

The Humor of Base Ball

ILLUSTRATED IN VARIOUS SAYINGS AND DOINGS

Incidents of the Ball Field and Exchanges Among Exponents of the Game Which Add Somewhat to the Gayety of the Nation.

Every major league base ball player has his peculiarities. Connie Mack keeps score, and makes note of all the bad plays. He tells his men about their faults the next day when the meeting is called at the hotel, when the club is on the road, and in the club house when at home. Frank Chance tells the boys about the plays as they make them on the lot. The New York men will never forget Chance on a few occasions during the past season, when he told Claude Derrick where he



Frank Chance

got off. It was during a game in Cleveland with a man on first base. Olsen hit the ball to the shortstop. Derrick had no trouble in stopping the "pill," but in his anxiety to make a double play by touching second, then throwing to first, he missed the middle bag and also lost the man at first.

"What in — are you trying to pull off out there, Derrick?" shouted Chance from the bench.

"Why, I was trying to make a double play," answered the shortstop.

"Let me tell you something," said the manager. "You keep on making double plays like that and you will double play yourself to Kalamazoo."

Lines to August Herrmann

What though your infield be heavy and slow?

What though it never amount to so much?

Herzog and Hohlitzel, Neihoff and Groh—Think what a hit it will make with the Dutch!

A Plausible Explanation

"On the great plains of Asia," says a scientific journal, "are often found heaps of stones, piled upon the skeletons of men who had evidently perished under a storm of missiles. The identity as well as the crimes of these victims can never be ascertained." Shows how little the wise men really know. Who could these victims have been excepting pre-historic umpires?—Cincinnati "Times-Star."

League Meeting Incidents

Bozeman Bulger, of the New York "Evening World," found a few humorous features of the National League meeting at the Waldorf-Astoria, which he mentions as follows:

"We are now face to face with the highest price ever paid for first call on World's Series tickets. The amount is \$260,000, that being the sum paid by Joseph Lannin for half interest in the Boston Red Sox. This will explain the rather puzzling problem of why a multi-millionaire of peaceful disposition would quit his ease of mind to get mixed up in base ball.

"My main reason in desiring to be president of a big league club," explains Mr. Lannin, "was to avoid the trouble I have had every year in getting tickets to the World's Series."

"One of the funniest incidents of the second day's pow-wow was a young reporter getting Clark Griffith mixed up with Fred Clarke and quizzing him about the Tinker deal. When addressed as Mr. Clarke, the Washington manager took it for granted that the reporter meant Clark Griffith. Upon being asked about Tinker Griff declared that he did not want him, and didn't think he could get him if he did. The reporter was rushing to the phone with the 'big story' when Griff tumbled and stopped him in the nick of time."

"From the South, Sah"

During the recent National League meeting, while the base ball men were assembled in the lobby of Proctor's Fifth Avenue Theatre, whither they had accompanied Governor Tener, to do honor to Captain Anson, who was doing a vaudeville turn there, an incident occurred which is described as follows by Billy Weart, of the Philadelphia "Telegraph":

Billy Murray, the former manager of the Phillies, won a bet from President Baker, of the Quakers, at last week's meeting. During a fanning bee one evening, Murray, who is a close student of human nature, remarked:

"Do you know, Mr. Baker, you can never find out the exact place that a Southerner comes from? Ask any Southerner and he takes a whole State as his native place. Ask a Northerner and he will tell you he is from Punsutawney, Pennsylvania; Oshkosh, Wisconsin; or Hoboken, New Jersey. But ask a Southerner and you can never get any definite information."

Murray's statement didn't appear logical and an argument resulted.

"All right," said Murray, "I'll bet you I can prove my statement."

The bet was made. Then Murray called to Irving

Cobb, the well-known short story writer, to join the party.

After Cobb was introduced, Murray quietly remarked: "By the way, Mr. Cobb, I believe you are a Southerner."

"I am," replied Cobb.

"What part of the South are you from?" asked Murray.

"From Kentucky," replied Cobb.

There was a laugh from the members of the party. Then the joke was explained to Cobb.

Bozeman Bulger, the base ball writer, was then spotted, and he was also asked to join the party.

After a little conversation, Murray turned to Bulger and asked:

"You are from the South, 'Boze,' are you not?"

"Sure I am," replied Bulger.

"What place in the South are you from?" inquired Murray.

"From Alabama," proudly declared Bulger.

"Boze" couldn't understand what the laugh was about until the nature of the bet was told to him.

President Baker paid his bet. But Cobb hasn't told yet his native town in Kentucky, nor has Bulger given his birthplace in Alabama.

Mr. Weart forgot to add that Scout William Neal, of the Phillies, was also quizzed and, like the others, proudly replied that he "hailed from Kentucky"—thus clinching Billy Murray's case and wager.

The Pinch Hitter

He can't hit like Speaker or Jackson or Cobb;

As a fielder he never was in it—

He can't even hold down a regular job,

Billiard News and Comment

BY JOHN CREAHAN

Philadelphia, Pa., January 5.—Editor "Sporting Life."—Alexander R. Samuels, who, about 30 years ago, was one of the best-known roomkeepers in this country, died on October 17 in Manhattan, N. Y., and was buried on October 22 in Trinity Cemetery, Harlem. Seventy-one years ago Mr. Samuels was born in England, and came to this country with his parents when he was a child. At the breaking out of the Civil War Mr. Samuels entered the Union cause and was promoted to the rank of captain. After the close of the war he was soon found in business in Brooklyn, where he kept an oyster house. His next important movement was to open the Assembly Billiard Room in that city, where his reputation as a roomkeeper became national. It was probably at that time one of the best-paying rooms in the country. There is much in the life and career of Mr. Samuels to recall the life and career of the late William J. Thompson, who about the same time was located in business in this city, although it is more than probable that the young Irishman, Thompson, was the greater business man of the two, and made vastly more money than Samuels did, although the end of the two men was practically the same.

Not satisfied with what was then one of the largest billiard rooms in this country, Mr. Samuels decided to become a theatrical manager and secured the Park Theatre in Brooklyn, after the Conways relinquished it. Mrs. Conway was a noted actress in her day. She was the sister of Mrs. D. P. Bowers. That was at a time when the theatres of this country had stock companies, and while Samuels' management was said to have been practically first class from an artistic view, the new venture was a failure. Mr. Samuels' next venture was more successful. He managed Mme. Anderson, an English walking woman, and made \$14,000 in one month. He was next engaged in managing the Cosmopolitan Theatre in New York, after which he handled and managed an international walking match at Gilmore's Garden, in the same city.

His next business venture was a failure, which reduced him in financial matters; but not discouraged he opened the Grand Union Hotel at Coney Island, which was then the largest hotel there. While at Coney Island Mr. Samuels got into a business conflict with the authority of John Y. McKane, then practically the ruler of that place, with a result that "the boss" of Coney Island came out first in the conflict, after which Mr. Samuels suffered from lack of financial resources; and after resorting to numerous other ventures, he met with a serious accident which resulted in his going to the Soldiers' Home at Bath, N. Y., where he remained for some time—or until he was entirely restored in health—after which he returned to Brooklyn, but never referred to his former reverses in business. Mr. Samuels left one son and three daughters.

I can well recall the time when I made in the billiard world of this country a dead fight against making tables smaller than 5x10. As manufacturers are now making 3x6 tables there is no reason why they should not continue to make them 2½x5, and later on 2x4. The smaller the tables are the more of them you can get in a public room. But there is another advantage—the workmen can put the tables in their grip, which will save the cost of hauling them.

Martin J. Beirn, who died recently at his home in this city, at the age of about 70 years, was probably one of the best-known men in public business in this city, although he practically belonged to a past generation. For many years he was connected with Green's Hotel, where his nephew, Joseph Beirn, had charge of the billiard room when the hotel was under the ownership of Thomas H. Green. The Beirn family was more than well known in business around Eighth and Chestnut streets as far back as 50 years ago. Mr. Beirn's daughter is a Sister of Charity—Sister Virginia—in Notre Dame Convent, Walnut Hills, Cincinnati.

It was but recently that I heard by accident of the death of Charles Conway, who opened a billiard room on Eleventh street, below Chestnut, during '76, in anticipation of making a fortune there during that year. A good deal of comment has been expressed during the past five or ten years at the vast number of large billiard rooms which have been opened in various cities in this country, but I doubt if the owner of any of them expected to practically realize a very large amount of money during one season, as was the case in this city during the Centennial year—not only in the opening of billiard rooms, but very large hotels, incredible as it may seem, the names and locations of which are still fresh in my memory, and if necessary can be given at very short notice.

For reasons not necessary to refer to here, it would not be supposed that the late Jacob Aronson would open a large room here—among others—in anticipation of the Centennial year trade. Conway's room on Eleventh street was not more of a failure than Aronson's at Thirteenth and Chestnut streets,

Yet no team'd be without him a minute.

The hero I sing plays the bench every day

While his teammates are gaining the glory.

But when the test comes in the thick of the fray—

Why, then it's a different story.

When a keen eye is needed and a cool head as well—

When a good thump a victory will clinch—

Then the regular's withdrawn for the man who'll raise!—

For the guy with the punch in the pinch.

An Annual Story

"My game," says the dufer, "by April next

Will develop into a big surprise."

But when April comes he discovers instead

He's developed nothing but alibies.

'Twill Be Different Then

If Joe Tinker can only bat as well next Summer as he is clouting in the Winter League he will make Ty Cobb look like a wooden man.—New York "American."

Solved at Last

The old legend of the Tower of Babel and the Confusion of Tongues wasn't quite correct. That memorable mix-up

while the latter location was by much odds the better of the two, I very much doubt if there are any billiard men in this city at the present day who can recall the life and career of Charles Conway, with perhaps the exception of William L. Rookhill, William H. Morris, John McCabe and Patrick Donahue, proprietor of the Empire Room on Eleventh street, about Chestnut. And yet in his day and time Charles Conway was one of the best-known business men in this city. Originally, or nearly 50 years ago, Mr. Conway was the owner of one of the largest livery stabling houses in this city, a business practically unknown at the present day, but at the time of which I write, a business which was very extensively carried on, not only in this, but in every large city in this country.

Mr. Conway was then said to be worth not less than \$100,000, which was considered to be vastly more than a quarter of a million dollars would be at the present day. Mr. Conway, however, unfortunately for himself, had a very decided tendency to be what is known as a sporting man, which finally resulted in his retirement from his original business. After the failure of the billiard room which he opened, a business of which he had no knowledge whatever, he developed into what is known as a "man about town." I doubt indeed if he ever afterwards was engaged in active business. I might, indeed, did I feel so disposed, write the story of his life practically to the last. I have known many tragic lives during the past forty years, but I cannot recall any life that was darker or more tragic than that of Charles Conway.

Mr. Edward Barnes, manager of the Empire Billiard Room, on Eleventh street, near Chestnut, has been on the sick list for some time past, as I have been informed.

Joseph Lawler, of the R. B. Collender House, of this city, had a narrow escape recently which might have been more serious if not fatal, when an automobile ran over one of his feet. Fortunately, the accident was no more serious than putting Mr. Lawler on crutches for a few days.

William Hoppe, while giving a series of exhibitions in the West during the present month, will have for his opponent young Jacob Schaefer, who is now said to be one of the most promising young experts in this country. History repeats itself in billiards as in almost everything else. If I am not mistaken, Mr. Hoppe is in a measure indebted to the late Jacob Schaefer for being the great master of the game which he is today. That Schaefer's son should now travel with, and be coached by, Hoppe will be more than appreciated by the veteran professionals of this country. George F. Slosson is also one of the great experts of today to whom Mr. Hoppe is indebted for his great billiard art. It is consoling to know that Hoppe has taken young Schaefer for a student. It recalls the days when Thomas Foley, George F. Slosson and the late Jacob Schaefer brought Frank Ives before the public and were, in a large measure, responsible for creating the greatest player known to the history of the business.

I have been informed that George Slosson's room in New York is to be closed, owing to the leasing of the building for another business. I have not been able to learn whether Mr. Slosson has as yet secured a new location; but in view of the fact that for more than 30 years past Mr. Slosson has been one of the foremost roomkeepers of this country, it is more than to be hoped that he has no idea of retiring from business. Mr. Slosson is not only a comparatively young man, but his high and honorable reputation as an expert roomkeeper and man of honor would be a calamity to the business were he to retire from it.

Mr. George Stuart Patterson, attorney at law, and associated in that capacity for some years past with the Pennsylvania Railroad, if I am not mistaken, who was recently appointed on the committee to consider the advisability of permitting railroads to increase freight rates, was a few years ago one of the foremost amateur billiard players of this city, and I have no doubt is such today. Mr. Patterson is a member of the Philadelphia Club, and is as courteous and modest as he is gifted in his chosen profession. His pictures in the press of this city would infer that he is a mere youngster, but as a matter of fact, he must now be a man of at least 40 years.

How many Philadelphians of today can remember or recall Robert Smith Lister, who died recently at his home in this city at the age of 90? I was personally of the opinion that Mr. Smith had been dead for at least a quarter of a century. In his day and time—say 40 years ago—he was one of the best-known men about town. He belonged to the days of Alderman William McMullen, John Tobin, William Whittney, Peter Zell, Thomas Meads and James Meade, the husband of Lucille Western, the actress. Philadelphia has changed very considerably since those days, and in many respects for the better.

was only a directors' meeting trying to soak the president of the Nineveh Reds for selling shortstop Tinda-ra to the Babylons for 25,000' golden goochoos.—Cincinnati "Times-Star."

It Might Be Different

Once in a great while Mr. McLean, the real giant of the Giants, grows helpless. Mr. Seymour must have been waiting for one of those times. But we'll back Mr. McLean to demolish any resident of the National, American, or Federal League, provided he is in normal condition, i. e., about three sheets and no reefs.—Chicago "Tribune."

THE EASTERN ASSOCIATION

A Suggestion for a Change in the Recent Guarantee-Fund Legislation Not Likely to Prove Acceptable.

BRIDGEPORT, Conn., January 5.—Editor of "Sporting Life."—One matter that is not being received kindly by all of the magnates is the one relating to the clause requiring the placing of \$1250, one-half of a month's salary, to guarantee the players their money and stand behind the league in case of a club's disbandment in the middle of the season. As has been pointed out, the old arrangement of filing a bond drawn up by some bonding company is no longer allowed under the National Agreement, and instead, the \$1250, or its equivalent in some bank, must be placed in the hands of the president. Manager Zeller, of Pittsfield, comes forth with the suggestion that possibly Secretary Farrell will allow his league to follow the Canadian League, and instead each of the clubs place in the league treasury 10 per cent. of the gross receipts immediately after each game. Zeller points out that this worked very nicely in the Canadian League last year, and admits that some of the teams paid in as much as \$1800, while the lowest was something like \$800. Therein lies the discrepancy, the difference which the teams would pay into this fund. Under this arrangement Mr. Zeller says the league would soon have a sinking fund of \$10,000, and there are others who like the scheme that point out that the big cities should do something to carry along the league. It would result here in Hartford, New Haven and Springfield paying in a considerable sum of money, while the other five clubs' shares would be very much less. Needless to say this does not appeal to the owners of the clubs in the big cities. They prefer the posting of the \$1250 in cash or equivalent—and this will be the cause of much argument at the next meeting of the league.

News Notes

Jawn Hess, former Springfield pitcher, now on the Harrisburg police force, drew badge No. 13.

It is said that catcher Nagle, of the New Haven Club, is being sought by the Federal League.

John Anderson, former major league outfielder, is an applicant for a berth as umpire in this league.

It is whispered around the circuit that Scelski, the Staten Island man who bought the Meriden franchise, paid \$5000 for it.

Jim Garry and Arthur Nichols both want to be umpires in the Eastern Association. Billy Luby is still a candidate for manager of any team that will take him.

Harvey Russell, the Bridgeport backstop, who ranks with the best catchers in the Eastern circuit, is practicing with the Blue Ribbon basket ball five, of Bridgeport.

Jerry Connell has been a member of the New Haven team for 13 successive years. It is rare for a player to be with one minor league club without being made the subject of sale, trade, release or draft.

President George Cameron is reported as lying at death's door at a hospital in Chicago, whether he recently went for a special operation for the stomach trouble which has been sapping his health and strength for a year.

President O'Rourke has decided that there is no base ball law to prevent William Scelski transferring the Meriden franchise to New Britain, without payment of the \$1747 claim by Mr. Murphy, former New Britain franchise holder.

It is said that Owner John H. Freeman, of the Bridgeport Club, wants \$8000 for the Bridgeport franchise. Figuring on the reported figures in the Meriden deal this price would not seem to be too steep, but Andy Coakley believes it is.

President O'Rourke says that he is going to have all new umpires this season. So good will they be that he has informed Mike Doherty, the real class of last year's arbitrators, that there is no chance of his being reappointed and to take another job if he can get it.

Secretary Hugh Reddy, of the Bridgeport Club, has arranged an exhibition game with the Boston Nationals for April 12. The booking will be a Sunday game and play will be staged in Bridgeport. The arrangement is contingent on the Boston Nationals opening the season at home.



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