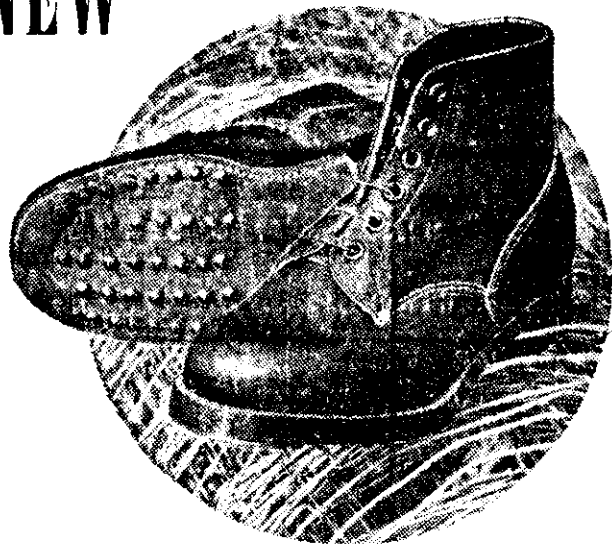


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Shepherd's Calendar

NO SONGS TO SING

by "SUNDOWNER"

I THOUGHT it a little sad today when a friend with a fine baritone voice, successful and happy and still only 55, told me that he no longer wishes to sing. When we were neighbours 20 years ago he sang as naturally, as zestfully, and almost as frequently as roosters crow and magpies chortle, and for the same reason: because there was something inside that had to come out. Now he finds it easier to remain silent. He is not old or beginning to be old. He has the same hearty laugh, the same warm smile, the same spring in his step and pressure in his hand. But he does not want to sing. Over-production of energy has ceased. He was healthy plus before; now he is healthy only. Time, though it has not yet overtaken him, has thrown a shadow his way. He is probably as comfortable as he has ever been in his life, as competent, and as serene. I am sure that when he goes to bed at night he falls asleep as easily as a child. But he does not want to sing. He is no ailing knight at arms alone and palely loitering. He is the happy warrior with his external battles well won and his internal conflicts neither troublesome nor dangerous. But he does not want to sing.

JUNE 13

I once knew a blind woman who judged the health of her friends by the tone of their voices. After she told me this I began to be careful in her presence, to hold myself in hand when I was speaking to her, and to maintain a cheerful heartiness. But I never deceived her. She knew when my blood was singing and when it was merely making a noise. Though I never had a

voice, there was a time when I was a frequent and easy whistler. That time ended about the stage my friend has now reached. Fifty-five, if we live to seventy-five, is about the middle of our mental maturity. But it is a middle that is also an end. A cloud no bigger than a man's hand has appeared on our horizon. We may not fear it, but we look at it. Then we look again, and when we have been looking for as long as it takes us to pass from youth to age we discover that we are looking silently. We no longer whistle or sing.

I HAVE used many methods for controlling dogs, but I have never thought of calling in a dog psychiatrist. All the same, I hope it is true that the United States Post Office has engaged "experts in the complex field of post-man-dog relationships" to cut down casualties among letter

JUNE 16

carriers. It is time Washington had something to turn its mind away from the President's heart and ileum, and dog psychologists are more likely than party politicians to do that quickly. To ask people to put their dogs on the chain before the postman calls would be asking too much. Whatever it did to the dogs it would impose great hardship on the men and women who have studied dog psychology and opened clinics to carry researches further for a fee. I saw one of these at work not very far from the centre of Washington, and remember how promptly he arrived when the cry of distress reached him, how soothingly he spoke to the shocked owners whose boxer's toe had been pinched in their car door, how often he visited the

(continued on next page)

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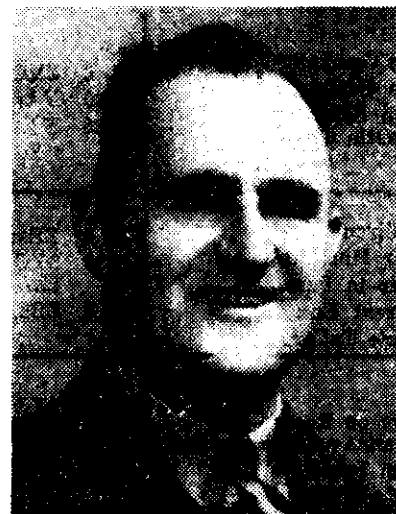
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Following The Springboks



SHARING the commentary with Winston McCarthy in the Springboks v. Hanan Shield Districts match at Timaru on July 18, is the 3XC commentator Jack Fraser (right). Jack has always taken an interest in a variety of sports, among them being swimming, indoor basketball, gymnastics—and last but not least—Rugby, having played for the Kaikorai Club in Dunedin and the Star Club in Timaru. He was also a referee

for ten years, and since 1949 has conducted sporting sessions for 3XC. J. S. McGuinness (left), another Jack, will this year complete fifteen years' refereeing, and thus qualify for the long service medallion of the Canterbury Rugby Union. A schoolteacher by profession, he has been doing Rugby commentaries for about seven years, and on July 21 will be heard sharing the commentary on the Springbok v. Canterbury match from 3YA.

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