

Rugby football was introduced into Canada by the officers of the regular troops stationed at Montreal. The first game of which there is any authentic account was played in 1865 at Montreal between the officers of the regiments stationed there and the civilians, who were nearly all undergraduates or graduates of McGill College. The new game met with favour, and soon Quebec, Halifax, Toronto and Kingston could boast of football clubs.

In 1876 the game was introduced into Harvard, and annual matches were played between McGill and Harvard until 1883, when the great divergence of rules made it difficult to continue the contests. The match of that year was played at Boston, and as the Harvard club was accustomed to playing only 11 men on their team, a compromise was made, and 13 men were allowed for each college.

In its growth in Canada the game has never departed very far from the English customs, although it shows a number of characteristics peculiarly Canadian.

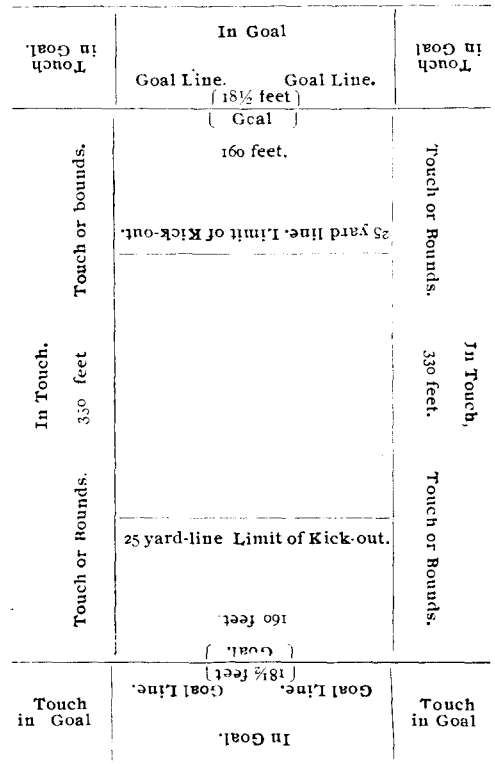
Compared with the wonderfully rapid development of football across the border, the game has progressed but slowly here, and the reasons are not hard to find. The country being younger, boys have not been brought up to football at school. The climate is, however, the great factor in retarding its growth. While the collegians at Yale, Harvard and Princeton have three months of playing weather, in Canada it is the exception to have more than a month and a half, and sometimes the season is still shorter. The effect of this is to render the complicated system of signals and concerted plays, which form such an important part of the American game, entirely out of the question and to favour the production of good individual players rather than of good teams.

The differences in the rules of the Ontario and Quebec Rugby Unions for a long time have hampered the playing of inter-provincial matches, but these differences have now been practically done away with, and the union of the two bodies, with the establishment on a firm basis of a Canadian championship, to be annually competed for, will do much towards popularizing the game.

The influence on Canadian football exerted by the American game has been great, and twice have deputations been sent to witness an important match with a view to changing the rules of the Canadian game and thus making both games

more nearly alike. The result of the last visit was that the Canadian visitors have not altered the opinion they formed last year of the American intercollegiate game, and they are unanimously of the opinion that the American style of play is in no way superior to their own Rugby game. The game is a much more confined and close sort of football, admitting of little of the fine punting, nice passing, fleet running, or, in fact, any of the pretty plays that go to make Canadian football what it is.

A—Plan showing the lines of a Canadian Rugby Field.



As the game is now possibly in a transition state, the question arises will Canada follow the English or American style?

The Canadian Rugby game is played by 30 men, 15 on each side, arranged as follows:—One full-back, three half-backs, one quarter-back, from four to seven wings, and the rest in the scrumage. The full-back is the last defence man, and he must be a sure catch and must not know what it is to let a man pass him;