

This Week's Special Article

Leader Writers, Financiers and This "Cement Racket"

WHEN I was very young, a Clever Person who later became a schoolteacher, asked me what it was that kept bricks together. An old catch this, but I was young and ingenuous and so gave the obvious answer. With the pleasing air of omniscience, which was to stand him in such good stead later, he thereupon pointed out that, on the contrary, it was the cement which kept bricks apart.

I am reminded of that not altogether pointless catch when the country shakes—even this neutral country—with Test match fever, and the press breaks out in a rash of editorials in which one spot is quite indistinguishable from another. Perhaps in length and style minor variations are perceptible, but the matter seems to be moulded from one matrix. As soon as a touring team approaches the shores of any part of the British Empire, leader writers joyfully abandon such favourite terms as "implement" and "liquidate" for a moment, and give Hitler and Mussolini practically a free hand in Europe.

The tourists are welcomed as fellow members of that great and glorious Empire on which the sun never sets. This astronomical peculiarity may not, incidentally, be a British monopoly, but everyone knows that the Portuguese and Dutch play very inferior cricket. The tourists are accused of being ambassadors of goodwill; they are reminded that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, and a little clanking of bones heralds the ap-

"BOSIE" here presents some candid opinions about sport and cementing the bonds of Empire. It seems particularly topical because half the male population of N.Z. sits up in the small hours listening to 22 men of Australia and England laying on the bat and the cement, while the crowd cheers wildly every time the opposition scores an Imperial century . . .

team can hardly escape some reference to "keen and friendly rivalry." As a final blow, all teams are assured that their visit will do much to cement the bonds of Empire.

Leader writers cannot be blamed for much of this. Most of us would write in a similar strain in the same circumstances—that is, if we had to write leaders for a living. Yet, at the risk of being reviled as a cynic, no sportsman, an ungrateful and unpatriotic snake in the grass, or a Communist, or even a Jew, I would question this cement business.

It would be unfair to pretend that interchanges of teams is entirely without value in "forging the links" of Empire. But, on the other hand, the absurd prominence given to success in sport has at last made winning a matter of national prestige. And who, indeed, likes a blow in the national prestige?

Once a game becomes grimly serious, its primary purpose is frustrated and friction is almost inevitable.

Exactly how much cementing did Jardine do in his last trip to Australia?

At the Empire games, the South Africans and West Indians could not have been more antagonistic if they had been Nazis and Communists.

The last Indian cricket team to visit England seems to have used an (Continued on next page.)

In the Wake of the Week's Broadcasts

An experienced listener can tell whether an artist is at ease when in front of the microphone. The first few words of a speech or bars of a song usually indicate immediately whether

the speaker or

HIS EASE singer is either a

AT novice or an old

THE MICROPHONE hand. But ease does not always come with experience. Christchurch, however, thought much of Danny Malone when he gave two recitals from 3YA. Here was indeed a man perfectly at home.

There was one reason—one excuse, rather—why the popular station, 3YL, Christchurch, should have given up so much time the other night to a relay of the Canterbury Advertising Club's annual dinner. The

CLUB DINNER SPEECHES WERE BORING

Hon. Walter Nash, Minister of Finance, was giving a talk on "Trade." Mr. Nash's talk, well worth hearing, could easily have been made the sole item from this function. However, long before Mr. Nash was able to get near the microphone, listeners were inflicted with the usual back-patting verbiage that goes with all club dinners. "For Everybody's a Jolly Good Fellow" was the theme song, and listeners

had to hear it time and time again until the "meat" of the programme was reached. Candidly, should not 3YL use a little more discretion when doing outside relays?

Hearing a young girl from Christchurch with a pleasing voice announced over the air from 2ZB as "New Zealand's Gracie Fields" last week, did not fill me with enthusiasm. It put me in a critical mood straight away, and set me **LITTLE MOZART**, comparing the voice of the young girl with that of the famous Lancashire lass, a comparison in which the singer had inevitably to suffer. Had she been

NOT YET N.Z.'S