

Football.

WITH THE AUSTRALIAN SOCCER TEAM.

Mr. W. Bratten returned to Flaxton last week after a very enjoyable trip with the Australian Soccer team to New Zealand. The team consisted of 8 Queenslanders and 8 New South Wales men, and although not successful in winning the test matches, they won 9 games, lost 4, and 1 was drawn. In chatting over the events of the trip Mr. Bratten pays a tribute to the organisation of the tour arranged by the New Zealand Soccer Association, of which Mr. B. L. Salmon is the secretary and a host in himself. From the time the team stepped off the liner S.S. Ulmaroa, on May 24, at Wellington, everything went as merrily as the proverbial "marriage bell." After the four days at sea the team found themselves in very comfortable quarters at the Carlton Hotel, Wellington. A stroll through the city soon acquainted them of the fact that the Australian Soccer team was in for a good time. A small army of photographers beselging them on the way to the City Hall, a most imposing structure, where they were tendered a civic welcome. Prominent amongst their hosts was Sir William Harris, a prominent business man of Scottish game. The first match of the the city, and a keen follower of the tour was billed to take place at Wanganui. The name at once conjured up scenes of international sculling-races on the Wanganui River, and of Dick Arnst, the world champion sculler.

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The 80 mile train journey to Wanganui was to most of the party a revelation, and the change of climate and the difference in the appearance of the country a decided eye-opener. The town itself is a very pretty place, and the football ground one of the best fields the visitors have ever played upon. The team was tendered a civic reception at this city also. Mr. Herd, the vice-president of the local Soccer Association, took us under his wing and landed us at the theatre party the first night, and at a prize fight on the second. One of the visitors, Mr. Fisher, no mean "pug" himself, acted as second to one of the fighters, a fact that was duly announced before the fight, and received with a tremendous cheer.

"The match at Wanganui gave us our first sprit," said Mr. Bratten, "and was chiefly noticeable for the different interpretation of the rules of Soccer to those we have been used to. However, we won by 3 goals to 1, a good crowd witnessing the match. We were in good spirits after the win, and quite prepared to vote Wanganui O.K. Indeed "Doyle" the wag of the team remarked "This'll do me." Leaving this city by motor on the following day we enjoyed a delightful ride over good roads to Marton en route to Nelson, a wonderful fruit growing district in the South Island. The city of Nelson is ruled by a jolly good old stick of a Mayor; indeed he could not do enough for us. To myself from a citrus growing district there was much to interest in the extensive apple orchards, one of which the team visited. It is owned by a Mr.

EXCLUSIVE apple orchards, one of which the team visited. It is owned by a Mr. Gilbert, and is one of the largest of the fruit growing industry the New Zealand government have established the "Cawthorne" Institute for research work in connection with soils and insects and this has proved of very great benefit to the district. The team was afforded an opportunity of viewing the Institute, being much interested in the collection of fruit pests. Another very serviceable institution is the Boy's College, somewhat after the style of Gutton College, only much more extensive. Indeed, the sights at Nelson are an education in themselves, and lead one to wonder why people do not travel more. However, we were after football, and had a very nice game, winning 8 to 2. By this time our chaps were getting into their stride, and approached the very fine feeling shown towards the team both by affording them practice grounds and the free use of the Y.M.C.A. Gymnasium. Throughout the tour the Y.M.C.A. Gym. was open to us in every city where they are established in the Dominion.

In the Wellington match Gibb, our captain (and let me here say that Mr. Fisher, the captain on leaving Australia, acted in a very fine manner by handing over the captaincy to Gibb, in whom he recognised a very able soccer general) played a very brilliant game at centre half, and although we were beaten 3 to 0, we were not out-classed. The day (June 3) was the wettest, coldest and windiest one could imagine. Even at half time we

could imagine. Even at half time we had to seek all the warmth and shelter we could find. To those of us from sunny Queensland this was disastrous. If the weather at Wellington was bleak, the people were warm to us indeed. A Mr. Graves entertained us right royally at a jazz party, whilst another evening was spent at the pictures. The good roads around Wellington were almost enchanting to us, especially the run to Lyall Bay, one of the most pleasant watering places on the island. We had this foretaste of the sea as a preliminary of the sea trip to Lyttleton, en route to Christchurch, that city of beauty.

Our next match was at Greymouth, right across the Island. We set out in coaches on a cold and frosty morning, the horses slipping and falling on the frozen ground. When we reached the vicinity of Arthur's Pass, between the N.Z. Alps near Mount Rolleston, we saw a wonderful sight. One comes suddenly upon the magnificent Otira Gorge, in which one descends from Alpine scenery to that of the more temperate type. We paid a tribute to the fine work of the coach driver going down the steep roads with a sheer drop of hundreds of feet on each side. I used to think the razorback road to Montville "some" hill, but the Blackall Range, is a land of mole hills compared to Otira Gorge. As usual, 'Doyle' wanted to know the names of the various spots, but the more nervous chaps shut him up so that the driver's attention would not be taken off the team. It was a most magnificent trip,

team. It was a most magnificent trip, something to be remembered, those horses, those roads, those licles, those mountains, and those thrills; a feast of glories of life.

With a rude shock we are brought back to mundane things. "Do you hear the band?" asked Doyle after a short run in the train from Otira to Greymouth, "they are playing 'See the Conquering heroes come.'" When we got out of the train things did hum, and the Westland Soccer Club and people of Greymouth were there to a boy. We had a real triumphal entry to the City hall in motors headed by the band, and for their trouble we gave them a good game, winning by 2 to 1. There was a "bosker" crowd, and such good-hearted people. On passing through Christchurch a few days before, we had heard of the Mayor of that City, and when we returned there to play the South Island team we met him, and found him a real "doer," and a character of no mean order. At the civic reception he gave us some sound advice and wound up by giving us the

freedom of the trains and municipal baths during our stay. The leading Soccer club of Christchurch, the St. Alban's, took us in charge, and we spent a very jolly evening at the pictures and afterwards. The game was a very brilliant one at this beautiful city; no-one could grumble at the crowd, and the field was A1. The Returned Soldiers' League gave us a good time at a big dance they had arranged. So large was the gathering that two halls were utilised for the dancing. It is not bad when one can still enjoy

halls were utilised for the dancing. It is not bad when one can waltz around a large hall, waltz from one hall to another and so on. The R.S. is, just "It" in Christchurch; "five of our firm wear the badge," we were told. As in Brisbane, everybody motors to Redcliffe on Sundays, so in Christchurch everyone motors to New Brighton, and we enjoyed the outing immensely. Here I met an old A.I.F. cobbler, Dave Gibson, and needless to say we spent an enjoyable hour.

The run to Dunedin, a 6-hour journey over the Canterbury plain, is enough to make a man silly when he remembers the mountains at Otago; such a level run only a western Queenslander could appreciate.

They are good folk away down at Dunedin, & in football are exceedingly just, so much so that in the game we played there against Otago, no less than five penalty kicks were awarded, something unusual in Soccer. The Returned Soldiers' Club here opened their doors to us, and treated us as cobs, making one feel that the word "Anzac" has some meaning. The Dunedin mayor is a worthy supporter of the "Auld Kick," and at the close of our stay in the city ladled out the flattery that we were the "best boys" to visit the city. The letter conveying the congratulations will be duly framed. In Dunedin one soon understands the flattery etc. on seeing the enormous crowds of girls. The woollen mills alone employ some 1500 young ladies, and we had a happy time inspecting them (the mills).

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The first test game was booked for Dunedin, and much speculation was caused as to the probable result; as is usual to all these big matches, there was a good deal of side-betting going on. One cannot say it was an altogether pleasant game, as the operation of the New Zealand bumping game gave them an advantage, and feeling ran somewhat high towards the close of the game. However, no bones were broken; we suffered defeat by 3 to 1, the only goal for Australia being obtained by this district's representative. At the opening of this match the Aussie team had developed a "wreck," thanks to the efforts of the British Army officer whom we met at the Overseas Club some few days before the match.

The Otago Football Association entertained the team at a smother concert on the night of the first test, the chairman being Mr. Eric Anderson, one of the leading men of Dunedin. Needless to say there was considerable comment on the day's play and the interpretation of the game; at times the feeling was unpleasant, but we believe much good will come of the straight-out criticism by our representative.

The tragedies of life are however closely linked with the joys thereof, and however much the actual game of soccer exhilarates one in the course of life, we were brought back to earth with a bump when we witnessed the inmates of the Seacliff Mental Hospital, albeit pleasantly situated in delightful surroundings. The high artistic attainments of some of the inmates was evidenced by the very fine paint-

was evidenced by the very fine paintings decorating the main hall, in which the team partook of afternoon tea.

There is a very fine edifice in the Choral hall at Dunedin used largely for dances, at one of which we spent an enjoyable evening, the youth and beauty of Dunedin being much in evidence.

The joys of Dunedin were next day finished, as we were whisked off at midday bound north again. The six hours run to Ashburton was full of interest. We were however not allowed to rest, for a pressing invitation to the pictures and a re-cherch supper to follow was irresistible. The football ground at Ashburton is situated in English Park, the owner Mr. English being president of the Canterbury Soccer Association. The surroundings were very pleasant and reminded one of some of the Parks of "Blighty." We again suffered defeat at Ashburton by 2 to 1, but there is always a run of luck either good or bad in every team, so we were

not down-hearted. Indeed one could not well be so for very long, as the form of entertaining the team by motor cycles was most happy, and quite a feature of the whole trip, but then New Zealand has many good roads. After our defeat we had a run to the various "sights" of the district, in course of which we visited the Aged Men's Home, where some ninety men in the after-glow of life are cared for. The visit to the local woollen mills impressed us very much and we wondered why many similar mills were not in evid-

many similar mills were not in evidence in Australia.

Our next objective was Wellington, where the second test match was to be played. On the way we enjoyed the sea run in the S.S. Maori very much. By this time we were well-known all over New Zealand. Team photographs were in every paper and almost every luncheon paper had some reference to the team, and so the crew of the "Maori" and we were good fellows.

We resumed our old quarters at the Garden Hotel, being treated as star boarders. Our minds were however, bent on the second test; it was to be a game for keeps. As the struggle turned out, it was not a spectacular game, each side being in sober earnest and no risks; it reminded me very much of an English Cup tie, so much depending on the result; and like many of those Cup ties it ended in a draw 1 to 1. For the New Zealand team Corbett stood out on his own at centre half whilst Jones as left half played a most brilliant game. Of our own side I worked like ding dong sports.

The relaxation from sport was not hard to take that evening at a sumptuous dinner as the guests of the Y. M.C.A., adjourning afterwards to the "Orpheus Club" quite the best of its kind in New Zealand.

The witty and cultured president, Mr. Batt, extended a hearty welcome to the team, and the evening's entertainment took the form of a musical recital by the Club's orchestra consisting of some 40 members, the rendering being quite tip top, and lifting

... of some 40 members, the leader being quite tip top, and lifting one for the moment into an ecstasy of enjoyment.

By one of those remarkable results of environment we found that the people of the west coast of New Zealand knew no bounds to their hospitality. They were most lavish in their welcome and after a 12 hour train ride from Wellington to New Plymouth we literally were besieged by the crowd at the station, and headed by the Town Band at 10 p.m. we had a triumphant march to our Hotel. The civic reception, morning tea and a wonderful motor ride filled in the following day, the chief point of interest being "The Meeting of the Waters," a natural phenomenon of great beauty. At New Plymouth we had a good win against the Taranaki team, defeating them by 6 to 1. "North, further north" were the orders and all one Thursday and that night we journeyed by train, arriving at Auckland in the early hours of Friday morning traversing the greater part of the North Island. At Auckland we played the hardest match of the tour. That the local team expected to win was indicated by the odds on betting indulged in; however a surprise was in store, the Aussies winning 4 to 1. The captain of the Auckland team was most frank about the matter and paid a glowing tribute to Captain Gibb and his team.

The town welcome and the team's entertainment were still lavish. As the guests of the "Orpheus Club" at Auckland we were privileged to hear rare singing and harmony by Maori

rare singing and harmony by Maori boys: their songs, part songs, and dancing were quite a treat to all of us, and the evening was most enjoyable.

Perhaps the most marvellous and interesting portion of the whole tour was the trip to the Rotorua district, famed for its hot springs, earthquakes, etc. The party put up at "Waiwera" House (Waiwera is the Maori name for hot water). Several ladies in native costume and speaking irreproachable English were detailed as our guides to the various phenomena of the district. The medicinal value of the springs have been turned to practical use, the extent to which they have been commercialised shows that the business must be very lucrative. "Bath House" contains a number of baths with various medicinal qualities. Our team was allowed, as a compliment, the free use of the Duchess Bath, in which we had the most refreshing and pleasant bath imaginable. One of our team also enjoyed the supreme luxury of the "Violet Rays" in its most perfect form; the sight to onlookers was astonishing.

Before proceeding on the round trip of the Rotorua district we were entertained at a purely Maori concert, the harmony being most perfect.

The fourth of July will long be remembered by the Aussie team as a day of marvellous sights and experiences. Setting out in cars for the hot springs we were astonished to find that we were motoring along a road composed of 57 per cent sulphur; naturally the smell was in the air and the dull cream color of the dust left no mis-

create a color of the dust left no mistake as to the 50 per cent. part of the business. In fact we would readily have accepted a higher statement of the percentage. In this district the New Zealand Government can point with pride to a wonderful result in re-arrangement, the hill sides being covered with a dense forest of English larch and Oregon pine; some of the trees admit to the age of 25 years, the work having commenced a quarter of a century ago. Morning tea was served at "Te Whiroa," a house in which many curious things are to be seen as the result of the earthquakes.

We struck a lovely day to view the green and blue lakes, the latter being a crater of an extinct volcano; no inlet or outlet of water is apparent to this marvellous body of water of a deep blue color, and the level of the water 90 ft. higher than the level of the adjacent Green Lake. The waters of both lakes are very highly impregnated with minerals causing the coloring so noticeable. The "Champagne Pool" was also visited, deriving its name from the "fizzing" effect if sand is thrown on the water. One shuddered to see the "Murderer's Pool" of deep dark blue color and depth unknown and unfathomable. The geysers are a source of much interest and wonder. The Frog Pond of boiling mud is a sight in itself. Lake Tarawera is one of the most beautiful lakes in this district. Near the great lake Taupo Moana, are several volcanoes, one of which, Tarawera, erupted violently in 1886 and destroyed the marvellous pink and white

stroyed the marvellous pink and white terraces which were amongst the most beautiful natural wonders of the world.

We were afforded the pleasure of a cruise on the great lake, and were almost overpowered by the grandeur of the surrounding scenery. A curious result obtainable in parts of this lake is that one can float into a space where the water is unbearably hot, yet a boat's length away the water is temperate. Some of our friends asked if we were all sober, but the experience is correct notwithstanding.

The waters of the Frying Pan Lake, e-

rupted in April 1917, attain a temperature of 112 degrees Fahrenheit. Adjacent to this one are the Medicinal Pools, namely the "Iodine Pool, the Arsenic Pool, Soda Pool, and Alum Pool, all unmistakably composed of the various mineralised specimens. Needless to say, in these favored regions the culinary art is made easy, the Maoris cooking in the various hot springs. The trip was wound up at "Ohinemutu" where we attended a jazz evening at which a large proportion of Maoris were present.

One almost forgot in the round of wonderful sights that there was such a thing as "soccer," but we were brought back to ordinary life on leaving the Rotorua district for Hamilton, where we played the South Auckland team and beat them 2 to 1. At Hamilton we were entertained at a Smoke Concert, and next day visited the "Waikato" Experimental Farm, dairy-farming, poultry, and bee farming, being

ing, poultry, and bee farming, being the most noticeable features. The dairy stock were very fine; the Government pays a very great amount of attention to dairy products, which is the cause of New Zealand butter ranking so high on the London market as now to be generally admitted "equal to Dutch."

Back to Auckland for the third test was our next move, arriving there two days before the match. Our stay was enlivened by the kindly offices of Mr. Bannister, president of the Auckland team and paymaster of the cable ship.

The kindness of the Y.M.C.A. was again most favourably bestowed upon us; we were entertained at billiards and a light supper prior to the next day's soccer struggle.

One can be forgiven for feeling a thrill of pleasure at the sight of an audience of over 9,000 people at the last test game, and if any incentive were necessary the presence of so many people would supply that incentive. The game was more open than the previous one, and soccer was played at its very best. Australia going down for the second time. We felt that we were fairly and squarely beaten, and that New Zealand possessed many very fine soccer exponents.

The day's events were finished at the "Savage Club," the most exclusive affair of its kind in New Zealand, having a membership of over 400, and supporting an orchestra of some fifty members. The entertainment was very pleasant; the luxurious appointments and the superb wines and cigars were a thing to be remembered. During our

and the superb wines and cigars were a thing to be remembered. During our events in Auckland, one of the most hospitable and genial of the folk we met was "Bob Leask," chief engineer of H.M.S. Chatham, on which vessel we were entertained at afternoon tea.

With one more match to complete the tour we left Auckland with the heartiest farewells one could wish for, bound for Palmerston, at which town we were accorded a civic reception. During a motor ride we experienced one of the most hair-raising events of the tour. One of the chauffeurs, when running along a road parallel to the railway, signalled the engine driver for a sprint, and (Gee Whiz!) didn't we spin. Sit tight and hold your breath was the one thing to do; 50 miles an hour was the rate we bumped along at, and we lost the railway train. We saw some good cars but we never met anything to equal this piece of machinery.

The match against the Manawatu team we won somewhat comfortably, and next day set off for Wellington to re-embark for Australia.

On board the S.S. Moeraki we bade farewell to our New Zealand friends, Mr. C. E. Fordham (chairman), B. L. Salmon (secretary), and Messrs. Reynolds, Yeoman, and Greaves being present to wish us bon volage. Mr. Mayers presented each member with a silver leaf badge, the New Zealand emblem. The run across to Sydney was pretty rough, but all hearts were cheery on arrival at Port Jackson after a never-to-be-forgotten trip and a successful soccer tour.

"There is a possibility of our inaugurating the aerial mail and passenger service between Charleville and Cloncurry, by the end of the present month," said Captain E. C. Johnston, (superintendent of aerodromes), in the course of an interview this week.