

THE GAELIC ECHO

macalla na n-*Ṣaeóeal*

baile áta Cliaṡ, mí na nodaṡ a 17, 1943

luaṡ 2p.

1943 Was Record Making Year

NEW CHALLENGERS FOR ALL-IRELAND HONOURS

1943 WAS A HISTORY-MAKING YEAR IN THE ANNALS OF THE GAELIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION. New challengers from North and West appeared in the All-Ireland finals, Cork and Antrim meeting for the first time in an All-Ireland decider, while the footballers of Roscommon, after many years of endeavour, inscribed their names on the roll of honour by defeating Cavan in a replay.

The provincial championships produced many spectacular games and brought change of champions in Munster, Connacht and Leinster. County games were well attended in every part of the country, and here, too, there were many changes in the title list.

Leagues were successfully run in at Ballyduff, old-time Kingdom three provinces, and at the moment strongholds of the game.

while the third, the Dr. Lagan Cup, was a win for Antrim who thus was the Cup lost last season. Roscom.

EARLY A RECORD. The hurling problems were as difficult as in 1942, but the crowds were first time bigger than ever. The hurling at the All-Ireland hurling was the largest for many years, to be a football final figures almost created a record. There were huge hostings in the South for the Munster final and semi-final, and in the West for the Connacht football final, which this year was played at Roscommon.

The entry for the senior football championship was the largest for some years while the senior hurling entry also showed an increase. We had a change of champions in both codes in Leinster, where Louth, after thirty-one years, won the football title and Kilkenny recovered the hurling honours, which they last held in 1940.

Louth's rise was one of the surprises of the season as in the 1942 championship the Wee County men were very unimpressive when losing to Meath in the opening round.

Kilkenny, although defeating Dublin in the Eastern final, were none too impressive, but few expected the Noremen would go out in the semi-final against Antrim at Belfast, where there was a 12 thousand crowd which went frantic with delight when, for the first time in the history of the game, the Glensmen qualified for the All-Ireland final.

The Munster hurling championship, as usual, produced some grand games with the Cork-Waterford final the high-light.

Waterford disposed of a weak Tipperary team before playing Limerick at Cork, where the Decies hurlers qualified for the final with Cork, conquerors of Kerry in a listless game.

TRUE TO TRADITION.

Crowds reminiscent of the pre-war days assembled at the Athletic Grounds for a final that lived true to the southern tradition, and it was only in the closing stages that Cork asserted themselves sufficiently to claim a two-points victory. This was the All-Ireland semi-final, and straight to Croke Park came the Leemen in search of their third All-Ireland title in a row.

If the hurling championship produced a thrilling final, the football provided one of the surprises of the year in the overthrow of Kerry, champions of the province seven years in a row. That the Kingdom's football prestige was being sapped by the policy of clinging to players in the veteran stage was fairly apparent in 1942 but few expected that the Green-and-Gold colours would be lowered in the south.

The unexpected, however, happened, a rising young Cork side holding the Kerry men to a draw and winning the replay, to then go on and defeat Tipperary in the final.

Up North Cavan continued their trail of victories in the football competition while Antrim regained the hurling title to start their spectacular trek to Croke Park.

Monaghan, with many young players who were prominent in minor ranks in 1939 and 1940, reached the final and made a bold bid on a damp day at Breffni Park.

IN THE WEST.

In the West Galway remained unchallenged in the hurling world, but the Tribesmen received a rude shock from Antrim, whom they played at Corrigan Park.

All five Connacht counties participated in the football championship, which, as usual, was chockful of interest. Galway beat their old rivals, Mayo, while Roscommon disposed of

(Continued on Page Three)

START OF HISTORIC FINAL.



MOST REV. DR. MAGEEAN, BISHOP OF DOWN AND CONNOR, throwing in the ball to start the 1943 Cork-Antrim All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final.

beannaṡtaí an t-*Ṣeasúir*
nodaṡ fé *Ṣean* 's fé raṡ ar ár léiṡteóimí
uite aṡur aṡ-*Ṣlian* fé maíre

Croke Park Too Small?

THE attendance at this year's All-Ireland Football Final (drawn game) was only a few hundred below the 1938 record. The gates were closed on each occasion.

With normal travelling facilities, it is safe to say thousands of prospective patrons would have been unable to view the 1943 Final. In the piping times of peace it is safe to assume that accommodation for spectators in Croke Park must be considerably extended.

YOUTH EDUCATION.

OUR "youth" education, like all other branches, must take account of both body and soul. We must ensure that the students will realise the importance of making Christian principles operative in every phase of daily life. It is to be understood in our Christian state that nothing must be allowed to interfere with the spiritual interests of the individual. It is not within the scope of the present article to deal at any length with the moral aspect of the question. But two points must be made clear. (1) That we must be prepared to comply with the teaching and advice of the Church when matters affecting religion are at stake, and (2) our workers' colleges like all other schools must be complementary to the family and the Church. After all, love of home and family is the root of all true patriotism.

This is an extract from an article which will appear in the 1943 G.A.A. Annual, now in course of completion.

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JIM BARRY WRITES on TRAINING



TRAINING A TEAM FOR AN IMPORTANT MATCH MUST BE THOUGHT OUT VERY CAREFULLY, and if not carried out on the right lines can do more harm than good. First of all, the physical condition of the team at the time training is due to start has to be taken into consideration, and this is very important, as here much harm can be done in the line of over-training. It is much better to have a team underdone than over.

An over-trained man could become a physical wreck and his health could become very much impaired as a result of over-training.

So here at the start, let me say that of all the things to be watched out for during training, that of over-doing it is the most important. You take 20 men in hands to train for an Inter-county or local Championship. All of them are of different physique and temperament. You have got to watch every individual during the whole course of the training and see what effect your system of training has on them. Having looked your team over as to their physical condition, you then proceed to map out a system of training suitable to their requirements. Watch them individually and not as a team, because it is by this you can find out if any of them are going over the mark. By this I mean to keep your eye on every member of the team, as some of them may require to be eased off. I myself have on a few occasions finished the training of a player after only three nights' training, as some members of the Inter-county team may be after doing a lot of it in local games. Weather conditions may sometimes affect your team during training. A dull, heavy, warm night may make the team or members of it look as if they had enough of it or had gone stale. The next night you will find them full of life and mad to be at it. The first night or two should be devoted to breaking them in for what is to come.

EASY DOES IT.

If a team is in very bad condition it is

**Conditions
may
change**

**—but for
QUALITY**

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Our Next Issue

NEXT issue of "The Gaelic Echo" will be in connection with the Railway Cup finals at Croke Park on St. Patrick's Day. Order your copy, and also please tell your friends about the paper.

tators would crowd around the dressing room after training to see some of the fun which takes place. I could fill a book with some of the things said and done during the massaging, etc. But it was all taken in good parts and as part of the training. I have heard more than one player say he would not miss a night from training for anything. This is what a training ground should be like, plenty of life and no sulkiness.

The trainer should not altogether leave it to the players to liven up things. He should take a hand in it himself. This helps in no small way to make a team not alone fit but fighting fit.

At the start of this article I mentioned the seriousness of a man being over-trained. I saw a football team in an All-Ireland Final a few years back, and I said to a few friends beside me: "That

Do's & Dont's that Make for Success

very unwise to go all out at the start. If you start right away to "give them the works" you will have them cracking up before the training is due to finish. Break them in gradually and when you think they have had enough of it, put them on light training just to keep their wind right. I always finish my training of a team on the Wednesday night before the match, and very often the team is only doing light workout on the last three nights, that is Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, as I find they are fit enough to stand the hour, no matter how fast it will come. Some players will try and slack it on you. This you must not tolerate under any circumstances. The player who is not prepared to give of his best in training should be removed from the training ground, as he is no good to you there, and no good to himself; besides the other members of the team are disgusted with him, and it is better for all concerned if he is not there at all. When he does turn up again you will find he is going to do all he is told. Don't be a very hard task master. Try and inspire the men's confidence in you, and if you do this you will find no trouble from the type of individual I have just mentioned. Training should be made interesting to the players, and the serious side of it forgotten once in a while.

HAVE A LITTLE FUN.

Fun should be introduced occasionally and room for a good joke should never be lost sight of. The trainer should at times leave himself open to a joke being played on him. This helps to make the men like training and does more than anything to create that "one club" feeling without which a team is no good. Team spirit is one of the most essential things in any team, and the trainer should by every means in his power see that his team is endowed with it. An inter-county team comprises men from many different clubs. Some of them may have had hard battles in their local championships and may be feeling none too friendly towards each other.

This is where the trainer will display most of his skill in getting them to forget any little differences they may have had and to take the field as one club ready to give of their best for the honour of their County.

In this respect I was very fortunate as most of the teams I have had in training comprised men who had forgotten their differences before they had left the playing field. They were good fellows all, and from the great teams of 1926 to 1931 to the present Cork team, we have always been one happy family in the training ground. The spectators who throng to the training ground have often had a good laugh at some practical joke, perhaps at times practised on myself by some member of the team. Believe me, it would be a queer night that "Micka" Brennan or John Quirke didn't make us laugh. Backed up by Batt Thornhill, it would be the height of their ambition to pull a fast one on myself and have a good laugh at my expense. Sometimes spec-

team is over-trained." The moment I saw them walk out on the pitch I could see they were over-done in the training. During the progress of the game my remark was justified, as it was a usual occurrence to see two or three of them lying on the ground, not from injuries but for loss of wind and from weakness, as they had left all their stamina after them in the training ground. Sometimes trainers are inclined to show themselves on the training ground. By this I mean doing what they should not do, just because there is a big gathering at the ground. Their team is fit, but because there is a large crowd looking on they put the team through their paces at a time when they should be easing them off and only doing light stuff.

I have often had a large gathering at the grounds on the last two nights of the training for a big match, but they didn't see much, as the team would have finished heavy training and would be only doing light exercise to keep their wind right. Sometimes a trainer has to keep them at it full belt up to the last night of finishing, as it may take the whole course to get them as fit as he requires them and has no time for easing off. This will happen where a team hasn't been doing much in the way of training or matches before he took them in hands. But it is foolish to overdo them simply because there are spectators present.

RESPONSIBLE JOB.

A trainer's job is a very responsible one and he should get all the co-operation possible from all concerned. It is only by co-operation he can give of his best and make his training the success required. The big majority of players are decent, honourable fellows and take

VERSATILITY



JACK LYNCH (Cork) has the unique distinction of being selected to represent Munster in hurling and football inter-provincials.

Three In A Row.



THE CORK TEAM which won the 1943 Hurling Honours. This was Cork's third win in a row and the fourteenth in all.

CROKE CUP SEMI-FINAL, 1912.

AT Thurles on Feb. 25th, 1912, Waterford defeated Roscommon in the semi-final of the Croke Cup football competition by 2-2 to 1-1.

IS ATTURSEAC SEAR.

Is atturseac sear mo seol parion,
I ngan-pios do'n tsoit le tréimse
m' shaoi;
Do sears mo shé 'Sult spéir m'
shaoi le caineam non de
Pé 'n-Éirinn i, O . . . pé
'n-Éirinn i.

Le barrs mo sears ni léir dom
seirtoabó
'S m' ceangal, m' mó léan, m' Deora
Éirinn

M' blasta mo céas tu'scúil's cáom,
Le n-a máicéim mo bé, pé
Pé 'n-Éirinn i,
Pé 'n-Éirinn i, o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o,
Pé 'n-Éirinn i.

As eadó sae béarsa a béal
'S is bailce deas saor m'io
a cir.

A reom-ar rosg réro glas
rim,
Lé n' ceatgáir mé, pé
Pé 'n-Éirinn i, o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o,
Pé 'n-Éirinn i.

O ceitléad te hÉten, péac, mac
Driam

Is Sampson le Déta maorge, m'ín
Má beanáir-se éad car éis m'íom
Má éitím tem' bé, pé 'n-Éirinn i,
Pé 'n-Éirinn i, o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o,
Pé 'n-Éirinn i.
(Le n-Éogan Ruad Ó Súitceabám).

Hurling, our National game par excellence, has gone through a process of evolution without losing any of its main characteristics; it is now a joy to play and a delight to watch. Beyond some minute detail the game as played to-day is well nigh perfect. It is the product of devoted Irish hands and hearts; we are justly proud of its health and popularity. —"Carbery."

The burst of Spring has overswept the land
With irony of budding life, while they
The life of Ireland's life, are lying cold
Under the earth and mouldering to decay
With all who in that struggle centuries
old
Made the same fearless stand.
And we remain, in whom no hopes of
Spring
Arise, and from all delight is fled
In life, what seems but shame since they
are dead,
Careless what fate the morrow to us
bring.

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Ulster Finalists.



THE MONAGHAN TEAM, which reached the 1943 Ulster Football Final.

1943 Was Record Making Year

(Continued from Page 1)

Leitrim, and, for the third year in succession, we had a Galway-Roscommon decider, with Roscommon favourites to dethrone the county which in five years had figured in four All-Ireland finals.

It was a typical western final in which the issue hung in the balance for fifty minutes, but eventually the more youthful Roscommon men triumphed, the Connacht title coming back to that county after twenty-eight years.

The All-Ireland semi-final brought strange rivals into opposition, as it was the first time that Louth and Roscommon, Cork and Cavan met in the penultimate stages of the football championship, while Kilkenny and Antrim were also meeting for the first time in the semi-final of the hurling competition.

It was the first time, too, for Ulster to be dually represented in the All-Ireland final, as Antrim and Cavan came through their semi-final tests although it was only by the slenderest margins that the Northern champions triumphed.

LOCAL SURPRISES TOO. Even in the local championship sphere, it was a year of surprises and dethronements as there were few counties in which we had not a surprise result or two. There was the dethronement of the senior hurling champions, Sarfields, and the rise of Eire Og in Tipperary, while in Louth we had the victory of St. Brides to confound the critics.

Then in Meath Duleek won the senior football title for the first time,

while in Limerick an army team took the football honours.

Draws, too, were more plentiful than usual, an indication probably of the gradual levelling of standards in the different counties.

Among the schools and colleges it was also a busy year, the All-Ireland Colleges title going back to Ulster and the Sigerson Cup to Cork, where there has been a welcome reawakening of interest in Gaelic games among students of University College.

If we except the incidents in the closing stages of the All-Ireland football final replay at Croke Park, it was a year devoid of any serious breaches of the good conduct rule.

There were isolated cases of trouble between players, but happily the provincial championships were free from such happenings which we all must condemn and do our best to prevent by an appeal to players and officials for a better spirit and a little more give-and-take.

KEEP TO THE RULES. It is difficult to avoid objections, but after listening to a few of these during the year, it may not be out of place to make an appeal for a greater effort in keeping to the rules both in the letter and the spirit. No good can come to the Association if clubs set out to deliberately break the rules by importing players from outside counties or parishes or by playing men known to be illegal.

People travel much further nowadays, making it difficult for imported or illegal players to escape detection.

The playing of men about whom there is any suspicion of having offended against the foreign games rule should be wholeheartedly discouraged.

"A man is innocent until proved guilty" may be all right in law, but against this we can say that "there is never smoke without fire" and that where a club has even a suspicion that a player has offended there should be no hesitation in dropping that player. People do not go about stating that certain clubs have won championships with players made illegal through infringement of the foreign games rule, and it would be far better for the Association and the club itself if these individuals were allowed go about their business.

The G.A.A. is big enough to survive the loss of those few who give enemies a weapon in the shape of cheap jeers by which to attack the Association, and it behoves every club official and member to see that those individuals about whom there are suspicions should be kept in their proper place. Nobody invites those people into the Association, and if they do come in, they should be decent enough to obey its rules.

Let us hope that 1944 will be at least as equally successful and that the games of the Gael will continue to flourish in every corner of Ireland.

"In later days when hopes seemed dead

And bleeding lay our land; At times to Freedom's call came forth A stout and stalwart band; The men to strike with sword and pike And died before they'd fawn, Had known the swing, and the glad-some ring Of the stout-grained ash camán."

Present Day Football Faults

THE title of this Article may lead many people to reply that there can be little wrong with a game that could attract 68,000 spectators on September 26th. We hold that a very large number of these attended in the hope of witnessing an improvement in the game, and, with all deference to the teams concerned, we believe there was general disappointment.

Most keen judges of football are of opinion that the last decade has seen a deterioration in the standard of play in Gaelic football. It is the purpose of this article to examine the situation, to point out the obvious faults, and to suggest remedies.

As one who has witnessed a great number of matches in recent years between the leading counties in all parts of the country, the writer holds that there has been a lowering of the standard of play. That this belief is fairly common, may be discovered by casual conversation with faithful followers of the game. Many reasons for this are suggested, but usually people ascribe the decay to (a) the rules, or (b) the referees, or (c) the players.

THIS article has been written by a prominent supporter of Colleges and inter-county games. He has helped to train some of the best College teams of recent years, and his opinions should be read with interest.

With regard to the rules, we have all heard frequently that there is need for revision, and now that the time for revision of rules is approaching we shall hear much more about it. The writer, however, believes there is no need for revision of rules, and respectfully urges our rulers to think carefully before revising any rules of play, and, if changes of rules are introduced, that they be not finally sanctioned until they have been well tried out in practice. After all, it was under these same rules that we had the great games of the recent past—the Kerry-Kildare finals—Dublin and Kerry 1932—Dublin-Kildare games in the 1926-32 period—Galway-Mayo of the same period. The rules under which these games were played are good enough to produce similar games now.

THE POOR REFEREE!

It is an old custom to blame the referees for all shortcomings in the game. We pay tribute to the referees in general as conscientious, hard-working officials, but we must attribute some blame to them for the falling off in the standard in football.

Firstly, because as a body they do not make sufficient use of the "advantage" rule, and so slow up the game. Secondly, because they have been ignoring the modern tendency to pick the ball off the ground, and have made little effort to check throwing the ball, i.e. the alleged hand-passing that we see. Players are irritated by seeing their opponents commit these fouls unchecked, and retaliate by holding and pulling and so we have more fouls and more delays.

Referees should also see to it that free kicks and side-line throws are taken smartly, and not in the leisurely fashion

to which we have become accustomed. Finally, referees entirely forget that a player may and should be sent to the sideline for continual foul play.

Rules and referees have some influence in bringing about the decay in the game, but in the end it is on the players that the main responsibility lies. We will deal with some of the outstanding faults of to-day. Handpassing amongst forwards or throwing, as we prefer to call it, is one of the main factors which is spoiling the game.

PLETHORA OF SCRAMBLES.

Hand passing, to be effective, must be carried out at high speed and in a forward direction, but how seldom do we see that done.

Pick Ups and Throws are Ruining Game

teams, it leads to bunching amongst the forwards. The backs close in also, and we have a plethora of scrambles round the goals, resulting usually in a free kick. It is also producing forwards who are forgetting the art of springing for a ball, and who do not realise that the full width of the field is required for proper forward play. Let forwards then try to give us sweeping passes with kicks from wing to wing and we will have a game worth watching.

The next fault amongst players is picking the ball directly off the ground. This fault leads to fouls by the opponent, and in addition also slows up the game, and if not done neatly, is not an elegant piece of work. How much more spectacular it is to see a half-back send the ball fifty yards with a ground drive or to see a forward lash it in goalwards?

But above all, most of the faults we see in players can be ascribed to lack of practice. One cannot arise to the heights

in any sphere without practice, and I am afraid that present-day players do not do sufficient in this line. The great fielders and kickers learned their art by constant practice on Sunday afternoons or week-day evenings. Jumping with others for the ball gave them the spring and the confidence necessary for success, while the urge to kick farther than any one else did the rest.

Finally, in regard particularly to Finals, the writer is of opinion that the system of collective training is a failure. It seems to produce a nervous type of player who cannot display his best form.

ANXIETY AND WORRY.

Over anxiety, brought on by three weeks in which the player has little to do but worry over the game, produces errors and fouls. Again it appears to make players more fragile, as witness the numerous stoppages due to apparently trivial injuries which hold up the game and infuriate impartial spectators. We think that if the players were to practice in the evenings at the local centre, and were brought together to one or, if necessary, two centres twice a week and given a half hour's practice around a goal and a match for an hour, better results would be achieved.

We have written this in no carping spirit, but with an earnest desire to point out faults and the simple remedies for these faults, and believe that if these hints were followed, we might have football games worthy of the name, and games which would go down in tradition with the great games of the past.



ROSCOMMON—The New All-Ireland Football Champions.

pic' a' tsúgarat

Trim' aistig aréir do smúneas-sa 'Smé'r leaba buis m'n go clútaicé So raib annir an éinn 'na seasá' Lem' caoib Sur caimé a gnaoi 'sa h-ioncár liom.

Curfá:

Ó bean a' tige 'bpuil buairéam ort (pé só), Is ó bean a' tige má tá ná bíod

Is éurpinn muig tige go mbuaróppinn ort.

'Fm úo na píbe plúcaig liom Corruig ad' sárde agus tinnlaic mé

Ar fáille Flásin i n-aice Tráigll, Beo' banis is rinne 'r siúl a'gann.

Curfá:

Do preabas am' sárde go h-uath sa' m'e, Is níor fónas te puinn dem' clútaic enis, A' tairceat na uciorta 's ise lem' caoib, Sur sroiseamair pic' a' tsúgarat.

Curfá:

Ní péaca-sa fion ná lionn sa tige, Ná leaba go tuigeadó triúr innce, Ac seanabros tuige pé seane-éinte buróe, Is an-ionmorc' míole' a' siúl uréi.

Curfá:

Mar ar éobal mé réir bí clampar ann, Bí laeam is seanna is samuail ann, Bí an dáispéac burde trí mullaic a' tige, Is níor éobal mé néal as na brean-caoi.

Curfá:

An' hi for Tommy the dáisy O Polished his boots so neatly O With his three-cocked hat and his double bow-knot And his fiddle for coaxing the Ladies

A USEFUL VETERAN



JOHN QUIRKE, with plenty of first-class experience and long service, proved his worth for the

KERRY STAR.



ONLY 3 COUNTIES SHOWED TOP CLASS FORM IN 1943

'Sean Fear'

MUCH discussion is at present being given to the question as to whether hurling is really in a healthy state.

Others—and they, too, are not few—say that the true measure of hurling must be taken from the keenness of competition in senior ranks in the All-Ireland hurling series.

Compared with the high standard of Gaelic Football, it cannot be denied that there is something wrong—very wrong—with the position of hurling in its highest grade.

In the year just closed, outside two

The midfield display of PADDY KENNEDY (above) and Sean Brosnan in the tournament game with the football champions, Roscommon, recalled the many classic struggles in which they figured.

Mayo v. Kerry In 1906.

IN the replay of the semi-final of the Croke Cup Competition at Limerick on March 4, 1906, Mayo beat Kerry by 1-2 to 0-4.

The teams were:— Mayo—R. Marsh (capt.), A. Corcoran, D. Ryder, T. Boshell, P. Farmer, O. Sweeney, P. Ferguson, J. Fury, P. Heffernan, T. Murray, T. Gilmartin, W. Boshell, T. Wade, M. Crean, P. Sweeney (Ballina), M. McHugh, J. Munnelly (Castlebar).

Kerry—T. O'Gorman (capt.), J. O'Gorman, D. Curran, M. McCarthy, C. Healy, J. Buckley, J. T. Fitzgerald, P. Cahill, A. Stack (Tralee); R. Fitzgerald, P. Dillon, D. Kissane, J. Myers, F. O'Sullivan, D. Doyle (Killarney); D. Breen (Castleisland).



Snap of the play in the 1943 All-Ireland Hurling Final.

on Our Hurling Standard

matches in the Munster Championships, there was not an inspiring contest in the trek of Cork to final victory. Reviewing hurling standards then for 1943, in three counties only, Cork, Waterford and Limerick, is there any semblance of first-class form: that is in comparison with any of the fifteen preceding years.

CORK'S REAL MERIT.

This brings us immediately up against the question of the real merit of the present hurling side. Is it such a great side that its achievements make all present and past performances mediocre? Or is it that it looks so good in its march from victory to victory because all—or nearly all—the other county teams are mediocre or less than mediocre?

It has not yet equalled the performance of that great Limerick side which went through a series of first-class matches Championship and League some five years ago, to the number of approximately forty without defeat.

Economics play not an inconsiderable part in the disparity at present existing between the Cork champions and the bulk of hurling counties. A lowering of standards is particularly noticeable in the counties where compulsory tillage is now an important duty of small and medium farmers.

CHAMPIONS MAKE HISTORY.

Let it not be suggested for a moment that I put forward all these reasons to detract from the quality of Cork's hurling manhood. By no means. That is there in abundance: keen, speedy, plucky, artistic and vigorous, this Cork side deserve to

make history and have done so with honour and great modesty.

Second to Cork in performance I place Waterford. This is a county with comparatively few advantages. In early times they figured seldom if ever as serious hurling rivals to the other great Munster teams, but within the past fifteen years or so they have steadily asserted themselves and played invariably to a high level.

Clubs there are not numerous. Mount Sion, of course, did much to stir up a great competitive spirit, and Erin's Own taking up the challenge raised the standard high. Other clubs had to live up to the new high level or fade away, with the result that a Waterford side is now a thing to be conjured with in any year or time. Here again, purpose and deter-

THE writer of this article has had personal experience of hurling, both club and inter-county.

He writes not with a view to finding fault but with a view to improvement, as it is his opinion that the standard of the game has dropped in many counties heretofore regarded as strongholds.

mination were the factors associated with Waterford's present status.

Limerick with a great history and a great tradition, is on something of a par as regards merit with Waterford. It should in fact be second to none. Limerick athletes were always to the fore in the earlier days, and in later times their hurlers from 1934 to 1939 gave scintillating displays. To watch them play is to see a fine upstanding set of hurlers, with uniform physique and strength and dash, good, clean stick-work, and courage in plenty. It was often puzzling to me how they occasionally drop down on the scale. They do not appear to get the scoring results which their undoubted excellence seems to merit.

When we come to consider the recent performances of Tipperary—gallant Tipperary—I confess to be more than puzzled. Many of my theories go awry. No great economic struggle apparent here in this county of teeming clubs, strength, outstanding tradition, and fine national spirit. Emigration and extra labour may have denuded or stressed them to some extent, but even making allowances for these adverse factors, it is hard to explain their eclipse which, if not prolonged, is at least reaching a serious stage. The Dublin clubs, junior and senior, contain more Tipperarymen than men from any other three counties put together. More All-Ireland medals of all grades have probably gone to that county than to any other county in the country. They can have no financial worries. It is to be hoped they will throw off their lethargy at an early date.

Outside of Dublin there is no other serious rival to Kilkenny in Leinster. Dublin is a fluctuating quantity. It can scarcely plead the non-resident rule now to be a big factor in preventing them from higher performances.

COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

NINETEEN FORTY-THREE saw no relaxation in College activities, native games being strongly supported in the majority of our secondary educational establishments.

The All-Ireland Championships, a usual, produced splendid games, in which Ulster and Leinster qualified for the football final, while Munster took the hurling honours. The football final, played at Cavan, drew a record crowd for one of those games, Northern Gaels turning out in strength.

Munster, mainly drawn from North Monastery, proved too good for Leinster in the hurling final, played at Cork.

Connacht, holders, did not, owing to transport difficulties, defend its title. The provincial championships were also chock full of rich fare, with many of the old familiar names again figuring prominently on the honours list.

St. Mels and St. Kierans, in Leinster, North Monastery, Tralee C.B.S., and St. Brendans in Munster, St. Patricks, Cavan, and St. Marys, Dundalk, in Ulster, St. Jarlaths in Connacht, all claimed a share of the headlines, while in Dublin, Westland Row, Marino, St. Vincent, Synge St., Belcamp, and O'Connells were bang in the picture with a host of competitions. Belcamp, one of the oldest colleges playing in Leinster, is to be congratulated on having the honour of still taking a leading part in the fight for native games.

Rev. Fr. Manning, St. Mels, was unanimously elected President of the All-Ireland Colleges Council at the Annual Congress.

Fr. Manning, a native of Dublin, is a zealous worker, and under his capable guidance we can expect the All-Ireland Colleges Council to go on to further success.

There are not half a dozen non-resident hurlers playing in first-class Dublin teams for some time past. They have excellent facilities for training. Their finances are not strained. Still they never seem to act as a team possessed of understanding or co-operation. It has been bruited about that the selectors fight strenuously for their own club representatives on the county side, with the result that the best men are overlooked. Resentment, it is stated, follows this from the colleagues of the neglected ones. This is a vicious circle which must be broken if success is to come to Dublin.

THE PROBLEM.

As for the less effective counties such as Clare, Galway, Leitrim, Offaly, Wexford, Meath, they are certainly problems in the All-Ireland scheme of things. Granted to be heard of at all, Clare must come out of Munster—a tough job. Galway steps automatically into the semi-final stage. They claim this is a drawback. That is a debatable point. If included in Munster they would not be in the Cork, Waterford, Limerick class, and they might just be as ineffective as Clare has been for the past ten years in inter-county contests. Both counties appear to concentrate in a too parochial manner, concerned chiefly with their county championships. Whilst this is estimable up to a point, it is not enough. An extension of this line of action would sound the death-knell of the All-Ireland competitions. Antrim is in a special position, and not an unhealthy one.

Summarising my previous remarks, I conclude by recapitulating my main arguments:

- (1) That All-Ireland senior hurling standards vary too widely between the ten hurling counties;
(2) That the success of Cork has tended to mark the disparity;
(3) That Cork's success does not indicate a phenomenal standard of merit;
(4) That the impact of the emergency conditions in rural life has been a factor making for disinterestedness;
(5) That on the whole there is required a thorough examination by the Central Council of the drift of the present retrogression.

In putting forward these views, I do so in the hope that it will stimulate controversy and interest and ensure that no serious decay will set in through complacency or neglect.

cumann lúic óles zaeóeal

1944 INTER - PROVINCIAL HURLING and FOOTBALL SEMI - FINALS.

feabhra 13ad

iománuióeact as biorra

Connact v. Laişin

feabhra 20ad as páirc an crócais

iománuióeact asur peil

mumna v. ulaó

feabhra 27ad

peil as muileann ceann

Connact v. Laişin

These Games are the most attractive of the Season.

FINALS ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY AT

páirc an crócais

Group System To Help Hurling

Sean McCarthy Outlines a New Plan

IN AN "AISLING" in prose published in the "Celtic Times," 1887, Michael Cusack, Gaelic pioneer, speaks for himself. He recalls that many years previously "an idea, no bigger than a man's head, struck him," and, cast as he was in the fighting mould of the heroic 'Dal Cais,' he assures his friends that the attacking party was not allowed to escape.

The fiends leered at him, and cast a pall of darkness over his path; but his guide shone with the brilliancy of the sun, new risen, and he was able to achieve his purpose in founding the Gaelic Athletic Association, which had its roots and inspiration in Irish national ideals, animated by sympathy, study and experience.

"I had a rough journey," he tells, "I missed my footing a few times, was thrown down, but, as John said, 'I wasn't hurt, and I didn't cry.' Trust in my guide came easy to me, and I was not blinded by the showers of mud that fell around me, nor was I kept back by the jibe of the knave or the thorn in the puddle."

The spirit of Erin it was that called to him, "coming in my mother's form, and my duty was to listen and obey." She recalled vividly that he had lived in spirit through the nation's past glories and disasters. He was reminded that he had kept company with Cuchulainn and the "Craobh Ruadh," with the heroes of the past, with Wolfe Tone, Napper Tandy, and the men of '98; that he had lived with Thomas Davis, but was not making sufficient effort during his leisure hours to give effect to the principles he so vigorously enunciated during his brief span of public life.

He was told too that he had, in the dead of night, wept over Kich-ham's description of the bringing back of the cattle to Knocknagow, and in response to his deep wail of sorrow because he saw no prospect of bringing "the hurling" back to the Homes of Tipperary. Without it everything was lonely.

His attention was next directed to Davitt's meeting at Irishtown, Co. Mayo, in 1870. Meagher darted up from the Missouri on a ray of the morning star, and fiercely asked what had become of the Irish hurling? By this time Cusack realised that if he did not come to terms with his first visitor that there was serious danger of being obliged to receive delegations from every part of the Universe in



Mr. Sean McCarthy, B.A., Cork.

which the Celtic race had found a home.

MUSIC OF THE CAMAN.

I shall complete the paraphrase and the reply in our hero's own words: "Mother Erin, I think I understand what you want. Many of your children are having a hard struggle of it to keep a grip of the land that bore them. You seem to think that I should brighten their lives with the music of the camán. In spirit I have been living in Ireland for upwards of three thousand years, and during all that time the hurling field was the great recreation ground of my brethren. Of late, unfortunately, the spirit of the people has been drooping, and it will be difficult to straighten them up.

"I'll take hold of the first camán that comes in my way, call the boys together, make a beginning, and ask the people to join us."

"And now," he adds, "that all Ireland is hurling from Aghada to Rathmullan, under the rules of the Gaelic Athletic Association, for the benefit of posterity I shall tell the history of the last Seven years' War."

THE writer of this article, Sean McCarthy, B.A., Cork, is a past-President of the Central Council. His plan for the improvement of hurling is worthy of the fullest consideration.

But that stern pioneering struggle has long since been won; and the wonderful revolution which Cusack's foundation of the G.A.A. brought about in Irish life through the revival of our Irish pastimes is faithfully depicted in Canon Sheehan's "Parerga" and "Glenanar"; in "The Gaels of Moondarrig," by Rev. Fr. Dollard; and "Hanrahan's Daughter," recently published.

The inception of the G.A.A. was not then the result of a sudden impulse, aroused by temporary interest and enthusiasm; for, as the founder sets out in a previous series of articles in the "Celtic Times," the need for such an organisation was twofold; first, to curb the activities of the existing anti-Irish ascendancy coterie in sport, and stem the flood of alien ideas and influences emanating from them; and next, to discipline and safeguard the bodily well-being of the race, preserve its self-respect, and secure its distinctive inheritance of national ideals endowed with manly grace and vigour.

GAMES AND LANGUAGE.

The cause of our native pastimes was linked naturally with that of our language and culture in a way which no other organisation except the G.A.A. can claim or place on record.

Now for a brief review of the position of our games. It is a matter of historic fact that, in recent years, our Gaelic football has gone ahead by leaps and bounds, not only in the skill, speed and agility of the players, but also in the amazing hostings of spectators attracted to the principal venues in each province, culminating in a concourse of 70,000 spectators for the Galway v. Kerry All-Ireland Final at Croke Park in 1938.

Nor can it be contended that this remarkable result is solely due to the Metropolitan being football-minded, for it is an established fact that outside Munster the bulk of the receipts of the Provincial Councils is derived from their football fixtures. Even in the south, with the advent of Cork and Tipperary on the up-grade, challenging the supremacy of the renowned Kerry footballers, the tendency is in the same direction.

Under normal travelling conditions, the crowds at the National Stadium for the senior football championships exceed those at "the hurling" by 18,000—a fine assembly in itself—and during the emergency these records have been well maintained.

The enthusiasts will attend in any case, to enjoy the thrill of the occasion, through love of the games and their traditions, and the general public will come in their tens of thousands if they expect a close contest, and generally they are good judges of the respective merits of the competing teams.

WHAT IS THE REASON?

How does it come to pass then that the Football contests attract so many more than our equally superb game of hurling? Surely it is not entirely due to the fact that the flight of the football is so much easier to follow; but apart from the wonderful development of the features of play it is, to my mind, due to the circumstances that the issue in football is far more open because of the greater variety and number of counties with first-class chances of the laurels of victory.

In support of my argument, let us consider the position of hurling more especially outside its stronghold in the Province of Munster, where each of the counties, excepting Kerry, has won the provincial championship and contested the All-Ireland Final within the last decade.

In Leinster, on the other hand, since Wexford's win in 1918, two of the twelve counties—Kilkenny (13) and Dublin (11)—have shared the senior provincial hurling titles for the past

twenty-five years. Since 1887 Galway holds undisputed sway in Connacht, with the exception of one year (1906), when Roscommon represented the province; while in Ulster, land of Cuchulainn and the Craobh Ruadh, the Antrim hurlers have annexed the senior championship on 38 occasions since 1900, Monaghan securing the honours in 1914-15, and Donegal in 1906, 1923, 1932, and Co. Down in '41.

Concluding this review, I readily concede that the playing of the games by the greatest possible number of organised teams, and not the winning of high trophies, is the main purpose of the G.A.A. It is, however, unfortunately to be regretted that many players seek transfer from their parish clubs to participate with others enjoying better prospects, unmindful of "the honour of the little village" to which they should owe their first allegiance.

Far be it from my intention to despise or demerit ambition to reach the highest ranks and standards in the playing fields, and "come into the public eye," with outstanding deeds, in pursuit of victory for one's team or county.

But by developing skill and resourcefulness and intelligently studying the field tactics of the best players one's aim may be achieved in doing duty for one's native county, or that of his adoption.

But here again the scheme of events should be so arranged as to give the smaller or weaker counties a progressive chance of success, and towards that end I shall submit a few suggestions to the readers of the "Gaelic Echo," for consideration at their discretion.

To my mind the grading of counties as Junior has not been a success, and should be amended to a regrouping under separate Divisions with senior status, leading to distinct All-Ireland championships with promotion of the winners to the top grade. There is very little hope for counties without a great hurling inheritance, with a scarcity of material battling against mighty odds backed up by ingenuity, experience and tradition. Neither is there much attraction, even for enthusiastic spectators in what cannot

be much better than one-sided eliminating contests.

As a start, therefore, I would submit the following arrangement:—

SENIOR HURLING:

Munster.—Div. I: All counties excepting Kerry, Div. II.

Leinster.—Div. I: Kilkenny, Dublin, Wexford, Laoighis, Offaly and Westmeath (6). Div. II: Louth, Meath, Kildare, Longford, Wicklow and Carlow (6).

Connacht.—Div. I: Galway. Div. II: All the other counties willing to enter.

Ulster.—Div. I: Antrim and Donegal. Div. II: All the remaining counties wishing to compete.

The counties in Division I to have Senior, Junior and Minor teams as formerly; those in Div. II to have senior and minor selections only, these competitions to be played out independently on provincial basis; the seniors of Div. II to be played off against those in the same grade in the other provinces; the Minor (Div. II) winners to get special trophies and to be promoted the following year in their respective provinces, as there should not be separate Minor All-Irelands.

Furthermore, (i) I again advocate that the National Leagues should commence in the Springtime when counties are team-building, and not in the fall of the year when interest is declining.

And (ii) I am strongly in favour of a special Mid-West League to include Galway, Clare, Westmeath, Offaly and Laoighis (or Tipperary, for convenience to bring in the Nenagh sports-field), to be played off each year in March and April for, say, the Cusack Shield (to be provided). This would make up for Galway's isolation in the championships until called on to play the All-Ireland semi-final.

The scheme I have outlined would not delay or complicate the All-Ireland or Provincial championships—in fact it would speed them up. If the plan worked out well something similar could be done for football. Readers may devise improvements. Beannachta na Nodlag oraibh a Gaedheala.

PROVINCIAL TITLES WERE HARD TO WIN

THAT rocky road to Dublin; the Provincial Championships gave us some exceptionally good games in 1943, and the overthrow of reigning champions in three provinces. Attendances and gate receipts were up in every instance, while the standard of play was exceptionally level, especially in the football competition, in which we had a few draws and some very close wins.

Munster hurling attracted its customary interest and gave us an early surprise in the easy win of Waterford over Tipperary, who a year before contested the Southern final. Waterford later beat Limerick to reach the provincial final with Cork, who, in a thrilling game, in which the lead changed half a dozen times, just stayed on a little better to claim the honours by a couple of points.

The old rivals, Kilkenny and Dublin, once again qualified for the Leinster final, which, played at Nowlan Park, resulted in a win for the Noremen, Dublin

thus losing two provincial titles, as earlier in the season the footballers went out before Louth at Drogheda.

FORM RIGHT.

This game was the source of a good deal of adverse comment and an objection which Dublin sportingly withdrew. That form was not altogether wrong was exemplified in the subsequent championship games, as Louth defeated Offaly and Laoighis, to regain provincial honours after a long span.

The Leinster Council decided to complete the 1942 Minor Championships, Louth once again proving itself a nursery of youthful footballers by readily defeating Kildare in the final, while Kilkenny hurlers took the honours in this code.

Louth and Kilkenny thus completed the double by winning both senior and minor championships.



THE CAVAN TEAM, who failed in the 1934 Final at second attempt.

MAJOR SURPRISE.

Munster football provided us with one of the major surprises of the year, for few at the start of the campaign would predict the downfall of Kerry, who, since 1936, had lorded it over all rivals in the South.

The unexpected however, happened at Cork where the Leemen drawn from Clonakilty, Macroom, St. Nicholas and Fermoy, fairly and squarely beat the Kingdom side on a replay.

To continue the train of surprises, Tipperary nearly won the Munster final, Cork securing victory by a goal to qualify for the All-Ireland semi-final.

NO SURPRISE.

Roscommon's challenge had been so strong and persistent that their victory over Galway did not evoke the surprise it might have two seasons back. Mayo, hardly a ghost of its old self, went out in the opening round, while Leitrim beat Sligo and lost to Roscommon.

Up North a young Monaghan team made many friends by the way it defeated Armagh and Antrim to qualify for the Northern final with Cavan, whose greater craft and skill proved a little too good for the more youthful Monaghan men.

Fermanagh made history in its own way by for the first time winning the Ulster junior football title. This was the only junior championship decided during the year, which we must write down as being highly successful.

An tSúm

CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

Select an Irish Book this year. Here are a Few Suggestions.

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Hail To The Champions | The All Irelands Attracted

MISS MEG BARRY, FERMOY, has sent us the following lines in praise of the Dublin Camouigheacht team which won the 1938 All Ireland Championship.

We are deeply grateful to Miss Barry for her contributions to "The Echo."

Five years have passed—it looks like yesterday
Since, full of life, we battled in the fray,
Since grand Camogie fever swept us on
To our All Ireland with the proud Camán.

We played Longford and Carlow in Leinster,
And to Corrigan Park we set forth
To meet Antrim, the champions of Ulster,
The stalwart colleens of the North.

That day we won hard-earned laurels
And vanquished Belfast gave us cheer
As they wished us Good Luck and Good scoring
Against Cork—the "big" team of the year.

When the Final was fixed for Cork City
We trained as we'd never before
We saw the Blue Riband so near us!
Can Cork be defeated once more?

At last in "the Park" we're fore-gathered
The legions about us we see,
And the accents ring lustily round us
"God speed to the girls from the Lee!"

'Neath the charge of Peg Morris from Galway
The whistle resounds o'er the field,
And we grimly resolved from the throw-in
That not lightly to Cork would we yield.

Right up in the front line of scoring
Against backs who were crafty and keen
Were our forwards, deft Eva and Ita,
Well assisted by gallant Doreen.

We had Agnes on Left, sharp and speedy;
We had brave-hearted Angela, Right;
And soon ambidexterous Nuala
Sent the ball to the net in its flight.

There might be some doubt who was master
As a forward; in goal; as a back;
But at midfield no equal had Emmie
As she rushed from defence to attack.

In the Posts was our brave "College" goalie,
Ever coolest when fiercest the raid,
And countering Cork's fighting forwards
Were Rose, Sheila, May and Mairead.

They Won the Title.



THE DUBLIN TEAM which beat Cork in the 1943 All-Ireland Camouigheacht Final.

With five major scores to our credit
'Gainst Leeside's two big and three small,
The battle was won: the Blue Riband was ours;
The Cup had come back to our call.

So here's to the colleens of Dublin,
May best of Good Fortune await
Those colleagues of play, ever sport-
ing and gay,
The Champs. of 1938.

The 1938 Dublin All-Ireland team was:—

Emmie Delaney (Captain), Mary Lahiffe (goal), Rose Martin, Sheila Hodgins, May Fletcher, Mairead Barry, Angela Egan, Nuala Sheehan, Agnes Hourihan, Doreen Rodgers, Ita McNeill, Eva Moran.

AN CAILÍN RUA.

Ós mbéinn-sé mbliana mar ní mé nuraib,
Tos béas beic agam a éis a éuin,
Cúirtinn mo bá an amac ar a tSiannam
Agus béartáim abaithe mo cáilín rua.

Ríkes fol the dooirle lool ile addy,
Ríkes fol the dooirle lool ile ay,
Ríkes fol the dooirle lool ile addy,
Ríkes fol the dooirle lool ile ay.

U'fcaínn líom i ná bó 's ná bearaic,
'S ná 'bpuil 'de toungeas a' teacit cun cuan,

Ó sí mar sac sréine out in éctan stome,
Ói sém mán na finne 'r mo cáilín rua.

Ós mé líom fí ó baite so baite
Fíro Bieácláic cun na ngeartaí crua.

Can fuil con míle ó 'pás mé 'n baite
Náic ócúg mé 'deoc leanna 'do mo cáilín rua.

Ói cionn srúige léi síos so caitáin 's bárr an a' b'finne so ócúg sí buáó

Óa méanar 'don fear ós a 's'éobéó le meall' f
Ro'sa na scáilín mo cáilín rua.

Railway Cup Dates.

FIRST BIG GAMES of 1944 will be the Railway Cup semi-finals and finals.

Semi-final dates, venues and pairings are:—

February 13, at Birr:—
Hurling: Leinster v. Connacht. (C. Heffernan, Tipperary.)

Feb. 20, at Croke Park:—
Hurling and Football: Munster v. Ulster.

Feb. 27, at Mullingar:—
Football: Connacht v. Leinster (S. Moriarty, Dublin.)

The Central Council has ordered that in the case of draws extra time must be played.
The finals will be played at Croke Park on St. Patrick's Day (March 17th).

CARBERY'S ANNUAL.

THIS most popular of Yuletide publications is once more on sale. There are the customary descriptions of the All-Ireland Finals, with records of the other native sports of the year, athletics, coursing, etc.

Popular Morty Morley is once more to the fore, with further exploits of Sean Bheit an Cheo. These features have proved immensely popular with a host of readers. Incidents of the Land War and "Troubled Times," together with popular songs in Irish and English make up a note-worthy publication. Previous issues of the "Annual" were sold out in quick time and so should the present. It is an excellent production, creditable to its author and the printers "The Kerryman" Ltd., Tralee. On sale at the principal booksellers at 2/- per copy, it makes pleasant reading.

All Ireland

Huge Crowds Watch Cork and Roscommon Make History

TO say that all Ireland came to see the All-Ireland tests of 1943 is not by any means an exaggeration as this year's deciders and semi-finals attracted the biggest crowds seen at Croke Park since the outbreak of the new world war.

It was a wise move of the Central Council to decide on Croke Park as venues for both football semi-finals, and a sporting gesture of Galway and Kilkenny to consent to travel to Corrigan Park, Belfast, for the hurling games with Antrim.

With new provincial football champions in Connacht, Leinster and Munster it was little wonder to find far-flung interest being manifested in the semi-finals which were played on the second and third Sundays of August.

This year we had a preliminary round in the hurling, Galway playing Antrim for the right to meet Kilkenny in the semi-final proper, while the Munster winners had a bye to the final.

YEAR OF SHOCKS.

First shock of a championship of surprises was the defeat of Galway, who leading well entering the fourth quarter were pipped on the post by an Antrim side that hurled with wonderful abandon.

Then came the visit of Kilkenny to the Corrigan Park, where a capacity crowd cheered to the skies a victory of the Northern champions that was like a thunderbolt to the Gaelic world.

Everywhere people talked of this new Antrim technique that was expected to revolutionise the game and overthrow Cork, the reigning champions, who went into training with an earnestness not seen by the Lee since the days of the three games with Kilkenny.

That the big occasion caught the Antrim men there is no denying, but even at their best it is unlikely that they would have beaten this Cork side of 1943.

Cork, by their victory set up a new record of fourteen senior All-Ireland hurling titles, while this third time in a row equalled a record jointly held by Cork, Tipperary and Kilkenny.

Many of the Cork men secured the coveted honour of having won three All-Ireland medals in succession and by the Lee there were wonderful scenes of enthusiasm when the victorious hurlers returned home.

HISTORIC GAMES.

For the first time in the history of the football competition we had a Cork-Cavan and a Louth-Roscommon semi-final.

The meeting of West and East on the second Sunday of August at Croke

Park produced a glorious game with the issue in the balance right up to the moment Frank Kinlough, with a beautifully engineered goal put Roscommon in the final for the first time.

The second semi-final drew over thirty thousand people, but did not give us the same feast of good football. Tackling was too close and doubtful with Cork making the pace for most of the game.

Bad marking and anticipation by one or two of the Cork backs let Cavan through for the goal that decided this game and so the stage was set for a Cavan-Roscommon final, the first between these counties.

Both teams went into training and for days before the final little else was spoken of, for confidence was strong in the rival camps.

It was evident on the Friday and Saturday prior to the game that the Kerry-Galway attendance record would get a bad shake as Dublin hotels were crowded with people up for the final from every corner of Ireland.

HUGE CROWDS.

The accommodation in Croke Park was taxed to its utmost and had all those who came to the gates gained admission, there is no doubt but that a new attendance record would have been set up.

The game itself was a grand one with Roscommon badly beaten in the early stages to recover and finish level. An effort to get the rivals to consent to extra time failed and the re-play was fixed for October 10.

How that game ended in a Roscommon victory is too fresh in our minds to need retelling, while the closing scenes that marred an otherwise great championship campaign are too regrettable to call for further reference.

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ILABOR TONIC HAIR CREAM (6-oz. bottles) .. 1/3
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Leinster Final.



Laoighis scores a goal in the Leinster Football Final, which Louth won.



Time passes...

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IS STILL THE SAME

Irish Whisky
of Perfect Quality.

CORK DISTILLERIES CO. LTD.

THE LARK IN THE CLEAR AIR

—By—
JOE BRADY

Cumann na mbun Scol

ON the verge of the Curragh in a thatched mud cabin there lived many years ago a little widow all alone. Her name was Peggy Farrell. She had two crows—Patsy the grey and Micksey the roan. Good neighbours saved a bank of turf for her on the bog and sowed a few drills of potatoes in her haggard. Patsy and Micksey grazed on the abundant grass by the roadside and returned as regular as alarm clocks at milking time. The police turned a blind eye to Regulation 234 B which forbade quadrupeds to wander unattended on King's highway.

One winter's night when the wind was howling in the chimney and bursts of sleet played a tattoo on the window panes, there was a knock at the cabin door. Peggy peered into the darkness. A poor woman with a baby at her breast, begged for a night's shelter.

"Come in for the love of the Mother of God," said Peggy.

She put down more turf on the open hearth and hung the kettle on the crane. In a few minutes the kettle was singing and there was a comfortable glow of heat. Peggy made tea for the stranger. In the dim light of the turf fire, Peggy judged her to be a woman in her late twenties, handsome in spite of her ragged garments, but sorrowful and careworn. She had a bruise over one of her eyes. The baby was a lusty little fellow of about seven months, plunging and dancing on his mother's lap. Peggy asked no questions about whence they came or whither they were bound. The stranger was a woman of few words, and these few were spoken quietly in gratitude for food and warmth and shelter. The child smiled at Peggy and stretched forth his hands to be taken in her arms. Only then did she realise her own loneliness and desolation. "I'm like an old crow that fell down in a bog," she reflected.

When she awoke next morning the little child was sleeping peacefully beside her; but the mother was gone. Enquiries were made far and wide. Tale or tidings or her never were heard. Old ponds in disused quarries and the deep pools of the river were dragged. Ravines and coverts were searched—all in vain. At heart Peggy was glad, though professing to be shocked by such a shameless desertion.

The infant was taken to the Church and baptised Thomas Farrell. She insisted on the name. Patsy and

Micksey formally received him into the bosom of the home. Patsy licked his little foot with her rough tongue and Micksey chewed a corner of the christening robe. Peggy had found complete happiness.

Tommy grew up a handsome lad. He had jet black hair and eyes the colour of sloes. In summer his face was as freckled as a turkey egg. His days were spent on the bog and by the banks of the Flesk. He could imitate the curlew's cry and the green plover's call. His keen eye would follow the drumming snipe and lead him unerringly to the four mottled eggs in the rushes. He would move so quietly in his bare feet that he would not disturb the mother on the nest. Gentle was he with the birds of the air.

His favourite in all creation was the soaring lark. He would lie on his back for hours looking up into the vault of heaven, enraptured by the glorious melody. "The low sweet wondrously varied song of the humble linnet" too was his delight. The blackbird's whistle "impudently sweet, half of him passion, half conceit"; the Kingfisher flitting by like a dart of green and silver, the flashing gold-

"I was playing with the pups on the bank of the river," said Tommy. "What pups?" asked Peggy in surprise.

"The little black pups that come up out of the river. I do be playing with them every day," Tommy replied.

Peggy was mystified. She consulted Jim Kennedy who was bonesetter, cow doctor and general practitioner. He did not know of any black pups in the neighbourhood.

One afternoon in June Jim saw the young lad stroll towards the river. He followed unobserved Tommy whistled—a long high-pitched note but not loud or shrill. Jim had heard this call before. He did not know till that moment that it was an otter call. Four black sleek "pups" with pointed noses came bounding from the river. Tommy lay down on the grassy bank. In the twinkling of an eye he and the young otters were rolling over and over in high jinks. An old otter sat on its haunches at a discreet distance enjoying the fun. When Jim moved forward all the otters fled in a panic.

One day Tommy came home from the bog in wild excitement.

"Oh mum, I have a little lark in my cap" he said to Peggy in a tearful voice. "I had the nest in the bog. When I went to see the young ones a hawk was killing them all. I saved this little fellow. I pegged a stone at the thieving hawk and took a hatful of feathers out of him."

He brought a large sod into the kitchen and placed it in a corner beside the dresser. He made a nest and lined it with soft feathers. He stroked and fed the nestling. He imitated the call of the parent lark coming to feed its young. The little bird opened its beak and fed ravenously on the worms and seeds that Tommy brought. To breadcrumbs and milk he let back his ears as Tommy used say.

Next day he brought the foundling back to its nest in the bog and concealed himself in high rushes, hoping that the little one's plaintive call would lure back any survivors. It was a vain effort. Tommy found some blood-stained wing feathers and fluffy down, so that it seemed as if at one fell swoop all but this little orphan had perished. He took the little bird from the nest and put it back into his cap, which he swung gently as a hammock of gossamer. The nestling chirruped its contentment and half-closed its eyes like a sleepy baby in a cradle.

The hawthorn had put on its bridal veil of pearly whiteness and gentle breezes were swinging like fairy censers the delicately scented blossoms of the woodbine. Peggy was busy at the fire frying a rasher and egg so as to have it ready for Tommy on his return from school. She heard sweet sounds like the first notes of a wondrous lute. She turned from the fire and saw the young lark poised in the air above window level pouring out his heart in melody. Here was the song that soars to meet the dawn; the music in a heart that throbs for joy.

"He is like a little angel singing his first song for God," said Peggy aloud.

When his song was ended the lark lowered himself by gentle wing beat. For one moment he paused as if loathe to desist and lifted a little bar—the leit motif of the melody. Finally he settled on the nest with wings spread out at full length. He ruffled his feathers and turned his head slightly as if bowing to a lady's applause.

Peggy waited impatiently to break the news. All Tommy could get from her was an incoherent account of heavenly music and angels of sounds like echoes of rippling waters, the Adeste on the Christmas morning, winds whispering through leaves, little rabbits playing at evening in the slanting sunshine, child's laughter and kisses, scent of woodbine and roses. Peggy spoke like one half-dreaming, half-waking. It took Tommy some time to understand that the lark had sung his first song in mid-air. Tommy whistled and chirruped and tried every gamut to give inspiration to the singer. The lark opened his beak again and again. Each time Tommy thought that he was about to sing; but not a note came from the warbler. Tommy decided to feed him, thinking that a good meal would in-

cline him to music. He dug in the garden and found a fat worm. Groundsel was added to the menu. The lark gobbled up the worm, put his head under his wing and went to sleep.

"I wonder mum will he ever sing again," sighed Tommy.

"He will, me dotey boy, when it runs with him," was all Peggy could say.

Next morning she put the pan on the fire to fry some bread for the breakfast. At the first sound of sizzling up rose the lark and filled the whole house with his melody. Tommy rushed down from his room and stood spell-bound like the poet by the lark's song.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass
Rain awakened flowers
All that ever was
Joyous and clear and fresh thy music
doth surpass.
All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud
As when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams and
heaven is overflowed."

The open sesame was discovered. Tommy learnt to imitate the sound of a frying pan and at the first note the lark would soar and sing as though its little heart were about to break for joy.

The story of Farrell's soaring lark travelled far and wide. Tommy's pals from school came evening after evening to listen. They gazed open-mouthed over the half-door while Tommy like a young Maestro gave the command performance. Commercial travellers from Dublin went out of their way to pass by Peggy's. English soldiers from the Curragh Camp brought their sweethearts and wives and children on a Sunday afternoon. Great would be the disappointment if Tommy were not at home. Sometimes Peggy obliged by putting down the pan. She did not like to waste good dripping "just to please a few galoots."

The years went merrily as a wedding bell until one wet evening "Black Jack," a rough-bearded beary-eyed tramp stepped in and asked if he might boil a pint of water "to wet a grain of tay." Peggy bade him welcome although she did not like the look of her visitor. He unrolled a "Leinster Leader" from which he took a lump of pink streaked fat bacon, well-known as American lard—"the best article in the paper" chuckled the tramp. Peggy concluded that he was full of black porter. She regretted at that moment that she had not shut the door in his face. For when Black Jack took liquor he was on destruction bent. While he regaled himself she went out to milk the cows. Some time later he bade her a sullen good evening as he passed through the yard. When she returned to the cabin she found on the hearthstone the crushed lifeless body of the lark.

From that day Tommy grew restless. He was not surly or disobedient. But, as Peggy said, he was like a young scald of a curlew on a wild day, shaking his wings and getting the feel of the wind. When he thought no one was in view he would "do the cartwheel," spinning on his hands and feet like a wheel in motion. He was as lithe and supple as a deer. He would race down a steep hill and take the sight out of your eyes by doing a complete somersault, land on his feet and continue to race like a thoroughbred.

One morning Peggy woke up to find that he was gone. It was thirteen years since his mother had left him a helpless infant to her keeping, and now the lamp of her life was extinguished.

It was rumoured that he was seen with travelling gypsies; that his mother had come back to claim him. Others heard that he was traced as far as Dublin port and that he joined a circus that was going to Australia.

Peggy resigned herself to the will of God. On a fine Mayday she hobbled on her stick to the bog to get a few sods of turf. When she heard the lark's song her heart was breaking for loneliness. She sighed through her tears:—
"I am like an old clucking hen that hatched out a wild duck."

JOE BRADY is the pen name of a writer who is rapidly making a name for himself. "The Lark in the Clear Air" is a tale that should strongly appeal to our readers.

finches, a little symphony of crimson and gold ever captivated him. . . . But they were all nowhere beside the lark in the clear air, the "herald of the day." Once he was tempted to bring home a young lark that was just ready to fly. He had the fledgling in his hand. He could count the quick beatings of its heart. Some inner voice spoke to him. He fondled the little bird and put it back in the nest again.

On animals he exercised a charm that was uncanny; some even called it magical. The unbroken colt would come to Tommy in the field, nuzzling his pocket for a crust of bread or a lump of sugar.

When he was only six years of age he returned home one evening when it was almost dark. Peggy had searched for him everywhere. She chided him for his long absence.

NO CHANGE IN RAILWAY CUP TITLE HOLDERS

THERE was no change of title holders in the Railway Cup Competitions which once again produced splendid games.

This was particularly so in the finals at Croke Park on St. Patrick's Day when both titles were retained by the slenderest possible margins.

The hurling semi-final lay between Munster and Connacht and for the first time Nenagh was selected as venue for this game which went within an ace of producing a first-class upset as Connacht must be accounted unlucky not to have for the first time qualified for the final.

This was the first big game played at the new McDonagh Park and with a return to normal conditions this splendid ground is certain to house many important fixtures.

The football semi-finals were played at Tralee and Croke Park, the Kerry capital also housing a Railway Cup game for the first time since these competitions were inaugurated in 1927.

Leinster beat Munster a penalty goal scored by Tommy Murphy having direct bearing on the result which

up to this score appeared likely to be in Munster's favour.

Connacht supporters at Croke Park must have sighed for the days of Mick Connaire, Paddy Moclair, Jacky Carney, Paddy Quinn, Brendan Nestor, Tot McGowan, and Henry Kenny, men who helped to bring many laurels to the West.

The Western selection was scarcely ever in the picture against a side that played typical Ulster football, the North men winning in effortless fashion. The finals drew a splendid crowd with the holders favourites for another term as custodians of the cups and titles.

Score for score kept the crowd on tip toe from start to finish of two thrilling finals. Munster had the ill-luck to lose their full-forward Bill O'Donnell in the hurling final and were a little lucky to finish a point in front. The football game, too, was a neck and neck affair, with Leinster, mainly composed of Dublin players, putting up a great fight against the fast moving Ulster men for whom Tom O'Reilly, McCartney, Armstrong, Alf Murray and McDyer played dazzling football, and the cup going back to the North for the second year in succession.

Tá 58 fóirne iománaíochta i gCumann na mbun Scol i mbliaóna—28 m iománaíochta na sinnsear agus 30 Ceann Sóisearaí. Tá na fóirne sinnsearaí roinnte de réir a lároreáit—8 scinn i Romh A, 10 i Romh B, agus veic scinn i Romh C. Tá comórtas na sinnsear beagnac críochnúisce ann, cé naé bfuil siad aet dá mí ar suibéal. Tá na sóisear roinnte de réir an Ceanntair. Tá ceitre reanna ann, dá ceann i rútuiseáir na Cárnaí agus an dá ceann eile i nOiseáir na Cárnaí. Déir comórtas na sóisear críochnúisce go tuat tar éis na Noúlas.

I Romh Láirir na sinnsear tá an Craob ror áro árom agus Fort Toir, tá táin pómnti as áro árom agus eall Port Toir dá pómnti san seúicé de Se. Muire. Déir an cluicé ann se mbóda oem-eannac ror an dá scól seo.

Tá an Corn i Romh B ror Se. Cobraige, Se. Ó Conaill, agus Bótar Haddington, an fúreann i buádaí an roinn seo caépró si imre san roinn is lárore an bliáim seo éúgáim.

Tá Romh "C" críochnúisce agus buaróte as Scól Séibréit, ó Sráirí Aughrim. Nuair a fágáim na buacáilí Scól Séibréit imreáim siad go léir le Cumann iománaí Coúgan Ruab agus tá Cumann na mbun Scol as súit naé fáda an lá go mberó Craob iomána na Sinnsear as Coúgan Ruab.

Is fearr i bfuil, le páisí áca Cluicé iománaíochta ná peit agus b'fearr freisim le Cumann na mbun Scol iománaíochta beic acu i ríe na bliáim ar fáil. Tá constac mór i gcomhú iománaíochta, cé sin costas na gcamán. Mer nuí-raó éeana tá 58 fóirne iománaíochta as imre i mbliaóna agus sues 50 veic seo tá 150 cluicé imreáir agus ar a laigeat buistéar ceitre camán i ngeat cluicé—sin tuáim is 600 camán buisté i dá mí! Tá mbeaó an targeat as Cumann na mbun Scol beaó iománaíochta ar suibéal i scoiteanna áca Cluicé an bliáim ar fáil.

True spiritual and secular education, practically combined, constitutes the Christian foundation of all human progress. The national educational system of a country shapes and directs the entire outlook and future of the individual as well as the nation. It is of supreme importance, therefore, that our educational system should be suitable and practical in every respect; spiritual, national, cultural and material. Our educational system might also play a great part in the restoration of the national language.

A NEW NOVEL

BY FRANCIS MacMANUS

"The Greatest of These."

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STILL MORE VICTORY SONGS

Roscommon's All-Ireland football win was the history making event of the year, so we give pride of place to a song in praise of the new champions. It is sung to the air of "Sean Eire na nGaedheal go Deo," and appeared in the "Roscommon Herald," being written by Leon Kennedy.

THE LADS OF THE GOLD AND BLUE

I sing a song of Roscommon's men,
A song of joy and pride;
And let it ring by the hill and glen,
From the Suck to Shannon's side,
For Roscommon's men can take their stand

With the best our land can show,
They're true of heart and they're staunch of hand,
And their deeds with honour glow.

Hurra! hurra! for Roscommon's men,
Hurra for her lads so true,
Hurra hurra! for Roscommon's men—
The lads of the Gold and Blue!

They've brought the crown to old Coman's land

With fame and with honour bright,
For they were clean of heart and of hand

When they fought the football fight,

They've put their names on a page of gold

That we'll read all the ages through—
O' sine them high with a gladness bold,

The lads of the Gold and Blue.

Hurra! hurra! for Roscommon's men,
Hurra for our lads so true,
Hurra! hurra! for Roscommon's men—
The men of the Gold and Blue.

Let joy be high on our hills to-day
From Slieve Bawn to Curliu's ridge,
From Tarmon's fields down to sweet Loch Ce,

And from Mantua to Shannonbridge,
Let old and young in their native tongue
Shout high for the Gold and Blue,
And for the lads who brought us the crown,—
Fuireann chroídhá Chomain a buaidh

Hurra! hurra! be our gladsome shout!
Hurra for the clean and true!
Hurra! hurra for Roscommon's men,
The men of the Gold and Blue.

The following lines written before the Cork—Antrim All-Ireland Hurling Final were received too late for inclusion in that issue. They were written by Rev. Bro. Dromey, Greenmount, Cork, and we have pleasure in affording them a little space in this issue even if "Rebel" Cork has gained the Victory.

There's another Munster Final to our credit,
There's another trophy with our store,
The Leeside hurlers once again are tapping
At All-Ireland's ever envied door,

The Kingdom hurlers were easily disposed of,
At Ballyduff we showed them how 'tis done,
Then the Decies for provincial honours played us
And with our cups was placed another one.

Now the rocky roads to Dublin has been smoothed,
The men from Antrim's Glens we're going to meet
And whate'er the Antrim boys may think about it
There's one thing we can't hear of—that's 'Defeat.'

To all true Gaels there's no such thing as 'Border'
The North and South shall meet as of old,
Dal Riada's boys shall march so proud and stately
With the Lee Boys 'neath the green and white and gold.

And when the final whistle shall re-echo,
And Rebel Cork has gained the victory,
Dal Riada's men shall be congratulated
And 'Rebels' chaired a southwards to the Lee.

ONCE AGAIN CHRISTMAS IS WITH US: the third since the publication of the "Gaelic Echo," and it is a pleasure to present yet another sheaf of Victory Songs, for it was in our Christmas Number of 1941 that we inaugurated this popular feature.

We trust that a few more of our readers will come to our assistance in keeping this feature going, for without songs we cannot hope to carry on.

We have received quite a number of songs, particularly from Cork, but we require many more. So, please, dear reader, sit down when you read this and write out that song you know; and then post it to us.

We Want Songs

OLD Songs, New Songs, Club Songs, County Songs, in fact any song with a G.A.A. ring in it, will be welcomed for publication in our "Victory Songs of The Counties."

Send in your's to-day and help to keep this popular feature alive.

Address: "Gaelic Echo," 14, Parnell Square, Dublin.

One of the big surprises of the county championship games this season was the defeat of Moycarkey-Borris by Eire Og (Annacarty) in the Tipperary senior hurling final. Thomas Ryan, Annacarty has penned the following lines to celebrate a victory that should do much to foster hurling in West Tipperary, where Rev. Father Meagher, P.P. of Annacarty is doing such splendid work.

The song is entitled:—

ANNACARTY ABU!

Here's a health to Eire Oge,
May your banners never fall,
You beat Cappawhite and Cashel
And you feared not Killenaule.
On the third day of October,
Nineteen and forty-three
You beat Moycarkey Champions,
And gained the Victory.

Long life to Father Meagher,
For ever may he shine,
Likewise his gallant parish team,
All in their youth and prime.
With his good advice on training
He has surely done his best
And succeeded in the final
To bring honours to the "West."

From the strong Moycarkey tactics
Our backs did never yield,
The ball went down like lightning
To the goal from centre-field,
Our forwards now were ready,
They too were trained and fit,
And with style and combination
They seldom missed the net.

The training now has told its tale,
It strengthened every limb
For this we must pay tribute
To our old "Tipperary Tim."
Now Gaels all over the County,
To victory you'll advance
If you loyally keep together
And give Eire Og the chance.

So loyally work together,
And soon we'll see the day
We'll bring back old glories
Of our Gaels beneath the clay,
All youths now pay attention,
Wield the native ash,
And cheer once more to Victory
Tipperary's famous dash.

The victory of the Barrs for the second year in succession over Ballinacollig has brought another song from Bro. Dromey, which should appeal to the many admirers of the Blues.

THE GALLANT LEESIDE BLUES.

To all my friends and comrades,
wherever you may be,
At home in dear old Ireland or far
across the sea,
I send an invitation to sing or chant
or muse,
A song of praise of all the frays of
Gallant Leeside Blues.

From Lough's own parish here they
come, those trojans dressed in
blue.

You've never seen their likes before,
I'm truly telling you,
This glorious team of hurling men of
skill and grit and brawn
They've earned fame no team can
claim in wielding the camán.

You've heard of famous hurling clubs
throughout our native land
They gave us teams that in their day
were leaders of the band
There's Tullaroan and Erin's Own,
Ahane, Blackrock and Ruas
But none can share or e'en compare
with Gallant Leeside Blues.

St. Finbarr's Club—for that's their
name—has history to relate,
For sixty years and over, they've
done honour to the State
In troubled days or peaceful ones,
there always in the news
They're Irishmen and hurling men,
the Gallant Leeside Blues.

And in this present hurling year
these 'wonder hurlers'—Barrs.
Have proved once more as oft before
to be All-Ireland stars.
All challenges they will accept and—
whether win or lose
Three cheers once more and an en-
core for Gallant Leeside Blues.

BLACKROCK, as most people know,
is one of the great strongholds of
hurling in Cork, and allowing that the
Green and Gold has fallen on lean
times just now, exceptional interest
has always been shown in the game
down in the little fishing village that

has produced some wonderful hurlers.
One of the best known songs of a
few years back by the Lee was

THE BOYS OF BLACKROCK.

The sward has brought home to us
hurlers of late,
But there is one fifteen which you will
all call great,
They are all gallant hurlers, chips off
the old block,
They're a gallant fifteen, and we call
them Blackrock.

I'll begin with our goalie, "Ballyhea"
by nickname,
With Sean Og outside him, the full-
back of fame;
D. B. Murphy and Scannell are hard
nuts to crack,
And to finish our stronghold, we've
Maori and Mac.

Now we come to Mick Murphy, who
plays quarter back,
And when Mick is hurling, 'tis he
knows the knack;
If you knock up against him, you'll
get many spills,
And when Mick plays football he plays
with the Nils.

Mattie Murphy, Jim Hurley, our
centres, I'll sing,
Not forgetting Wannie Connell, who
plays the left wing;
Our star, Eudie Coughlan, was in
many a tough fight,
And, as you all know, Eudie plays on
the right.

Now we come to our forwards, the
men of the day,
Baltie, his brother and Paddy Delea;
Johnny Cotter (Quirke) and Mick
Leahy to make up the lot,
And these are the hurlers of famed
old Blackrock.

So, all you young hurlers, take pattern
by me,
And don't waste your time on the
banks of the Lee;
But come down to Beaumont with all
the young stock,
And learn how to hurl with the Boys
of Blackrock.

SA NŠAORTA TUIT

'San Šaorta tuit, 'sa nŠaorta tuit,
'San Šaorta tuit an ordce nium,
'Sa nŠaorta v'eistea le n-a šut,
Is truaš mo taise šan Šite 'šam,
Is buacall aerae eadrom me,
Sonai, šeamhar fion-šasta,
Comnuim tuom fém le trémise 'oerš,
'S šan éinne 'n bit' san ordce tuom.

Dá vtašá fém le n-šontait tuom,
'S an éleim a cumtead snaróm
orann,

Tuim áit sa tšaošal nae mbréas-
tann tú

'S níor baogal duit glór do
munntir-e.

'Sa nŠaorta tuit ašus nš.

'Sé nemim fém mbré 's mbrú
Ššac tá dá vtašann mo cumne
šom

Šur cam 'ššur elan išo bréire
fir

Cé nár taobuig tuom-sa pum
acu.

'Sa nŠaorta tuit ašus nš.

THE ROSE TREE.

"O words are lightly spoken,"
Said Pearse to Connolly,
"Maybe a breath of politic words
Has withered our Rose Tree;
Or maybe but a wind that blows
Across the bitter sea."

"It needs to be but watered,"
James Connolly replied,
"To make the green come out again,
And spread on every side,
And shake the blossom from the bud
To be the garden's pride."

"But where can we draw water,"
Said Pearse to Connolly,
"When all the wells are parched away?
O plain as plain can be,
There's nothing but our own red blood
Can make a right Rose Tree."
W. B. YEATS

Cúo buailte aš munntir "do
Ciarratšeac" Teó., Tráiš, aš
foitšige aš luac "Mac
na nŠaorta," 14. Ceanós
nait, Baite Šca Cúac.

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