

The Chit-Chat Club

Points from Papers Put "Over the Air."

(Set Down by "Telanother")

"Cheerio," said Blinks loudly, giving the oldest member a hearty slap on the back, as he entered the X club after a particularly successful day.

"Cheerio yourself and be damned to you," said the oldest member irritably. "Do you think I'm made of iron, to come digging me about like that? There's nothing to be cheerio-ing about, anyway. What with Coates giving in to the wowsers, we won't be able to get a drink here soon. A pretty pass things are coming to, anyway. When I was young, sir . . ."

"Let's have a drink now," interposed Blinks hurriedly, fearing a lengthy story of those "early days" about which the oldest member loved to dilate. "You're not the only one with worries. Here's me, gone to a new place out at the Hutt, and what do I find? Before I can erect my wireless aerial I have to submit drawings to the borough engineer—and then pay five bob for a permit."

"I'd make you wireless bugs pay five pounds a permit," said the oldest member.

"It isn't the five bob so much," said Blinks, "for I don't intend to let them bluff me into parting up with that. I used to get a hearty 'six' from our drawing teacher about three times a week, because I couldn't draw two straight lines. What a glorious moral she could find in this. I guess when the engineer gets my plan, he won't know which is the aerial and which is the house."

"It's a most ridiculous thing, anyway," said Larton, who had just drifted in, "and they can't enforce the payment of the five shillings, because the license you get gives you permission to erect an aerial. These local bodies round Wellington seem to have gone mad with their little taxes—and now they're trying to get another ten bob a year out of us for using the Hutt Road. It isn't cricket."

N.Z. BATTING STANDARD.

"My impression of the New Zealand team's play is that our batting is quite up to the class of the best county sides. The bowling, though lacking any great star, was almost as good as an amateur side could be expected to have, but our fielding showed lack of experience."

MR. LOWRY,

Captain N.Z. Cricketers.

"Talking of cricket," said Blinks, "it seems that Mr. Lowry, captain of the New Zealand team, is a better cricketer than speaker."

"How's that?" queried Larton.

"They wanted him to give an address on their experiences from 2YA, but instead he wrote one, and got them to give it from the station."

"Was it a good review?" said the oldest member, taking an interest in the wireless conversation for the first time.

"Yes, very fair," said Blinks. "They seemed to have been dogged by the weather right from the time they left until they got back. Even in Sydney, and in Wellington on their return, the weather interfered with the games. From early June until the middle of August most of their time was spent sitting in pavilions gazing at flooded and semi-flooded playing fields. They played at Birmingham ten days after a tremendous cloudburst, during which an iron fence on the ground was torn up for 100 yards in two places, and marks on the pavilion showed that there had been three feet of water on the wicket. At Bradford and Manchester the same conditions held good, and in Scotland things, if anything, were worse."

"No wonder the tour wasn't a financial success then," said Larton.

"It wasn't bad all the time, of course," said Blinks. "They had three good days against Surrey, where Hobbs delighted them with a typical Hobbs' century. At Canterbury Frank Woolley delighted them with two splendid knocks, 60 in the first innings and a century in the second. Mr. Lowry said that these two innings were perfect for soundness and brilliance, and were excellent examples of how a left-hander should play the game."

"Which did he reckon the best team they met during the tour?" queried Harrison, who had just entered the little circle.

"Kent. They made their runs more freely than other sides in England. They were also very interested in their games against the 'Varieties,' for the players there were all amateurs—young men with little more experience than the members of the New Zealand team. Oxford was slightly better than them, mainly because of the fielding, which was superior to that of the New Zealand team. Mr. Lowry said it was obvious that New Zealand could never hope to beat international teams until their fielding had improved."

"They had some pretty brilliant batsmen, though," said Harrison.

"Yes, and he gave some instances of good batting feats. Dacre and Dempster made 84 in 23 minutes against Gloucester in opening our innings, and in the same match Mills was able to keep his wicket intact against Parker, the famous left-hand bowler, for four hours. Parker would probably have bowled out the right-handers almost as quickly as they could take the wicket, but a left-hander baffled him."

"Against Derbyshire, Dacre, in a brilliant innings, made 175 in two hours, hitting eight 6's and twenty-four 4's. Dempster and Allcott put on 300 runs for the second wicket against Warwickshire, and Mills and Blunt 200 for the second wicket at Scarborough without being separated."

"English teams beat us all along the line when it came to tactics," said Thribs.

"Yes, that's true," said Blinks, "but from what Mr. Lowry said, I take it that our fielding was our real weakness. He attributed that to neglect to specialise in fielding in our schools and cricket nurseries. Because of that weakness we allowed opposing sides to make 100 or more runs more than an Australian eleven would have allowed. It was a great disappointment that the fielding did not improve during the tour, despite the fine sides they were up against."

ARMISTICE DAY.

"If this solemn day means anything to us, if we are truly concerned to pay the debt we owe our comrades who died for us, let us take such measures now that their brothers and sons—aye, and their grandsons, too—may not be called upon to make the glorious sacrifice we mourn this Armistice Day."

LIEUT.-COL. E. H. NORTHCROFT, From 2YA.

"It certainly can't be regarded as a successful tour," said Larton.

"I think it can," said Blinks. "No one thought our men, with little experience, were going home to clean up the English teams with centuries of cricketing experience behind them. It's been a great experience, and we will profit by some of the lessons they learnt on the playing fields there."

"Have you ever read that book, 'Lawrence in Arabia,'" queried Dexter, who, because of the few contributions he made to the conversation, was commonly known as "Silent George."

"You bet," said Blinks and Winton Thribs in the same breath. "Why?"

"Because it reminded me of Iraq, about which the Imperial Affairs lecture was given recently."

"He was killed in the war, wasn't he?" said the oldest member.

"Ha ha," yelled Blinks. "Not bad, old 'un. No, he wasn't killed in the war. He's still very much alive, being a Kingdom in the East."

"You may think you're funny," said the oldest member, with as much dignity as he could muster amidst the laughter, "but if Iraq is a kingdom, there was someone with a name like that in the war."

"Ever since I read the book, I've been fascinated with the place," said Dexter, "and I've often wondered how the Arabs got on after the war ended the occupation at which they were so much at home. From the book they were a pretty fierce lot, and wouldn't take the quiet life too kindly. As it turns out, they haven't had as good a deal as they reckoned on, but through no fault of Great Britain."

"They've been made a separate kingdom, haven't they?" queried Thribs, whose long suit was certainly not geography.

"Yes, but only after the dikons of a lot of trouble with the Turks, who wanted them under their domain. That was what the row with Turkey was about a few years ago, when it looked as if we were being drawn into trouble. The Turks, who had successfully cleaned up the Greeks, were looking for more trouble, and demanded a review of the treaty of Sevres. It was largely through the strenuous efforts of Mr. L. C. Amery, who will soon be among us, that the Arabs weren't left out in the cold."

"Wasn't that why Lawrence wouldn't accept any decorations?" said Wishart.

"Partly. He was disappointed with the way the matter was handled and thought England moved too slowly. The most wonderful thing that Lawrence was able to do with the Arabs was to get them to bury their blood feuds and unite against the Turks, thus making them a very effective unit. The Arabs wanted an independent State which would include all the Arab peoples, but their desires got a severe blow at the Peace Conference, where portion of Arabia was given to France under mandate and portion to Britain. Our mandate in connection with Iraq is not the same as that under which we rule Western Samoa. It was recognised that the Arabs had reached a state close to the time when they could be regarded as an independent nation, and we were really in the position merely of giving administrative advice and assistance. When it is felt that Iraq can stand alone Britain will withdraw."

"Iraq has been a heavy burden on British finances, and the difficulties have been accentuated by the Turks through their hostility to us. Though thoroughly beaten and forced to accept the severe terms of the Treaty of Sevres, Turkey experienced a remarkable renaissance of strength, and after Mustafa Kemal Pasha had defeated the Greeks he demanded a reconsideration of the whole matter. After several abortive conferences, further negotiations ensued between Turkey and Great Britain, and eventually the matter was referred to the League of Nations."

"When negotiations were under way the allegation was made that Britain was interested in the question merely in order to serve her own ends and

PERTINENT POINTS ON:

"The New Zealand Cricketers."

"Iraq—A Kingdom of the East."

"Peace Through Preparedness."



MR. F. C. PENFOLD, OF 2YA.

A pupil of Mr. Roland Boot, Mr. Penfold flashed into the musical life of Christchurch in 1917, when, with eight first prizes, he won the Christchurch Competitions Society's vocal championship. Since then he has been very prominent as a soloist. When the Male Voice Choir was formed in 1917 under Dr. Bradshaw, he became a member and, with the exception of the last two years, during which time he has been absent owing to pressure of business (he is a member of the well-known brass founding firm), he has been one of the choir's soloists. Mr. Penfold has long been associated with church choirs. He was a for a number of years choir-master at Linwood Congregational Church, and at present occupies a similar position at Trinity Congregational Church, Christchurch. He is a frequent and very popular singer from 2YA. He will be heard again on Friday evening.

—Steffano Webb, photo.

make sure of getting the oil which was believed to exist in Arabia. Concessions regarding this oil were granted, Turkey, however, disproving this suggestion, and moreover, it is stated that so far no oil has actually been secured there. Britain has to continue her mandate for 25 years, unless it is proved, before the end of that time, that Iraq is able to take her place as an independent nation.

"The task of handling Iraq is not an easy one. It comprises 150,000 square miles of country, peopled by 3,000,000 Arabs, whose warlike natures make the policing of the country a difficult matter. It is a matter for congratulation that during the last year there has been no military operation of a serious kind in any part of the country—a peaceful state that has not been known for centuries."

"I don't see why we should have to spend money policing other people's countries," said Thribs. "What thanks do we get for it?"

"None at all," said Harrison, "but I suppose we have the satisfaction that we are protecting a small people against aggression, and to some extent helping ourselves indirectly."

"I'm in favour of complete disarmament," said Thribs. "Let all the nations disarm and then there couldn't be any more war."

"I think you're sounder when you stick to the ten per cent lines," said Blinks. "Diplomacy's not your trump card, Winton, my boy. Don't you realise that through being prepared we often can prevent war?"

"Pshaw," said the oldest member, "some of you fellows can't look beyond your own selfish interests. Give me the days when men were men."

"And drank their six bottles until they fell under the table," said Thribs sarcastically. "A pretty lot."

"Better than you infernal money-grubbers, anyway. You don't seem to realise that you have a duty to your country and your Empire."

"Bravo," said Blinks. "That's the stuff. The old 'un' and I are agreed for once. Winton, you and your bloated profiteering sentiments are counted out."

"But can't we end war?" said Dexter. "We don't want to have to go through the horrors of another war like the last one."

"I heard a rather good address on that point," said Wishart. "On Armistice Day Lieutenant-Colonel R. H. Northcroft, D.S.O., of the New Zealand Artillery was 'on the air' and touched

on the preparedness question. I was rather impressed with what he said."

"A soldier naturally wants to have more war," said Thribs.

"No, he doesn't," said Wishart. "He has a proper appreciation of the horror of it. Take what Sir William Robertson said only the other day. Lieutenant-Colonel Northcroft took the same view, but preached the advisability of being prepared. Lord Roberts, the most beloved general of modern times, was an ardent advocate of peace, but he spent all his time urging his countrymen to prepare for war in order that they might avert it. In pondering over our glorious dead it would be well to take steps to see that those who are left behind should not have to undergo the horrors of another war. The only way to prevent it is to be prepared."

IRAQ—AN ARABIAN KINGDOM.

"There can be no question that the experiment of setting up an Arab State in Iraq, already largely self-governing, has been an undoubted success. Ultimately the admission of Iraq to the League will bring into being a free and enlightened nation, which will owe its birth to the League of Nations and the disinterested assistance of the British Empire."

IMPERIAL AFFAIRS ADDRESS. From 2YA.

"Preparedness for war did not mean provocation for war, and it had to be remembered that in the last war the money fired off in ammunition in a single day would have paid the annual sum required for preparedness. The fact that we had not been prepared cost us thousands of lives and millions of pounds. The nation had been brought to the verge of bankruptcy, and yet with the fearful lessons of the last war fresh in our minds we found many averse to territorial training. He urged that steps be taken to arm and equip in order that another such calamity could be averted."

"There's a lot in that viewpoint," said Blinks. "It would be all very well to completely disarm if we knew that every other nation were doing the same, but we know perfectly well they wouldn't do so, and it would merely leave us open to attack. Of course, once we are prepared we would have to watch and see that blundering politicians didn't lead us into war."

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