

## FOOTBALL LITERATURE

By Charles Phelps Taft, 2nd

A YALE man can hardly be enthusiastic about Percy Haughton, but at least he can be fair, and it takes only fairmindedness to conclude that he was one of a very few great coaches of the fascinating game of football. He has now joined an increasing group of well known coaches in helping to create a football literature. It is not too much to say that his book is the best of them all.

Mr. Haughton has written, so he says, for the average spectator. The first half of the book is directed toward helping this large class of our population to watch the game intelligently. The opening chapter is quite elemental enough for one entirely ignorant of the game. The second chapter is a concise and interesting account of the history of the game.

This is avowedly the purpose of the book, but it is far more than a primer for spectators. Like all our activities today, football in each large college is becoming highly organized, and a successful system requires not only an executive head with a knowledge of the infinite detail of the game, and with a strong personality, but also a body of men which corresponds to the Board of Directors in a corporation. For any such body which seeks to plan out a season and a general scheme looking

toward the humiliation of the bitter rival, this book contains a fine outline of the fundamentals of such a plan, and much which will arouse thought and valuable discussion. The second half of the book gives an analysis of the effective pre-season development of a college team, of the campaign, of the physical care of the men, of the proper place of scouting, and a brief statement of the essentials of attack and defense.

A few passages are very interesting. In outlining the general principles of offensive strategy, Mr. Haughton says, "Between your own twenty and forty yard lines...don't dare to use any forward pass which may be intercepted." One is therefore led to believe that the departure from this principle seen in the last three Yale-Harvard games was merely a temporary departure, and was perhaps due to Buell's own initiative.

In the chapter on the attack, Mr. Haughton mentions the kick as an offensive weapon, but he fails to describe the kicking game in general. This fundamental of football is never understood by spectators, and not always by coaches. Its value even in the so called modern game should be emphasized, as I am sure it is emphasized by most of the Harvard coaching staff. Aside from this, however, the statement of the principles of attack is extremely good. The defense lends itself less readily to generalizations.

Mr. Haughton devotes some ten pages to very pertinent comment on the knocker and know-it-all in the stands who can always tell on the spot what the quarterback should have done. This might very well be extended to include many of our friends who report football games for the newspapers.

One of the best features of this book is the collection of photographs, which are not distributed through the volume haphazardly but really contribute to the development of the thought of the text. Yale-Harvard and Harvard-Centre pictures predominate, and one notes that almost as many successful Yale plays are pictured as those successful for Harvard. Harvard always has been a generous rival.

It is a high testimonial for the game of football that it should require players with brains and attract grown up men with brains, and that one of the great coaches of the game should write almost as well as he worked.

What good is like to this,  
To do worthy the writing and to write  
Worthy the reading and the world's  
delight.

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Football and How to Watch It. By Percy  
D. Haughton (Harvard Coach, 1908-1916).  
Marshall Jones Co.