electric light is available, a cable should be laid down to the pit, and two or three wall sockets placed at intervals along the side, so that a portable lamp could be connected up with the most convenient of these. On no account should any other light except a safety lamp or one of the miner's type be used in the pit.

Many people who drive their own cars neglect altogether to examine their tyres, and naturally do not get anything like the wear out of them that they should. A tyre burst will ultimately follow a small cut in the rubber. At first this is hardly noticeable, but the tension on the rubber deepens it, and the opening ultimately reaches the canvas. Water, when the car is washed, or when it is run on a wet day, gets into the cut, and soaks into the canvas, which it slowly rots. In the end the air, under high pressure in the tyre, finds the weak spot, and a blow-out follows. The trouble and expense this causes could be avoided if the cut were filled up with tyre cement when it was still small.

SOLDIERS!

The Invercargill Municipal Library are anxious to have a complete file of all publications on transports, or others published by the soldiers. It is fitting and in the interest of all concerned that this file should be obtained, and copies from soldiers will be greatly appreciated. All copies should be accompanied by the sender's full name and address, and will be acknowledged through the columns of "The Digger." We have undertaken to help the librarian in this matter and would appreciate the action of returned men in helping to bring it to a successful issue. Copies can be forwarded to "The Digger," Box 310, Invercargill, or to the Public Library direct.

CALCIUM NOTES.

The Cemetery.—The trustees responsible for the care of the burying ground are suffering from a serious form of sleeping sickness. The condition of the gates and the untidy state of the frontage are disgraceful. Can nothing be done to abate the rabbit nuisance? How about a public meeting to discuss matters?

Dominion Geography.—Waianiwa is situated between the well-known districts of Otahuti and Wallacetown, on the Riverton railway. Although a very old settled district, its inhabitants have not become mouldy. It has the usual township features, but special mention must be made of the up-to-date garage and Stean's Emporium. The school garden is famed throughout Southland. Waianiwa has a football team whose chief claim to recognition lies in the fact that it won the Central Union Shield in 1920, and met with defeat on only one memorable occasion. The King of Waianiwa, Tinigalt, J.O.N. B.U.L. leads a secluded life, and the duties of his high estate make it difficult to secure an interview, but a contributor to "The Digger" has already introduced this dignitary to readers. His chief ministers of state are The Dosler, Whiskers, and Gant. Tradition says that Waianiwa was the home of two tribes, one given to prayer and fasting and the other to games and feasting. These distinctions in the behaviour of the inhabitants are still noticeable, and it is only by the tact of the King and his ministers that a clash is avoided. Waianiwa is very proud of their historic canoe, the vessel which transports their warriors to distant enemy lands in search of scalps. They claim that this canoe is absolutely unsinkable, although it may be liable to puncture. On the whole, Waianiwa is a very pleasant region, and not the least of its attractions it is proximity to Stevens' Lemonade Fountain.

Pepper and Salt.—The public is deeply interested in the "Digger" criticism of the Electric Power Board. Surprise is expressed that the Board has not seen fit to reply. Has it no case? Good luck to the "Digger" in its efforts to secure fair dealing and efficiency from this august body. "Let there be light."

The wind-up of the Quadrille on Tuesday last, saw a record attendance. Miss McNeil and Mr Crooks received small presentations for musical services.

Turnips are nearly finished. Farmers are anxiously watching the growth of grass.

Scotty Baird gave Union a taste of his quality at Otahuti on Saturday.

Mr Johnston has carried out extensive improvements to his farm steading. Jim is a real live wire.

Mr C. McKenzie is installing a milking plant in a new shed. His chief difficulty was water-supply. Suspicious, to say the least of it.

The indirect announcement in your columns that a certain young man was engaged has caused quite a flutter in feminine circles in Calcium and Otahuti.

Spring showers, winter winds, no grass, ewes lambing, cows calving, busy farmers, flowers blooming, no weddings, no football. Well! well!

Extract from "Digger" September 17th: "Baird who is neither a forward nor a back, etc." Should this read "Baird who is either a forward or a back, etc." Expert opinion says that it should. Baird played in both positions for the All Blacks.

WEST PLAINS.

A pleasant evening was spent in the West Plains Hall on Friday, when the residents of West Plains entertained the residents of Otahuti and New River Ferry by way of a Plain and Fancy-dress Ball. The hall was tastefully decorated and looked very pretty under the haze of Japanese lanterns; quite a large number were in fancy costume, some of the principal characters were: J. Forde, chirpologist; Mr D. Forde, dancing-master; V. Lavelle, fly-catcher; Miss D. Stanton, country clod; Miss Alcock, as Goblin played her part well; Miss Lizzie Simpson as a vase of flowers; Mr J. McDougall appeared late in the evening in a white-baiters costume and looked "it." Peter Culhane played his part admirably as an "eel bobber," to say nothing of Miss O. Mullan in kilts. She caused quite a sensation in her dancing of the Canadian Three-Step. Miss J. Cosgrove looked pretty as a flower-girl, with Alex. Dawson as Knave. Miss Peggy Culhane made a "nippy" jockey in riding strides and Miss Kitty Lavelle looked O.K. as a cowboy. Matty Hewell as a Spanish Princess looked very dainty and added much to the evening's entertainment by her singing and dancing.

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