

Come here, you little chick!" holding out his silver watch.

With a final pirouette she finished with a grave little courtesy, then ran to Silas: "Is there birdie in der?" and he caught her up and kissed her.

When the old lane is shady in summertime, and golden-rod and daisies crowd the way, and raspberries climb the stone-wall, and merry squirrels chatter and mock the red-breasted robins, and bees go humming through the odorous air, there comes a big white horse that looks like Washington's in the picture; and how carefully he walks and bears himself, for he brings a little princess who has made the old house a home. Such a fairy-like little thing, who

from her sunshine makes everybody bright and happy, and Silas's grim old face is smiling as he leads the horse, and Maria, with her basket of berries, is helped over the wall by Dexter Brown, who always says he must go but never does, for they love him, and he and Silas work harmoniously together. And grandma's eyes are brighter than ever and her cheeks as red.

"What comfortable folks they air gittin' to be," say the neighbors, "kinder livin', but I dunno but goin' a berryin' a hull artemoon is right down shiftless,"

Winter is over and forever gone from that household on the hill: the coming of gracious, smiling spring in' a sweet child's presence has made eternal sunshine in those ice-bound hearts,

HINTS TO FOOTBALL CAPTAINS.

BY WALTER C. CAMP.

MUCH has been written from time to time of the growth of the game of football, and the reasons for its popularity, but no one has described that which is the real secret of its fascination; viz., planning the campaign. Planning a football campaign is a most interesting piece of strategic work, and the amount of thought expended on it would astonish the majority of that eager audience which crowds the Polo Grounds on Thanksgiving Day.

"Get some of your old men back to coach," is a bit of advice often given to captains of crews and ball nines. But to no one is it so invaluable as to football captains. It is the careful planning of the season's work that will bring victory in November. Through the summer the captain has been counting over the material he will have as a nucleus in the fall, and he has also calculated about how much he can rely upon from preparatory schools. As a rule he treats with distrust all reports of wonderful men in the incoming class, for the players who may have been giants on school teams are generally lost in the crowd on a university field.

His first interest on looking over the men he means to make use of is this: Are there enough old men to steady the team? With five old men no captain should be discouraged, and with six or over he ought to be hopeful, provided he has a half-back and a quarter among them. The reason for this is that he can then arrange to have a veteran next to every

novice in his team, by scattering the three old rushers. It is amazing what steadiness can be infused into a team in this way. If the captain has six instead of five, he can then strengthen the weak side of his team by putting an old hand as an end-rusher on the side of the green half-back.

This plan of formation is merely for the early weeks of the season until the real campaign can be laid out. The veterans act as coaches to the new men, and after ten or fifteen days of playing in this way, the novices, if they be at all promising men, will have learned the general system of play, for the positions in which they stand. That is, the rushers will have learned not to bunch, *i. e.*, keep too close to the next man, and also not to lag, or be slow in lining up when the ball is down. They will have been repeatedly cautioned against tackling high and not getting through hard. A new half will have learned about how far back he ought to stand! and how quickly he has to kick. In this way the captain can accomplish a double amount of work, for while he is looking over his new material, and deciding upon what men will develop into the service, his old players are giving very efficient assistance to him by coaching the new ones and rapidly breaking them in. Were it not for this, things would be in almost as much of a mess after ten days' playing as at the start, for it frequently happens that a green captain will make so little use of his old men in the way of

coaching that the new men will be blundering on in the middle of the season full of faults which might have been stopped the first week.

Two weeks' work will enable the captain to select about sixteen men from whom he sees his team must be drawn. If he is wise he will be inclined at this period to favor those men who are showing rapid improvement rather than those whom he knows have already reached their best days. He will also put some thought upon the general weight of his team as well as the probable weight of the other teams he must meet.

When he has considered these matters well, and made up in his own mind the strongest team he can select, he should play these men together as nearly as possible for some three or four days, and after making any changes that may seem to him necessary, get his coaches together and stand with them for one afternoon, when all will have a good look at the practice. That evening he should have a meeting of the team and coaches, and a thorough discussion of the strength and weakness of the team. One learns very rapidly at such a meeting what the team considers its strong points and where they fear an enemy. During the next week the captain and coaches should decide finally upon what the strongest plays of the team are likely to be. The great necessity of doing this early is to thoroughly provide against accident, not only by being more than usually careful of the one or two men most engaged in these plays, but also to train others up to a moderate degree of skillfulness to take the places of men who may be injured. A decision must also be reached regarding the weak points of the team, and these not only strengthened but made less evident to opponents,

Following upon these decisions should come a week or more of very hard individual coaching. Each man is taken by himself and worked at as though upon him and his particular plays depended the victory or defeat of the team. A curious fact is that just at this point in the season, not only the team, but very often the captain and coaches are sure that their playing *is* poor and that defeat stares them in the face. The true explanation of this is that the enthusiasm has been worked off to a great extent, and the players have not yet gained the dexterity that practice will give, so that the poor playing is really painfully apparent.

Let us review the plan of the campaign up to this point. The captain first sprinkled his veterans among the raw recruits, so that it was necessary for them to mingle. By doing this he has prevented the old men from banding together and looking down upon the new ones, and has also compelled the green men to ask questions of the experts. While all were thus being well shaken together, he has had an opportunity to select the best team, and, by actual trial, to judge in what line of action they would prove strongest. All this has been effected with the least possible loss of time, for, owing to the shortness of the football season, time is too valuable to be wasted even in experiments. Of individual coaching, little need be said, as it is only a means of improving details, and does not affect the campaign, except in the way of dexterity.

The captain next begins to study the best offensive and defensive tactics for his team. He starts with the problem in such shape as this: Given the kick-off with an adverse wind, what is the best opening for the style of game his team plays? He may kick the ball as far down the field as possible. But this is very seldom a good opening, because the side that wins the toss, having the choice of goal or kick-off, it invariably happens that the kick-off is made against the wind. The captain knows that if he makes a straight kick down the field under these circumstances it will be returned, and with the help of the wind, will most surely be put back some distance into his own territory, so that the play will have lost him considerable ground.

The next thing to be considered is a long kick down the field and out of bounds on the side. This opening was a strong feature of the Yale game for several years, owing to the combination of two happy possessions—a strong place-kicker and a very fast end-rusher. The play usually means that the ball, when it goes into touch, is first reached by the opponents and they return it into the field at the point where it went out. Of course, the ball has made considerable advance into the enemy's territory; but as an offset to this, they have gained possession of the ball, and, if their play is strong and accurate, they should be able to return it past the center of the field on their first kick. While the above is the usual result of the play, it does happen that a fast end-rusher, in perfect unanimity with the place-kicker, will succeed in reaching the ball before the oppo-

nents. In this case there is an actual gain of the distance from the centre of the field to the spot where the ball crossed the touch-line. Another opening is to dribble the ball and then pass it back for the half to punt. This gives the rushers a chance to get up the field and prevent a return kick. In this case, unless the ball is fumbled, there is only an apparent gain, for the ball is in the possession of the enemy and after the down will be returned probably beyond the centre of the field.

The opening most popular during the past season was the "running break" or "V." The ball was dribbled and passed back to a half who was protected by the rushers enough to insure his having a fair start. He then made a break for the opening in the line and carried the ball as far as he could. The amount of interference allowed last year made this a strong opening, because the player usually made several yards, and that without losing the ball.

From this point on, however, comes the real strategy of the game. An illustration of this is the statement made and carried out by one of the coaches of a team which competed one Thanksgiving Day, not many years ago. After a conference with the captain and other coaches the night before the game, he made the astonishing statement that his team would, if they lost the toss, put the ball over the enemy's goal-line in less than five minutes from the time of kick-off. The diagram of the plans was laid out on paper, and is still in the possession of one of the men. The plays were these: The ball was dribbled and passed by a long throw to the right half-back, whose run was made successfully. The ball was snapped and passed to the rusher next the end on the same side. This play was strong, because the position of the men and the throw of the quarter made it appear that the ball was again going to the half, and the opposing rushers went through the more eagerly. The next play was a centre-play—the guard giving the ball to the quarter for a run, and the final play, which carried the ball over the line, was out next the end once more. The immense superiority of such a system over the usual method of sending the ball wherever there seems the most chance was conclusively proven, for, with the exception of a slight fumble, which caused one more down, there was no break in the chain, and each man made within a few yards of the spot which had been marked on the paper,

While it is, of course, impossible to lay out the entire progress of the game, owing to the element of uncertainty introduced by ignorance of what line of action may be adopted by one's opponents, it is possible to plan what ought to be done at certain stages in the game.

For instance, for many years it was thoroughly believed by all the best football men that the kicking game could not be played against the wind under even the most favorable circumstances. This theory has, however, fallen through, and it is generally concluded that with fast, good rushers, and strong, accurate kickers, the running game can with advantage be supplemented with a few timely kicks.

The opening of the game has been discussed; the next point is the placing of the men on the first down by the opponents. This is something of vital interest to the captain, for if the opponents have any strong line of play they will undoubtedly develop it early in the game. To discover and prevent the surprise is, therefore, the end to be aimed at, for a strong play successfully made at this point seriously weakens the adversaries, not only taking from them the actual ground, but upsetting their confidence and nerve as well.

Upon the use of the quarter depends the style of this first defensive play. Some captains keep him back of the line where he may assist the half-backs; others send him up into the line as an extra rusher. Neither of these two plans can be said to be the right one in all cases, for there are two elements which govern the play and should enter into the decision. The first is the relative skill of the rushers and halves. It is always possible for a captain to say whether he is strongest "in the line" or "behind it" and the quarter is most needed with the weaker set of players. The second is the wind. If this is very strong and straight, with the opponents, there is the greatest necessity of checking their running before they shall have advanced the ball within kicking distance of the goal, even though by doing this the captain for the time being leaves his halves and back less secure. Therefore the wise captain brings up his quarter into or just behind the rush line, and concentrates all his strength on preventing the gain of five yards on three downs. In this way he can oblige his opponents to kick or lose the ball before they are far enough advanced to be in dangerous proximity to his goal.

Of these two elements, then, it may be conclusively argued the wind is the greater, and if very strong, should decide him to bring his quarter up, even though his line of forwards be exceptionally strong.

The next point worthy of consideration is the offensive and defensive play about the goals. Most important are : *guarding a goal against the wind*, and *trying for a goal with the wind*. The former is of the most vital importance, and time spent upon studying the situation will prove of advantage to every captain. Let us suppose the case of a touch-back (*i. e.*, where the ball has crossed the goal-line, but without compelling a safety), for it is generally at this point that the condition becomes most serious. The captain finds himself driven back into his own goal and facing a wind and a team encouraged by success. His own team, on the contrary, are tired with the effort of contesting the ground, and they are also nervous with the feeling that the least slip on their part means a goal or a touch-down. The privilege of a kick-out—at best a privilege of less than twenty-five yards start—seems pitifully small in the face of the odds. The situation is the same as at the kick-off upon beginning, with the exception of the proximity of the goal and the attendant danger. The ball may be place-kicked or drop-kicked down the field or out of bounds; it may be dribbled and passed back for a punt or run. There is one thing which must not be done, and that is to kick or pass the ball out toward the centre of the field or across the goal, for as surely as the ball falls into the enemy's hands in front of the goal, they will, if their play be accurate, not fail to score. Next to be borne in mind is that when the ball does go into their hands it must be either a down or a fair, *i. e.*, it must not be a fair catch, but must go out of bounds, or into their hands on the roll with a rusher close enough to make them have it down. There are three ways to accomplish this : the first is to place or drop-kick the ball down the edge of the field and out of bounds, or accomplish the same result by a dribble and punt; the second is to attempt the running game until two downs are exhausted, and then kick out of bounds; and the third, and most aggressive of all, to kick the ball a short distance ahead but well up in the air, and putting all the men on side, rely upon getting possession of the ball in air or in the scramble as it falls.

If the last plan is adopted every man in the line must go forward with one idea in his mind, and that is to prevent a fair catch at all hazards.

Another question is often discussed regarding the protection of a goal, and that is : Is a man ever justified in running round behind his own goal with the ball on the chance of getting out far enough on the other side to gain ground? The only answer to this question lies in the head of the man who has to do it. There are some who can be trusted to know when it can be done, but most should be told to never do it unless at that point in the game a safety will turn the balance of the score, and they should not do it in the first half.

But to pass to the attack. A side has advanced the ball within kicking distance of their opponents' goal, having the wind and the ball with them. Should they at once attempt a field-kick, or by running try to get nearer, or even rely upon a touch-down? If they try a field-kick, should it be a drop at goal, or should they punt the ball just short of the goal and chance a muff or a fumble by their adversaries to yield a touch-down? Unless a team is remarkably strong in the running game, and has been making their five yards, it is silly to try a touch-down or nothing. Again, unless there is plenty of time remaining, it takes too long to work the ball up to the line and get it across, beside the many risks of losing possession of it in the meantime. Finally, a punt up in front of the goal is too decidedly a confession of the lack of a good drop-kicker.

As a rule, then, the first down had better be utilized by getting the ball in front of the goal if it is off at the side of the field. The second down should be an attempt to get somewhat nearer only in case the snap-back and quarter are sure men. Otherwise the drop-kick should be tried after the first down. One thing to be said in favor of trying the drop-kick at once, without attempting to bring the ball in front of the goal, is that the adversaries are then much less prepared for the try, and hence the kicker has a more uninterrupted aim and longer time. After the first down the opponents concentrate their attention more upon the kicker.

These are salient features, but, of course, there is an infinity of detail, of which the present article does not give space to speak.