

"EBBET'S FIELD"

BROOKLYN GIVES OUT WORK OF LEVELING GROUND.

The President's Elaborate Plans for a Diamond, With Stone Foundation, Which Will Be Overlaid With Steamed Ashes and Topsoil

SPECIAL TO "SPORTING LIFE."

Brooklyn, N. Y., February 5.—The first contract for the construction of Ebbets Field was awarded to Messrs. Castle Bros. of Brooklyn last Thursday. It provides for an excavation of 10 feet, which will be supported by an abutment wall, on the Montgomery Street side on the field and the filling in of the lower part of the Sullivan street side, making the playing field almost level, except for a slight fall for drainage purposes. The diamond for a space of 145 feet by 145 feet will be excavated three feet below the finish grade of the field and this excavation refilled as follows: At the bottom of the field will be laid stones of not more than six inches in thickness, diminishing in size until at the



Chas. H. Ebbets

TOP OF THE STONE FOUNDATION, which is to be 18 inches in depth, the stones will be one inch in diameter. On top of the stone foundation, which is to be level, will be laid nine inches of clean, steamed ashes, which are to be thoroughly wet, stamped and rolled with a five-ton roller until thoroughly compacted. On this foundation of steamed ashes will be nine inches of good top soil, which will be rolled perfectly level. In the stone foundation at the first-base corner will be laid a six-inch earthen pipe drain, which will be covered with good sod for a small space to prevent sand from falling into the pipe. The pipe will run to the

-END OF THE GRAND STAND

on the Bedford avenue side and have fall enough to carry the water off from this excavation. The pitcher's box will be elevated, with a general decline to the base runs, which are to be perfectly level. The retaining wall and fence to be built on the Montgomery street and Bedford avenue sides of the field will be of reinforced concrete. The abutment wall will be carried to a height of nine feet above the playing field on both sides and on this will be erected a concrete fence 10 feet high and nine inches thick, reinforced with iron bars. Upon this fence will be placed eight flagpoles for the purpose of flying flags with the name of each club in the National League.

BROOKLYN BUDGET.

Further Insight Into the Ambitious and Far-Seeing Plans of President Ebbets for His New Ball Park—The Future of Major League Ball.

BY JOHN B. FOSTER.

Brooklyn, N. Y., February 5.—Editor "Sporting Life."—Contract No. 1 has been let for the beginning of work on Ebbets Field, and it will be only a matter of days before the rattle of the hammer and the tattoo of the riveters will be heard over Flatbush way, while the soulful sob of the concrete bucket will blow oceanward as huge spoonfuls of cement are thrown into the walls and terraces of the new structures. Castle Brothers, of Brooklyn, drew the first contract on the work because they were the lowest bidders. Their part is to dig. They will make an excavation of ten feet on the Montgomery street side of the field. A strong abutment wall will hold the earth in place after they are through with their work. They are also to fill in on the Sullivan street side of the ground.



John B. Foster

THE PLAYING FIELD at the new grounds will be level except the slight fall which is necessary for drainage purposes. This is only six inches in every one hundred feet. By the way, that brings to mind one feature about the new ground, which should be an improvement over the old, and that is its "drying up qualities." The chances are that it will not be necessary to postpone so many games in Brooklyn because of wet grounds after the new park is completed. That's another help. When

folks find that they can go to Ebbets Field, with the chances good that they will see base ball, even if it does rain some, there will be more spectators on days when the indications are bad. There never was much certainty at the old ground. When the rain came down hard the field became a puddle. The result was that lots of fans could not be induced to pay carfare and take a chance if there was anything in the sky which looked like a bit of vapor.

ON THE MONTGOMERY SIDE.

and the Bedford avenue side of the field, there will be a retaining wall and a fence of concrete. The wall will be about nine feet above the field, and on top of this there will be built another concrete fence, ten feet high, so that small urchins will find it a very difficult matter to scale the smooth stone and take a peep at the players, while, so far as knot-holes are concerned, there will be such a dearth of them that all the old jokes about peeping

one of the busiest spots in Brooklyn. It is not far from the Parade ground and there has been a great deal of a very complimentary nature passed upon the judgment of the president of the club in selecting a location which is near the center of the city's outdoor life, and after the park is built, there is not the slightest doubt that it will be one of the most popular places in the city, not only for the use of the Brooklyn Base Ball Club, but for the use of such other organizations as are successful enough to obtain it for purposes of general athletic activity. The indications are good that the athletic future of Brooklyn will be centered about the new section, into which the park has moved, for years to come. Around it may grow up a colony of beautiful and cosy homes just as have surrounded famous athletic fields in England.

MANAGER BILL DAHLEN

is looking up time tables and mending his

Latest News By Telegraph Briefly Told

SPECIAL TO "SPORTING LIFE."

The Utica Club, of the New York State League, has sold infielder Ward Bastian to the York Club, of the Tri-State League; and has purchased outright second baseman Jimmy Mullen from the Toronto Club.

The Guelph Club, of the Canadian League, is to be purchased from W. A. Mahoney by a local syndicate within a few days. Manager George Needham has signed three players, namely, infielder O'Connor, southpaw pitcher Fitzgerald and an Indian catcher named Fisher.

The Newark Club, of the International League, has received the signed contracts of first baseman Harry Swacina and catcher Lew McCarty.

The Rome, Ga., Club, of the Southwestern League, has engaged as team manager catcher Harry Matthews, of last season's Albany (South Atlantic League) Club.

Third baseman Bobby Byrne, of the Pittsburgh team, has sent in his signed 1912 contract, without one word of comment.

Paul McHale, a well-known and popular fan of Worcester, Mass., has purchased the one-third interest in the Worcester Club, of the New England League, held by Jimmy Collins. The latter will seek a New York State League franchise.

The Columbus Club, of the American Association, has signed pitcher Bob Sterling, of Mount Vernon, N. Y., last season with the Richmond, Ky., team, of the Blue Grass League.

A dispatch from Lewiston, Idaho, says that there will be on February 11 at that place a game, "in which Vean Gregg and Al Bonner, formerly of Spokane, but who has signed with the Athletics, will be the opposing pitchers. Gregg will represent Clarkson and Bonner Lewiston. Ed. Wiggins has been re-elected manager of the Lewiston team."

Manager Zeller, of the Springfield (Connecticut League) Club, has purchased pitcher McSurdy from the Utica Club, of the New York State League.

Allen, a right-handed pitcher, who hails from Berkeley Springs, W. Va., has been signed by Manager Griffith, of the Washington Club. Allen reported to Manager Jennings, of the Detroit team last Fall, but was not given a trial. McAleer also passed him up, but on some strong recommendations Griffith has taken a chance with the youngster.

The Mansfield (Ohio League) Club has closed a deal with the San Antonio Club, of the Texas League, whereby outfielder Eddie Collins is traded for first baseman Weikel and a money consideration. Weikel was with the Augusta, Ga., Club in the South Atlantic League, last season.

George Stone, former champion batsman of the American League, now of the Milwaukee (American Association) Club, refuses to play ball this year. He says farming in Nebraska is too profitable.

Mrs. Mordecai Brown, who arrived in Terre Haute, Ind., February 2, says her husband, the famous Cub pitcher, will not play ball this year, and intimates he will never play ball again. She said he is not dickering for salary with the Cubs, and that when he joins her soon he would confirm what she says.

At East Liverpool, O., on February 1 judgment for \$2250 was ordered by Common Pleas Court in favor of Contractor W. J. Winderm against the East Liverpool Base Ball Club for construction of grand stand.

Al Bashang, of Cincinnati, who is now leading the Queen City Indoor League in batting at Cincinnati, has been re-signed by the Lexington Club, of the Blue Grass League, and is to be again in the position of third baseman during the Blue Grass League season of 1912.

through to get a glimpse of the game will vanish. To make it still more difficult for the youngsters and hoodlums, there will be an iron fence four feet high on top of

THE CONCRETE FENCE.

and there will also be eight flagpoles on the fence from each of which there will fly a flag of one of the cities of the National League circuit. When it comes to flags, Brooklyn is as good as any club in the league. If there is one little matter for which the president always looks out faithfully, it is flags, and he promises to have the new grounds ready, if possible, by Flag Day, although it looks as if there will not be much hope for it because of the very cold weather this winter. To add to the art of the affair the concrete fence is to be a dark olive green, and ivy will be planted all along its foundation and the creepers trained to the top.

THIS NEW PARK

is to be built to stand and the chances are that when it is completed it will be

The Detroit Club has engaged Jim McGuire, former catcher and manager of the Cleveland Club, as coach for the Detroit pitchers.

Secretary Quinn, of the Columbus (American Association) Club, has received the signed contract of first baseman Lake, a recruit from the Winchester, Ky., Club, of the Blue Grass League.

A Denver dispatch, under date of February 2, says: "Ira Beldon, outfielder of the Pueblo team last year, is a 'hold-out,' as he has declined to sign a Wichita contract because of a \$50 cut in his monthly salary. Jack Coffey, shortstop of the Denver (Western League) team, intends to quit the diamond for a business career. Coffey writes he will not play ball after this season."

The Chicago National Club has received the signed contract of Charles A. Moore, an infielder recruited from the Los Angeles Club, of the Pacific Coast League.

President W. H. Watkins, of the Springfield (Central League) Club, is still signing players for the team. He has secured Clarence Kovenor, pitcher, for the Crothersville, Ind., Club. He is six feet two inches in height and weighs 190 pounds. Also, Earl Blackburn, a catcher, from the Blue Grass League. There are now 29 on the list, not including Manager O'Day.

The Kewanee (Central Association) Club has signed pitcher William Pressy, formerly of the Pittsburgh team.

In the Central League the Terre Haute Club has signed infielder Kohl, who was last season farmer of the Traverse City Club, of the Michigan State League; the Youngstown Club has received back from the Washington Club shortstop Scott and pitcher Ainsworth; and in Dayton, O., A. J. Fiorini, E. J. Toecklein, H. E. Hucksins, Leo A. Stetts and R. Wells have incorporated the Oils-Superba Base Ball and Amusement Company, with a capital of \$10,000, for the purpose of building a new ball park for the Dayton Club.

Robert L. Lowe, the veteran infielder and scout of the Detroit American League Club during the last three seasons, has signed his 1912 contract, according to official announcement made on the 3d inst. by President Navin.

Monte Cross, formerly shortstop of the Athletics, has signed with the St. Louis American League Club as a scout.

Anthony Carlo, of Chicago, the 18-year-old high school pitcher, who twirled remarkable ball for the Newark Club, of the International League, last season, has signed for next season. By terms of his contract Carlo will not join the team until after finishing school on June 20. He lost only one game last season.

The Giants will train at Marlin, Texas, as the Board of Health of that place has officially certified that there is absolutely no danger now from meningitis.

Manager Harry Davis, of the Cleveland Club, announces that he will start for Mobile, Ala., on February 29 with 11 pitchers and six catchers. The other 20 members of the club will leave March 7 for Mobile. The entire squad will stay in New Orleans from March 18 until April 5, when they start North, arriving home for the opening game on April 11.

At Lansing, Mich., on February 3, first baseman Saier, of the Cubs, was severely shaken up, but not injured, when his automobile collided with a street car.

Manager Callahan, of the White Sox, has definitely decided to train at Waco, and 40 players will leave Chicago on a special train about March 1 for Texas.

The Louisville (American Association) Club has sold catcher Billy Ludwig to the Tacoma Club, of the Northwestern League.

trunk straps. That begins to look as if the base ball season is approaching and it is to be only a question of days before William will board one of those long, luxurious express trains, which lead to the West, and bid farewell to all the comforts of the Winter season, and prepare to plunge headforemost into the active work of putting together a base ball team for 1912. He thinks that he will have a better team than he had last year. So do others. Perhaps all of the teams will be better. In that case, what a race for the next National League pennant we shall have! Suppose that five or six teams should come down to the last week of the season disputing for the pennant. Wouldn't there be some base ball enthusiasm? On the other hand, suppose that six teams should stub their toes in May—but what's the use? That has happened so infernally often there is no fun in it.

NOT AS PAINTED.

Note that the Editor of "Sporting Life" is not inclined to agree with the optimistic Ty Cobb and his prophesy of \$15,-

000 salaries, in which the editor of "Sporting Life" is quite right and displaying sound business judgment. It is true that the profits and the receipts and the what-nots of major league base ball clubs are grossly over-estimated. The trouble with the young men who compute, or try to compute, expenses, receipts, and so forth, is that their figures are without foundation. In the first place, estimates of attendance are quite invariably too high. In the second place no disposition is shown to take into consideration the free list, and that eats out heavily. In the third place expenses are not based on a scale of ten years ago. Expenses have increased fifty per cent. in the last five years. In the fourth place ground rentals are almost treble what they were where base ball corporations do not own their real estate, and where corporations do own their own real estate taxes have gone up because of improvements. In some instances there is less required for insurance, but that is offset by the increase in taxes.

SALARIES ARE HIGHER

than they were and they are dangerously close to the mark which most clubs can stand and make both ends meet. The thousands who saw the World's Series in New York and Philadelphia do not represent the average base ball crowd. An unusual feat will always draw well in the United States. It should do so and patrons should pay for it. The football games between Yale and the minor colleges, and between Harvard and the minor colleges sometimes are even more interesting than those between Yale and Harvard, so far as football goes, but they do not attract 40,000 spectators, and games between Yale and Harvard would attract 75,000 spectators at double prices were there a

PLACE TO PUT THE SPECTATORS.

So with base ball. There may be games played for the World's Series which will bring 30,000 spectators through the turnstiles, but there are scores of games which are played through the season, in which the gate receipts are not large enough to pay the running expenses of the day and this is as likely to happen to a club which is doing well on the field as it is to one which is not making much headway. Base ball in some respects has more solidity than it has had in the past, but the fact is ever in evidence that base ball is a luxury and not a necessity. When men have to trim their personal expenses they will lop off base ball if it comes to be essential that they shall do so.

THEREIN LIES THE WEAKNESS

of the promoters who are making an effort to start new leagues throughout the United States. They are venturing upon their undertaking with the belief that base ball expands like gas. They will learn to their sorrow that the demand for base ball is not equivalent to that for sugar, and will probably be compelled to contribute largely of their "sugar" before they are finished with their venture. Two good Sunday crowds never will compensate for twelve bad weekday crowds, and the quicker that beginners in the base ball world hold that fact to themselves, the better it will be for them.

CHESBRO'S AMBITION.

The Once-Famous Pitcher to Imitate Calhahan's "Come-Back" Feat.

Special to "Sporting Life."

New York, February 3.—Jack Chesbro, formerly star pitcher of the New York American League Club, who has been out of harness for the last two years, will be given a chance to come back by Manager Wolverton, it was learned last night. He will be taken on the training trip, and if he shows old-time form will be retained. Chesbro is now on the Highlanders' ineligible list and will have to apply to the National Commission for reinstatement. Roy Hartzell, third baseman, and J. L. Curry, a recruit second baseman from Reading, sent in their signed contracts to the Highlanders' management yesterday.

THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.

Finally Decides to Retain the 1911 Circuit for This Season.

Special to "Sporting Life."

Keokuk, Ia., February 4.—Following the receipt of a telegram from President Robert Mason, of the Hannibal Club, stating that the \$2500 base ball campaign has been successful and the city will remain in the league President M. E. Justice, of the Central Association, yesterday announced that the circuit will remain unchanged during the season of 1912. Hannibal's guarantee of \$400 will be posted at once. President Justice further declared the applications of Cedar Rapids and Waterloo will be pigeon-holed without being submitted to the clubs unless there is a demand made upon him to do so.

The Chicago American Club has asked for waivers on the veteran outfielder, Pat Dougherty,