

SCIENTIFIC BALL.

By FRED PFEFFER.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



N. FRED PFEFFER.

SCIENTIFIC BALL,

Nathaniel
BY
wrote
N. FRED PFEFFER.

WITH A

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

BY

DE WITT RAY.

AND FEATURE ARTICLES OF INTEREST TO LOVERS OF

15
9552
"America's Game."



CHICAGO:

N. FRED PFEFFER, PUBLISHER.

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CHICAGO

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

N. FRED PFEFFER.

FRED PFEFFER was born on the 17th of March (St. Patrick's Day). The year was 1860. The place was Louisville. When he was christened, the clergyman said: "Nathaniel Frederick Pfeffer, I now baptize thee," etc.

His family subsequently realizing that the small child had a name long enough for three boys, abbreviated it to "Fritz," and, when Fred became old enough to master words of four syllables, he informed his relatives that he had no further use for Nathaniel.

It has been suggested that the readers of "SCIENTIFIC BALL" might desire a closer acquaintance with the author. Having known Fred personally and professionally for several years, the task of preparing a brief biographical sketch in this connection has been assigned to me.

Never was work more willingly undertaken.

In the city of Troy, N. Y., in 1882, I first saw Fred Pfeffer. His work as a short-stop that season had never been equaled in the city that once boasted so famous a team as the "Haymakers." After the game I sought an introduction, and in the conversation which followed, said:

"Pfeffer, Chicago is the place for you."

“Chicago,” he replied, “cuts no figure in my ambition ; I’ve been there once. Do you know a ball player named Sam Morton ?”

Then Pfeffer related his Chicago experience. Samuel G. Morton, now president of the Minneapolis club in the Western Association, had played in Louisville with a Chicago aggregation. Mr. Morton had been favorably impressed with Pfeffer’s work, and had urged Fred to go to the lakeside city. Accordingly, in 1881, Pfeffer took advantage of excursion rates and went to the community of Spalding and Anson. He had a note to President Hurlburt, of the Chicago club, but could not secure opportunity to present it.

A stranger there, he was required to pay his way into the ball park on the lake front. This he did for two days in succession. He yearned, as he expressed it, to “show Anson what he could do,” but failed dismally when he essayed to enter the sacred enclosure while the White-stockings were at practice play.

He came with bright hopes ; he left carrying a mighty load of disappointment. But he was not crushed. He felt that he could play “short” better than the man who then filled that position under the big Chicago captain.

The following year he played the season out with Troy. When the League Schedule was finished, Providence and Chicago locked horns in six exhibition games. Chicago won five of them, and Pfeffer played under Anson. The final game of the exhibition series occurred at Fort Wayne, Ind. Pfeffer, in this duel, made a double, a three-base hit and a home run, his execution deciding the game in favor of the Chicagos.

Then Captain Anson wanted him, and Pfeffer was splendidly qualified to meet the requirements of that great but exacting disciplinarian, Adrian C. Anson.

Let us briefly consider Fred's qualifications: He was a graduate of the "Vacant Lot" school of his profession. Judge Alfred Conkling Coxe of Utica, N. Y.; Hon. Don. Dickinson of Michigan; United States Senator John W. Daniel of Lynchburgh, Va.; Philip D. Armour of Chicago; John B. Day of New York; A. G. Spalding, the world-girdler; Henry Chadwick, Harry Wright, A. J. Reach, John Mandigo, Charley Seymour, W. T. Hall, E. F. Stevens, Tim Murnane—all owned the same base ball *alma mater* with Fred Pfeffer—proud to have taken every degree of the diamond in a vacant lot.

As soon as Pfeffer reached the age where the youngster becomes an outdoor entity, he grappled the national game. A few years later he became a member of the famous "Eclipse" team of his native city. In 1879 he played third base. He had previously covered second, had pitched, and played at short. A Louisville paper, at that period, alluded to him as being "a fine general player, but excelling as a third-baseman and short-stop."

He came up bunched with some celebrated associates. These were Crotty, catcher; J. Riccius, pitcher; McLaughlin, first base; Joe Sommers, short-stop; Browning, third base; Dylar, left field; Burklow, center field; Zimmerman, right field. In this combination Fred covered what clever John Clarkson christened, when he played in Chicago, "the second life-buoy."

Nine years ago, in 1881, Pfeffer says he received his "baptism of fire." The Eclipse team was pitted against

the famous Akron (O.) players. It was one of the grandest battles ever fought on the field of the cloth of pennants. Through nineteen innings, striving in vain for decisive advantage, they rested only when darkness fell, leaving the score tied, 2 to 2. That game cured Pfeffer of "stage fright."

In 1882, while playing short-stop for Troy, he led all the men in that position in the number of chances accepted. He reported for duty in Chicago on April 1st, 1883. Every year since, with the exception of one season, he has accepted more chances than any other second-baseman. In the year when he did not lead in this respect, he suffered for three weeks with a wrenched ankle. That season he ranked second in number of chances accepted.

These lines are written while Pfeffer is 5,000 miles from New York. It will be impossible for him to revise this personal tribute of his biographer, and it therefore becomes me to pen no extravagant laudation of the work which Fred has performed on the diamond. With the figures before me recording his achievements for the past eight years, one conclusion is inevitable :

These figures prove that Fred Pfeffer must possess some advantage over other second-basemen. They prove that he must know or do something to render his work effective which other second-basemen do not know or do. There is some element involved not embraced in "good luck."

What is this element which is the secret of one man's superiority during a long term of years ?

Mr. Pfeffer discloses the secret in this little volume. He attempts no historical sketch of the game. He does

not care to consume time in tracing the evolution of our national sport from the old Saxon recreation of "rounders." Base ball at the present time has no more resemblance to its primitive "first cause" than has man to the initial life-germ of the Darwinian theory. Mr. Pfeffer considers "America's game" as it is illustrated on the diamonds of to-day. He believes that it is a doubly scientific game; that while physical science is the first consideration, it is only the secure foundation to the superstructure of good judgment, caution, courage and brains. The union of muscular science with the more subtle science of the head, produces the highest type of the successful ball player.

A distinguished magazine writer, whose name is known in two continents, concluded a superficial review of our national game, which appeared in January last, by this open sneer :

"The graduates of the Vacant Lot are very great people in this age of intellect."

The famous essayist, by this fling, reveals the weak point in his intellectual and physical armor. He is either a burrowing bookworm or a frail, dyspeptic wreck. He is probably a man whose sedentary pursuits have sucked stamina from his frame and buoyancy from his brain. However that may be, the magazinist is an aristocrat for whom healthy people in America have no use. The man who turns up his nose at the physical education of "the Vacant Lot," is a snob. If so be it he has pedigree, the chances are nine to one he will never have posterity.

Intellect, Mr. Man of Letters, will expand in a vacant lot quite as freely as under the coaching of a foreign tutor.

Without inclination to sermonize, my magazine friend,

permit me to remark that this country has been made great by log-cabin, barnyard, prairie pasture and vacant lot intellect. Intellect has developed the magnificent sport of which Mr. Pfeffer treats in this book. Those who are recognized leaders of the game, both as managers and players, are men of sound habits, sound morals and bright intellect.

“SCIENTIFIC BALL” is an argument for brainy play. The ideas are those of a brainy, honorable man.

A more zealous player, a nimbler thinker, a fairer antagonist, a fellow of finer fiber, or a truer friend than Nathaniel Frederick Pfeffer, one does not care to find.

DE WITT RAY.

SCIENTIFIC BALL.

INTRODUCTORY.

THIS little book is written for those who would play base ball to win, and for those who would fully enjoy winning play.

The fact that I have played ball all my life does not of itself qualify me to claim the attention of the base ball public of this country. If, however, I have made some discoveries, as a result of my devotion to the game, which will benefit the player and yield an added charm to the spectator, then there is no need of apology.

For two years I have been convinced that the game was susceptible of a higher exposition than it has yet received. Slowly, but surely, the system that should govern it has been made plain to me. During the enforced idleness of the Chicago club in Boston, a year ago last summer (waiting for four foggy days for sunshine, which did not smile), I commenced work on the humble treatise in these pages. In no vainglorious mood do I declare that many players will find some points in this volume which are both original and valuable. Those of my professional brethren who will go with me through this exposition, and declare that they have not been helped to a better understanding of their work, will certainly admit that there are

many matters of detail herein treated with which the base ball loving million should be made acquainted.

The keenest critics of the game are those who occupy what are known as the "bleaching boards."

Having laid down this general proposition, I hasten to qualify it. On the "bleaching boards," as a rule, are many who play ball as amateurs, and whose knowledge of the game, gained from experience, qualifies them to criticise or applaud according as censure or praise is merited. How many times, while sitting in the grand stand, have I witnessed some exceptionally fine work which spectators on the "bleaching boards" were the first to recognize. There would be applause from the grand stand, but it would be, as a rule, scattering and tardy. Then, when quiet was restored and play proceeded, how often have you and I heard this query :

"Say, what was that play they just applauded?"

To those who are disposed to ask questions at a ball game, I dedicate this book, and if readers prove as numerous as questioners, I shall be content.

When a ball is hit fairly into the field every spectator should be interested] in knowing whether every player does his utmost to retire the hitter. When there is a man on a base, or when the bases are full, every spectator should be anxious to know—in the event of a hit being made—whether nine players did all that was possible to prevent run-getting.

Under certain conditions there can be but a specific line of play. With these simple pick-ups and throws to first I shall not deal. The point which I would emphasize is this : It matters not where the ball is hit, the work of the man

who has mastered this game is as plain to him as is that of the in-fielder, who takes an easy bound and sends it to the initial bag. It stands to reason, therefore, that the man who plays ball systematically possesses a decided advantage. This I hope to make plain both to player and patron.

IN THE MATTER OF ADVICE.

A good friend, Tom Burns, hearing that I intended to put some thoughts concerning base ball between the covers of a book, said :

“Don't submerge us with advice.”

He proceeded to declare that advice was cheap,—that being the reason ball players get so much of it.

Did you ever pause to ask yourself why ball players receive so much advice? Perhaps you can recall the first time you took a pretty girl to see her first ball game. When she entered the grand stand this dear girl couldn't tell the difference between a muffed fly and Mother Eve's error—the one it is said she committed in that great green “diamond,” the Garden of Eden.

In the first inning your young lady is calm ; second inning, captivated ; third inning, comical ; fourth inning, quizzical ; fifth inning, curious ; sixth inning, cynical ; seventh inning, critical ; eighth inning, combustible. And when it comes to the ninth inning, and her favorites need

but one run to win, this girl by your side pants to pound the opposing pitcher with her parasol. She knows all about how the game should be won ; and as for the umpire—she would just give *him* valuable points with her finger nails if she were down there where she could get at him.

What is it that in one hour transforms the fair and dainty innocent into an enthusiast, an adviser, a pitiless partisan and an oracle ?

I think I know, but I do not propose to tell. Fortunately, to quote Tom Daly, the bachelor, "I don't have to." The fact, however, remains.

The oceans of advice in which ball players are drenched ; the red lava streams of criticism in which they are compelled to bathe ; the shafts of contumely and the Sahara deserts of scorn which they must face, are mainly attributable to ignorance,—that delightful ignorance so admirable in a handsome girl, but so objectionable in her brother—especially if the latter is the base-ball reporter of the *Oconomowoc Thunderer*.

I have received, as Charley Foley says, "lashins" of advice. As this is the only chance I shall ever have to return it, I must improve the opportunity. I have been a target for the temper of hundreds of other men's best girls (when away from home). I have been crucified through the press by their *Oconomowoc* brothers. I can never "get even" with such critics. Therefore, I proceed to empty upon the heads of a defenseless public cauldrons of advice and to shower suggestions upon those millions interested in "Scientific Ball."

IN THE MATTER OF SIGNS.

I will not insult the intelligence of the reader by halting to remark that the members of a ball team should be friendly. Jim Hart declares that there will be "no nigger singers nor ball players in heaven." The inference is that they would fight after they got there. I disagree with James. I give my allegiance rather to that era of universal concord foreshadowed in the "Millennium Plan." It is not only possible, but it is easy to establish that degree of concord in a club so that every man will work for team success rather than for individual records.

A mutual good feeling being guaranteed, the first point to be considered, in my opinion, is a code of signs or signals. Every man who can be seen by the catcher should be made by sign to know when the catcher intends to throw to him. In my association with the leading players of the country, I have not found ten who utilize sign-play as thoroughly as they should.

It is possible for a pitcher to have a code of motions so perfected that every man in his club will know what kind of a ball is to be pitched. Knowing this in advance, the men can so place and govern themselves as to give the man in the box the most effective support. Support is what pitchers must have to win games, and they can all have more of it if they will not fail to keep basemen and fielders informed of what they "propose to do next."

This sign business I believe in making a matter of frequent drill. It need not be practiced in public, but it

should be attended to faithfully in private. If a player who understands the code should leave the club a new signal system can be used. Either the catcher or pitcher can give the signs to the men. It will perhaps be more natural for the catcher to do it when he is up behind the bat. The pitcher can signify to him the kind of a ball he proposes to deliver while both are in their natural positions. The catcher will then communicate it to the infield ; if the men in the outfield are alert, they can get it nine times out of ten. When the catcher is not "up," the pitcher can make known the signals. I can truthfully say that the sign work which I have advocated and practiced for years has helped me in fielding more than any other one thing.

Again and again have I urged pitchers to give me intimation in advance of the style of ball they were about to deliver. When they have forgotten to do this, especially at critical periods in the game, the consequences have often been disastrous. When they have given me the tip that was wanted, the result has satisfied them of the good policy of informing the men behind them of their intentions. First-baseman, third-baseman and short-stop have equally shared in the advantage of knowing the pitcher's intention in advance when they have been informed. Too often they have not been made acquainted with the pitcher's design.

If I have known more about the play in the box in advance of delivery, it has been simply because of persistence in asking and often begging to know. One pitcher has complained that I "was always hounding him," when my wish was to obtain knowledge which would benefit us both about equally. I am sure that *no club in the country* derives that benefit from sign play which it is possible to ex-

tract from a well planned and thoroughly memorized code. It often happens that the catcher sees opportunities for fine play at a base which the pitcher does not notice because of his position. When the catcher gives a sign to a baseman, the pitcher should be able to recognize it and regulate his delivery accordingly.

THE ARGUMENT ILLUSTRATED.

Here is one illustration : The catcher gives the second-baseman a sign that he will throw the next ball pitched. The pitcher should deliver it a little to one side so that it can be surely and easily handled. Otherwise the ball may be hit and the intended play prevented. When pitcher and catcher understand each other perfectly, the basemen interpreting the signal know what to do. The short-stop, having seen the sign, knows that the next ball will not be hit and has ample time to "back up" second base.

ANOTHER INSTANCE.

The base-runner is leading off second. The pitcher should never be compelled to look or turn around to ascertain the situation favorable for an attempt to catch the man napping. Upon a signal from the catcher the pitcher wheels and sends the ball to second. The second-baseman is there to handle it, as he has seen the sign made by the catcher. By a little practice it will be found that this program can be successfully executed ; and after two or three men have been retired in this way the runner is apt to remain glued to the second bag. Signal work can be made equally effective when understood by catcher, pitcher and first-baseman.

Much might be written illustrating in detail the advantages of a signal code. When a right-handed pitcher delivers a low, curve ball to a left-handed batter, the probabilities are that the hit will be to right field. If the first and second basemen know that such a ball is to be pitched, it gives them a special warning to be on the alert.

If the ball delivered to a left-handed batter is to be a high one, the first and second basemen, upon getting the sign, should move up toward second, as you cannot pull a high ball around as you can a low one. A low, curve ball delivered by a right-handed pitcher to a right-handed batter will naturally go to left field. A fast, straight ball is more liable to go to right field. The best pitcher I know of locates his fielders and then pitches accordingly, so as to compel the batter as far as possible to hit in the desired direction. Signals if utilized to the limit of effectiveness will help the movements and increase the efficiency of every player.

Tim Keefe certainly places due importance on sign play. I had a long talk on the subject with him last summer, which is here reproduced. "Years ago," he said, "signs or signals between the pitcher and catcher were something unknown. But as the game advanced in science, pitching and catching also kept pace with the other positions in that respect. At the present day there is no pitcher and catcher who work together who do not use a series of signs or signals. It is really a necessity, and the successful pitchers and catchers of the country to-day are men that work together, not only for their own interest but for the benefit of the entire team, and who have a sign for each and every particular ball delivered by the pitcher. How

often have I noticed some member of the opposing team telling one of his associates at the bat what particular ball is coming, or 'tipping off the signs to the batter'—to use base-ball vernacular. Every team has a different mode of doing this. Sometimes it is done by the 'coachers,' who are apparently coaching the base-runner, but in reality are watching which way the catcher (who is giving the pitcher the signs) moves his hands.

"The catcher generally moves his hands in the direction he desires the ball to go. If he signals for an out-curve ball it very frequently passes unnoticed by the coachers, or any player who is 'tipping off' the signs; but if a speedy ball is signaled for, the coachers at that particular moment manifest a great interest in the base-runner, and his cries of 'Now your off!' 'Slide!' 'Go on!' etc., apparently intended for the base-runner, are in fact a notification to the batter that a speedy ball is coming.

"I have seen the New York team 'tipping off' signs to the batter in a manner so boisterous that even if the catcher was deaf it appeared as if he might hear them. The moment the catcher moved his hands calling for a speedy ball there would be the greatest clashing of bats from the remaining players on the bench, and at the same moment every player would be suddenly seized with a violent fit of coughing. This was all intended to put the batter on his guard as to what particular ball was coming. How funny it was when we played against a team that was working the same 'scheme' as ourselves and were not aware that we knew anything regarding the 'tipping-off racket!' One of their coachers would set up a howling apparently at the base-runner the moment Ewing had signaled the pitcher for a

fast ball, or some of their players would suddenly be seized with a violent coughing spell. But as Ewing had worked the same dodge himself he always kept on hand a supply of signs equal to the emergency. He has one set of signs that are always imperative, and another set that he uses when playing against teams who do not 'tip off' the signs. The latter set are so plain that a person in the audience can tell what ball he has signaled for. He moves his hands with much freedom and in the direction he desires the ball to curve. The moment Ewing has given the sign and he hears the clashing of bats or coughing from the players of the opposing team, he then resorts to the imperative sign, calls for a different curve, and the batter who has received the 'tip' for the opposite ball, hits at the next ball pitched, only to find it about five feet out of reach. At the present day the catcher signals the pitcher, and if the sign does not suit him he generally shakes his head and pitches the opposite ball. Some catchers give their signals with their fingers, some by the hands resting on the hips for a fast ball, and on the knees for an outcurve, and so on."

Concerning the perfect understanding which should exist between in-fielders, Mr. Murnane, a very practical writer, says:

"The short-stop should change his position as he remembers the batsman, and go directly behind the pitcher, if necessary, to lay for his man. If the batter is a slow runner, the short-stop can play a deep field; if there is a runner on first, he can play well toward second, and especially is this the way to play the position when there is a right-field hitter at the bat, as it will give the second-baseman a chance to play off his base. Pfeffer, of Chicago, is without doubt the best player in the league to make a double play. He

seldom looks at the first base, always being prompted by Ed. Williamson, the short-stop, when to turn and let go of the ball and when to hold it ; for there is nothing made by throwing the ball around when there is no chance to get the runner. Pfeffer covers the second base the instant the ball is sent to the right of the pitcher, and makes it a rule to keep well inside the bag so that the runner will not interfere with him. As quick as the ball hits his hands he is on the swing and throws to first without raising his head, judging the direction wholly by the base line. Sometimes he will stop and toss the ball to the pitcher. This is when he has heard Williamson sing out 'no.'

"That one word is enough. He knows that there is no chance to get his man. Many second-basemen are slow in returning the ball to first on a double, fearing they may hit a runner, but the Chicago man never stops to think of this. He swings with the throw and lets her go. If a man is in the way he gets hit, and knowing this they generally duck out of the way. It doesn't take long to find out the timid players, and every chance to worry these individuals is eagerly taken advantage of.

"In throwing to bases for double plays, care should be taken to give the ball to the baseman in a way that he can handle it. Third base, short and second base will find it a great help to practice throwing with an underhand snap. Much time is saved when the distance is short, and the ball can be handled much better by the baseman.

"The infield should always know just the kind of a ball the pitcher is going to give the batsman. If an out-curve, the third-baseman and short-stop should move around toward second, and if an in-ball, the second-baseman can

change his position to correspond with the short and third base. Much care should be taken in making the move, as the opposing batsman is likely to take notice and change his style of hitting. The men can remain in their usual positions until the pitcher has his arm on the swing; by that time the batsman has no chance to observe the movements of the fielders."

Many accidents have occurred in the past where the in and out fielders have come together. This, as Mr. Murnane says, can always be avoided by the out-fielder calling out that he will take it, as he is the one who can see best. The in-fielder, running with upturned face, must keep his eye on the ball, and can never tell just what balls he can take, and therefore will always go for everything until he hears a fellow-player sing out, and then he can stop. Many players become speechless when a ball is hit up between two of them. Practice will obviate this difficulty and make it a source of comfort to the whole team to know that every man will go for everything, and, when sure of taking it in, will call out so the other men can take their eye off the ball. I have seen some of the league players shirk their work and the managers of the team would never know it.

Second-basemen are more likely to make bluffs and get off with them than any of the other positions. A man with a lame shoulder, for instance, would not care to stop a fast ball while on the run towards second, for then he would have to show how weak a thrower he was, as he would be hurried in getting it to first. A captain that understands the game should call down men who like to play for records, as they never care how successful the team may be so long as their average is high.

“BACKING UP.”

Failure to “back up” players and positions has probably been as disastrous a feature of losing-clubs as any other which can be specified. Because of this fatal weakness scores of otherwise well-played games are needlessly sacrificed every year. The men in the Philadelphia league club were well drilled in the theory and practice of “backing up” during the season of 1887, and while many were surprised at their splendid succession of victories on the home stretch, few realized that their triumphs were largely due to the fact that every player was in the right place at the right time.

For the better development of base ball as an athletic profession and a legitimate entertainment, it is desirable that every player should understand that there is more winning play in brainy play than in hand or leg work. No situation which can arise in the progress of any game should or will confuse a player who understands the game.

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

When a ball is thrown from the catcher to second base, the short-stop should run across behind the second-baseman and the center-fielder should run in. Right here is a chance for the pitcher. Suppose the ball gets away from the short-stop, goes to the center-fielder, and the base-runner gets to third. Anticipating a throw to third, the pitcher should back up third base.

When a ball is hit to left field the center-fielder should

get in the rear of the left-fielder as soon as possible. A hit to center field should be a signal for both the other fielders to close up in the rear and be prepared to return the ball immediately should the center-fielder fail to stop it. The right field should be backed by the center.

The following suggestions regarding "backing up" around the second base are presented and earnestly recommended to consideration, as I have found them highly valuable in my personal experience :

When a ball is hit to left field, the short-stop should take second base, while the second-baseman should "back up" the throw. If the ball be hit to right field, the baseman covers second while the short-stop "backs up" the ball. Observe the last-named plan when the ball is hit to center field.

Have each man's duty understood in advance, and then correct and systematic play will come naturally. By having your short-stop take the second base on a ball coming in from left field, you have the first and second basemen to "back up." When a ball is returned from right field, the short-stop and third-baseman can "back up." When the ball is sent back from the middle field, short-stop and pitcher should "back up."

A BRILLIANT BUT RARE PERFORMANCE.

A brilliant bit of work not often performed is this :

A base-runner is on third. A fly hit is made to short field. The runner makes an attempt to go to the home plate. The ball is thrown in from the field, strikes something and its direction is diverted to one side. This renders the catcher powerless unless the pitcher has backed him up.

The short-stop can also run in and frequently be useful. He should see whether the runner is really coming in or only bluffing. If he is not determined to make an attempt to score, the short-stop can take the ball on the fly ; if the runner is bound to come in then the short-stop allows the ball to go to the catcher.

SAVED THE DAY FOR ANSON.

Here is a play which has won many a game for the Chicago club :

Suppose there are three men on bases with one hand out. Under such conditions the Chicago men do not "play in" as close as many other clubs. If the ball be hit to short-stop or third-baseman quick, he does not throw it home but puts it to second in time to permit of a double play by shutting out the runner at first and no run scored.

If the third-baseman or short-stop puts the ball to the home plate, he probably retires one man, but the next batter may make a hit, or some fielder may make an error, and thus give another batter an opportunity to bang the ball. It is, nineteen times out of twenty, the better policy to attempt the double play where the hit warrants the experiment.

When the ball is hit to the second-baseman sharp and quick, he should step back to the base line, touch the runner as he goes by and then throw to first. If the runner doesn't come up to you, run him back toward the base, touch him and then throw to first. If the ball be hit slow, the only way when the bases are full is to run in on it and put it to the plate.

The first-baseman can make this play frequently if the ball is hit rapidly to him. Let him "snap it" to the plate

and then run to the base, so the catcher can quickly return it to him, as under the conditions mentioned the runners do not have to be touched. This quick handling of the ball is something so clean and magical as to excite the highest admiration of those who are qualified to appreciate fine work on the diamond.

DOUBLE PLAYS.

When there are men on bases always strive for a double play. When there is a runner on first bag, let the second-baseman play close to the base line. Thus in case he gets the batted ball ahead of the runner, he has almost a sure thing on a double play.

My experience has taught me that no two men will come down to second base when crowded for time exactly alike. This fact should be remembered by all who cover the second bag. But it is also a fact that a runner, when under pressure, will always come down in an individual and characteristic fashion. Take John Ward, who is one of the most puzzling base runners living. Ward will vary his style of getting away from a bag, but he always alights when he is hustling in the same old stereotyped way. I have found it extremely useful to "keep tab" on the way runners come down to my base. Some make it a practice to collide with you in such a way as to block you from throwing. In those cases I rush at a man, touch him, jump away from him and

recover to throw to first. For so doing I have been many times criticised, but, when I do it, it is because I know my man. Believe me, there is no egotism in this. It is only a measure of self-preservation.

It should be remembered.

Another axiom of the game which should be made more prominent is this :

Whenever there is a runner at first base, there is always a chance for a double play on a batted ball. This point M. J. Kelly, of the Boston club, never loses sight of. Hundreds of times I have heard him call from the right field and always at the right time to remind men that they must not be satisfied with doing one thing as long as it was possible to score two points.

The certain mark of superiority in an in-fielder is the fashion in which he throws a ball, making a double play. The cool-headed man is always the general.

The level-headed man on the ball-field will regulate his action according to the hit. If the ball is hit sharp, do not throw it as hard as you can. Take your time and endeavor to throw it high or low, according to the preference of the baseman who receives it. Too much haste on the part of the man who has the first handling of the ball has hundreds of times prevented what would otherwise have been a double play. Send the ball properly to the second-baseman, and it gives him a chance to get himself in position to throw effectively when he receives the ball.

BASE - RUNNING.

There are comparatively few men playing base ball for a living who excel as base-runners. On an average there are not more than two in every team. To be successful in getting from bag to bag, a man need not necessarily be a remarkably swift runner. He must know when to "take ground" and how much of it to take. He must get away the moment the pitcher starts to draw his arm back.

Again, a man is not a base-runner unless he knows how to slide and when to go down. I care not how fast a player can run, I would not have him unless he would slide. You seldom see a good runner who is on second base attempt to steal third unless he should happen to get a big lead and is satisfied that he can make it without the handicap of a close decision. A man who is on second when there is no one out, should not attempt to steal third. It is strange that this is not more frequently impressed on players. A man on second, with no hand out, is nearly as well off there as he would be on third. This is the way to play sure ball.

Much depends, however, on the state of the game; if it is close, all the more need of extraordinary care. Many games have been lost by fruitless and senseless attempts of men on second to steal third. Had they remained where they were safe, a hit or an error would have brought them home and won the game.

A good base-runner causes fielders to make numerous errors. They know he is tricky and will take advantage of every little weak spot in the opposing team. They also

know that they must handle the ball quickly, for with bungling work the man they are watching is liable to steal a base. Under such conditions the chances for errors are materially increased. To be a good base-runner, a man should be constantly "on the jump," ready to take advantage of any little misplay that may occur. You often see a ball going to an opponent on a bad bound. It is diverted in an unexpected direction, and the runner who is alert can steal a base.

Suppose a runner to be on second. A fly-ball is hit to short right field. The runner knows he cannot get to third on the play but he feigns an attempt in that direction. Let him not, however, take his eyes off the ball. If the man who has fielded the hit throws to third, there is plenty of time to get back to second. But if the ball is thrown to second the runner must break for third with all his speed and be prepared to slide. Nine times out of ten he will reach third all right.

Comparatively few persons understand why this is so, but a little explanation makes it plain. When the ball is thrown to second it must be handled twice, involving double the time. The throw to third must be rapid and perfect.

Many ball players do not make as good a record between bases as they might if they would remember the throwing capabilities of the man who has hold of the ball. There are good, and there are what the profession call "crazy" throwers, who scarcely know where the ball is going to land after it leaves their hands. On the latter class a runner is sometimes justified in taking a desperate chance, for the probabilities are that the man who dares will "get away with it."

Suppose a long-fly is hit to left, center or right field when there is a runner on first. The good base-runner does

not go up half way to second base and there await the result. The fielders, as a rule, catch those far-fly balls. A brainy runner who sees those long-fly balls going out to the field stays on first base and is ready to run to second the instant the ball strikes the fielder's hands.

POINTS FOR NIMBLE THINKERS.

Here is a handsome piece of work, but I doubt whether it has been done a dozen times since the League has been in existence. The conditions are these :

A man is on first base. The batter drives the ball to left field for a hit. The man who was on first naturally runs very hard to second, and nine times out of ten will overrun second toward third base. If the fielder is alert and the second-baseman understands him, they may retire the runner occasionally. This suggestion only applies when the left-fielder is not out too far. With pretense and pantomime, as if he was going to throw to third, he shoots the ball to second and frequently the man may be caught. Joe Hornung has this fine play to his credit, as have O'Neil and O'Brien.

A fielder should never throw a ball in from the field slowly or roll it in when there are men on bases, as a good base-runner will take advantage of any such lack of judgment. When there is no one on bases any hit to the outfield should be returned as rapidly as possible to the sec-

ond base. A ball hit to left field when a runner is on first, should be sent to third. When a runner is on second and a hit is made to left, the ball should be sent to second at once. If thrown to third the man who made the hit is liable to go to second.

A runner is on second. The batter makes a hit to center field. The runner will, nine times in ten, attempt to reach the home plate. If the hit was a sharp one and the fielder was not playing out too far, there is a chance to throw the runner out. Good fielders here have an opportunity for the display of judgment. In general, I do not think the public are at all disposed to give to expert outfielders the credit which is their due.

SLIDING.

Everybody in the team should slide. Make no exceptions. There is no man in a team who can be excused for not sliding, when necessity requires, in running bases. On this point every good captain will be strenuous. Every player should be required to slide when it is desirable. It is part of the game.

I realize that a man takes chances every time he slides ; he is liable to break a leg ; but that is true of every trained athlete in every profession. Remember this : the base ball player who is truly deserving of applause, is the one who slides, and by sliding prevents a put-out. I regret to

say that sliding is not appreciated by spectators as it should be. William Sunday, of the Pittsburgh team, has made a heroic record in this particular. So has Hugh Nicol, McCarthy, Latham, Ryan and others. The crowds see the man go down head-first or feet-foremost; they see a cloud of dust rise from the bag, and it is either "out" or "safe." The crowds know nothing of the wrenched ankles and wrists, or of the scraped hips and raw shin-bones. If the runner be declared "out," he must trot in without complaint. If "safe," and the leg or arm be skinned, there is all the more need for continued watchfulness and increased speed to gain the next bag.

As between feet or "head first" sliding there is a difference of opinion.

The player who plunges headlong is more liable to get his base, but his chances of accident are increased. If I were the captain of a club I would not insist that my men should slide head-first, because of the danger; but some players prefer to go down that way, and with some it may be safer.

The player who slides feet-first must go directly at the bag. In the other position a runner can throw himself behind the baseman and come in around with his hand. If the baseman does not have the ball ahead of the player the chances are in the latter's favor, as the baseman has nothing to touch but the runner's hand.

The baseman may remember that the runner who slides head-first does not throw himself directly at the bag; he slides his head and shoulders around behind it. A man who comes head-first cannot hurt the baseman. He may injure himself, but I do not know of one instance where the base-

man was scratched. Forty-nine times out of fifty I know how the man running to my base will slide, and govern myself accordingly.

I have endeavored to study sliders as a pitcher does his batters, and the knowledge gained has, I am sure, increased my effectiveness, while it has often saved me from injury more or less serious. When a head-first slider comes at me I step back. I want to be where I know his body will come and where I can put the ball on his body before he can get his hand on the bag. When a slider comes feet-first it is dangerous to the baseman. Then I know I must get out of the way and touch my man as he goes by, or hold out my hand containing the ball and let him strike against it on his sliding trip to the base.

WORTH REMEMBERING.

Here is a nice little point that has won several games for the Chicago club: Suppose there is a man on second and one on third, with one hand out. The in-fielders play inside of the run-ways, so that if they should happen to get the ball from the bat they can throw the man out going home. Of course the runners move up every time the ball is pitched; some move up farther than others, and the clever baseman will be guided by the action of the man he wants to retire. Finally he gets well off from the bag; you know you can catch him. Then signal your catcher

and receive the return signal. The pitcher sees the signal, knows just what play is proposed to be made, and knows what kind of ball to pitch. He delivers the sphere well out from the batter so that the catcher can go up on it, handle it easily and throw it sharply to second base, the base-player timing his movements so as to reach the bag when the ball does.

To execute this play successfully and not allow the man on third to score is the fine point. Let the catcher, immediately on receiving the ball, look at the third bag, and take one step back as if to throw it there. The runner will of course go back. Instead of throwing it to third he puts it to second. The man on third then has no advantage, as he is going back toward the third bag when the ball is thrown.

Let me be a little more explicit about this :

The signs having been given, the instant the ball is delivered the second-baseman, who has purposely been playing "well off," starts on the run for second to reach that point simultaneously with the arrival of the ball. On men who are "just aching" for the catcher to throw the ball—"slick" men like Irwin, Miller, Glasscock, Gore and Johnston—I work this snap as follows, always being sure from knowledge of the runner, his nerve, self-confidence and speed, that he will make an attempt to go home if the ball is thrown to second.

The runner discovering (as he supposes) the ball is going down to second, starts for the plate. Instead of having the ball thrown down to second, I have the catcher put it just beyond the pitcher. When I start for second I do not stop there ; I keep on running up, receive the ball and return it to the catcher, who has abundant time to nail the runner.

Do this with a good base-runner once or twice, and you will keep him guessing ever after. It has also a mighty good restraining influence on other members of the opposing team. They argue that if you can catch their best base-runner, there is no use for them to try to slide in. Having lived to reach third, they will say :

“No, no ; let the other man get an out if he wants to ; I stay right here.”

The short-stop can occasionally “sneak in” and catch a man in the same way ; but it is not so safe, as he cannot, while running, so easily see the runner on third, and therefore is unable to tell whether he is going home.

HISSING A GREAT PLAY.

Here is one of the finest pieces of ball playing that comes up in a game, but you will hardly find men who are plucky enough to chance it. It is a feature that I have never seen executed outside of the Chicago club. I have seen other players attempt it, but fail of its successful accomplishment. I worked the point once when I was playing short-stop as a member of the Troy, N. Y., club, the game being one played in New York. The play was hissed ; the spectators evidently did not understand it. I tried it again ; the crowd this time comprehended it, and the applause which followed I could only interpret as an encore. I will try to make it plain to every reader :

Base-runners were on first and second. The batter hit a fly-ball in the air to one of the in-fielders. He made a short pick-up of it and then executed a double play. If, as sometimes happens, you do not make a clean pick-up, you can easily get one man, for all you have to do is to pick it up on the second trial, when you will have abundant time to catch the man, for the men are forced and do not have to be touched. In making this play you must "kind o' smother" the ball—deal with it so that it cannot get far away from you, so that it may be available for a single play if you fail to handle it cleverly enough to retire two men.

When a good base-runner reaches second, he will generally run up freely toward third every time the ball is pitched. His intention is, nine times out of ten, to make a dash for third should the ball be thrown down to second by the catcher. My policy is to give the catcher a sign, run in as hard as I can, meet the ball half way between pitcher and second base, and then throw it to third. This, of course, involves the signal code and good clean work all 'round, but that is what we are aiming at, and the game is now so old that we should be able to illustrate it with increased expertness from year to year.

A LITTLE TALK ABOUT FIELDING.

You will hear bleaching-boards and grand-stand almost invariably join in applauding a catch in the out-field. That is all right. The truth is that the catching is perhaps the

easiest part of the work required. It is the A, B, C of the profession. To catch a fly-ball is the first thing the young player learns; failing in that, there is no career open for him either as amateur or professional.

The strong point of a fielder is in knowing what to do with a ball after he gets it, and then acting promptly on his knowledge.

Take the case of the man on second and a ground hit to center field. The fielder is playing well in; the hit is a sharp one; the fielder is pretty certain that the man running from the second can be retired at the home plate. He makes a dash for the ball, fumbles it, then secures it and throws to the catcher. It is too late. The time lost in that fumble represented the fielder's margin of advantage. Losing that margin, the opportunity for putting out the man at the plate has gone. But he throws the ball to the catcher just the same, and thereby displays poor judgment, for the batter runs down to second, whereas he should have been kept on first.

It is in the exercise of judgment at critical points like the one mentioned that a fielder exhibits his usefulness, and yet how rarely is this appreciated by the average spectator.

Still another suggestion regarding fielding: A runner is on first base and a hit is made to right or center field. The fielder who is bright will see that there is no chance of catching the man running from first, but there is a very good likelihood of catching the batter at second if the ball is rightly thrown and handled. Let the fielder make a throw to what is known as "short third" — that is, about midway between the position of short-stop and third base. The batter will think an attempt is to be made to retire the runner

ahead of him and will himself try to get to second. The short-stop, however, takes the ball thrown to "short third" and sends it to second in time to catch the batter.

The same suggestion relatively applies to home-plate plays. If you do not think you can catch your man at the plate let the fielder send the ball in near the pitcher's position. The batter will make an attempt to go down from first to second, but the pitcher may often get the ball there ahead of the runner. A fielder who can make such points as these is a most valuable acquisition. The intelligent onlooker who analyzes the play will be quick to give such a fielder his meed of praise.

I know one fielder, O'Neil, of the St. Louis Browns, who displays remarkably good judgment in disposing of a ball under the conditions named. Sometimes his good intentions have been thwarted by a pitcher who would stand aside and let the ball go to the catcher where there was no prospect of retiring the runner in that direction, but where the batter could have been nabbed at second by the co-operation of the pitcher.

Sitting in a reporters' box once as a spectator of a game I heard one base-ball writer say to another:

"What did he throw that ball in for? He might have known it was useless."

The other reporter replied, "Well, he made the attempt, anyway. Give him credit for that."

The fact was that the fielder — Stovey, of the Athletics — threw the ball to the pitcher's box to have the latter intercept it and put it to second to retire the hitter. The pitcher was not "on," nor were the reporters.

I have found what I may call "bluffs" or "motions"

of frequent help. A ball is hit to me which I have fumbled. There are men on the other bases. The time lost by the fumble is warning that it is useless for me to attempt to catch the batter by throwing to first. But I pick up the ball just the same and make a motion to throw to first, and instead of doing so wheel and throw to one of the bases. The other runners have left the bags thinking the ball is going to first. This is a point where you have nothing to lose by putting it into execution and everything to gain.

The second-baseman should "back up" first-baseman on every ball that is thrown by short-stop, third-baseman or catcher, when there is no one on the bases, as he can frequently prevent a runner going to second, and often to third, on the wild throw that has been made to first. The short-stop or pitcher must care for second when the second-baseman is supporting first.

Given a pitcher, catcher, short-stop and second-baseman who will work together, and it seems to me there is hardly any limit to their effectiveness. In making this claim I do not wish to underrate or to disparage the work of any other player in the team.

THE DANGEROUS MAN.

A little thought will convince the reader that the really dangerous man in a critically close time is the runner on second. When he is taking all the ground that he dares to — frequently more than caution dictates — and playing well up the runway towards third, he is all ready to come in on a base hit. A base hit then, ties or wins a game.

No man on second can safely get more than ten feet from the bag and watch both second-baseman, short-stop and

pitcher. The pitcher, from his position, can best watch the short-stop, when there is a man on second and the short-stop is not in his position. The latter fact should be the best evidence which the pitcher needs that the play is to catch the runner off second. The runner naturally pays the most attention to second-baseman. He cannot simultaneously watch both short-stop and baseman.

Let the short-stop stand down back of the line at the point where the runner stops after leaving second. Under these conditions, with an active, watchful guard by pitcher, short-stop and second-baseman, it is possible to either catch the runner off second or to so alarm him that the average base-hit will not bring him in. First the baseman runs up and the runner darts back, only to take more ground as he sees the baseman retire from the bag. The runner is always at a disadvantage, for before he turns to look at the short-stop the latter can be "on the go" for second, and the cooperation of the pitcher frequently retires the runner. Should the plan fail, it will at least have the effect of keeping the runner close to the bag.

Because I have played second base, I have naturally devoted much thought to the possibilities of the plays at and around that position. Of the importance of that place it is not for me to pass any opinion, further than to remark that outside of the battery it is the key to the in-field situation.

I find that I am not alone in my estimate of the importance of second-base work. In a recently published article, Tim Murnane presents a diagram in which he specifies the position I take when a runner is on first, and adds: "A great many professionals play back of the line just as

they do when the bases are clear ; but Pfeffer of the Chicago, the acknowledged king of the position, plays close up to the base line.

“His object in this is to get fast-hit balls and make double plays. If he was well back he would have to take the ball on the run and would not be so sure of both men. Then again he finds it the best way to keep the runner from getting to the second. As he goes down the line ahead of the player trying to steal the bag, it is likely to bother the base-runner, unless he happens to be of the vicious kind who finds pleasure in jumping, spikes first, onto a player who may be waiting for him with ball in hand.

“Pfeffer’s success in playing the position has proven beyond a doubt that playing up close to the line when there is a runner on first is the most effective way to cover the base.”

What I admire more than anything about the game is the work of a thoroughly qualified pitcher. It is not enough that the man in the box should have all the curves, shoots, and drops. It is not enough that he should pitch swift or slow, or vary his speed. A good pitcher’s usefulness is unlimited. You cannot overestimate it. He can back-up bases; he can, if he will, cover all the bases when needed; he can “fill in” when a runner is caught between bases; he can be at the plate when a point is to be gained there.

THE PITCHER.

When the party of representative American ball players was in Australia and England, our English cousins called base ball "only glorified rounders." This definition I accept. It is the most eloquent compliment which could be bestowed upon the game as played to-day. Surely "glorified rounders" means rounders improved. But how improved? Why, "glorified." Is not that a great advance on the original? Anything that is glorified is about as near perfection as you can get it. Heaven, the good book says, is a glorified state of existence.

Therefore, I say amen to "glorified rounders," for that is what the base ball of to-day undoubtedly is.

The truest glory of the sport, however, is realized in this year of our Lord by one man, the pitcher.

I hope, before long, to see such Fathers in Israel as Harry Wright, A. G. Spalding, N. E. Young, Henry Chadwick, Walter Hewett, C. H. Byrne, William Barnie, A. J. Reach, Tim Murnane—that's nine, isn't it?—compelled to take a bat some pleasant afternoon, when they are quite well and face John Clarkson's cannon-balls when he feels first-rate. I want these gentlemen to discover from experience just how much the science of pitching has improved since that old-time, underhand delivery, on which they fattened their averages fifteen years ago. I would like to see them attempt to make a living for two hours batting Egyptian Healy, Mullane, Galvin or Keefe. Having introduced Mr. Keefe to the readers of "SCIENTIFIC BALL," I leave him

to tell the story of his own position—a position which he ornaments—a position in which he is to-day without a superior.

The article which follows was prepared by Mr. Keefe expressly for this book :

PITCHING — BY T. J. KEEFE.

If the pitcher's delivery be ineffective, the strongest support avails him but little. The chief requisites for a first-class pitcher are good, quick curves, plenty of speed, and a cool head at critical moments. To be successful he must possess all of the above qualities. Speed is really the essential point in a pitcher, but he must have good command of it or his work will be more damaging to his catcher's hands than to the opposing batsmen. The same holds good with his curves. If he has not good command of them, he is certainly laboring under great disadvantage. The only way to acquire command of the ball is by continual practice. Always make it a point when pitching to have an object to pitch at. It cannot be acquired in a day or a week, but requires years of practice. Some of the leading League pitchers of the present day are men who have acquired the art from books that treat on the subject, *i. e.*, gained the idea, and worked at it until they became proficient and could pitch the ball at a given target.

The pitcher should be careful in beginning, for a bad habit or a poor position once acquired requires almost unremitting effort to overcome, and the result is almost a new beginning. The pitcher will experience as much trouble in the change as he would if he were just learning the art.

During my experience as a coacher I have had pitchers under my instructions, who have made a poor commencement because their style of holding the ball was defective. Instead of holding every ball they pitch the same, they will grasp the out-curve ball wholly between the fingers and pitch it in that manner, while the same pitchers will hold and pitch their speedy or in-ball with two fore-fingers and thumb. The result is that the batsman can tell by looking at their hands what particular ball they intend to deliver.

I could mention the names of over a dozen League batsmen to-day who stand up among the first fifteen or twenty leading batsmen of the country who always watch the pitcher's hand. Any change in the method of holding the different balls is at once noticed by them, and the pitchers will find that day a very "long" one indeed.

Every beginner should make it a practice to hold every ball, no matter whether out-curve and drop, an in or slow ball, the same. No doubt by pitching the out-curve wholly with the fingers it will be larger, but the larger or deeper the curve the sooner it is perceptible to the batter, for a deep curve ball will apparently curve sooner after leaving the pitcher's hand than a fast, quick one; but the advantage gained by holding it between the thumb and fore-finger is that it baffles the batter in regard to what particular ball the man in the box intends to send in.

Secondly, he will have a far better out-curve, for it will be quicker and considerably faster, and a short, quick curve will prove more effective than a very deep or large one. Of course all young pitchers like to see a good curve on the ball when delivered, and as the curve delivered by the use of the fingers entirely is deeper than any delivered in a

different manner, it is not surprising that so many young pitchers acquire a bad habit in the beginning.

Some find it comparatively easy to change their faulty method of pitching, while others cannot do it, and must be content to continue in their old style and take their chances on being effective. It is certainly a chance, for when a batsman can tell what particular ball is coming it is impossible to deceive him, and it would be strange if he did not frequently hit the ball safe.

The days of underhanded pitching have gone by. There is but one style that will prove effective at the present day, *i. e.*, the high or overhand throws. Every ball should be delivered as high above the head as possible, and with the same motion. It is the only style that is used now by the successful pitchers of the country.

There is no position in the game that requires more headwork than that of the pitcher. A cool-headed pitcher will come out successfully in the majority of close and exciting games. For in all games played chance and science figure so largely in producing the result that there is generally a break in some particular inning, and it generally favors the pitcher that sticks to his work and displays the best judgment.

A game is never won or lost until the last man has been disposed of; consequently it behooves every pitcher to bear this in mind and continue working his best until the game has terminated.

The pitcher in taking his position should stand erect, facing the batter, holding the ball on a level with his shoulder and between the two fore-fingers and thumb, with his left hand covering the ball. When in the act of delivering,

he should bend his body as far back as possible, thereby relieving his arm of considerable strain, bringing his arm first down and then above his head, so that the swing of it will describe a circle while in the act of delivering the ball.

He should have signs with his catcher for almost every ball that he delivers, and work to them accordingly. The catcher should give the signs, and if the signals do not suit the pitcher's idea he can signify it by a negative signal. Pitchers should be very careful when base-runners occupy the bases. That is the trying period. He should master his position so that it will enable him to confront all such emergencies successfully. He must first receive the catcher's sign, then watch the base-runner; see that he doesn't secure too much of a start off his delivery, so that the catcher will have an opportunity to dispose of him while stealing to second base.

This plan worked quite successfully last season when a very fast runner intended to steal second base. Have the catcher stand about three feet outside the plate and pitch a fast, straight ball about breast high and right into his hands. This enables him to have a clear field in which to throw to second base. During my experience as a pitcher and also as an instructor I find that young pitchers, and especially the college pitcher, uses far more curves than any experienced League pitcher. The college pitcher has the up, down, in and out and numerous other curves — in fact, too many altogether. The effective pitcher to-day has no time to use so many curves. He must have good command of his delivery, and by so doing can dispense with many curves that are used by beginners and still be effective.

As I said before, the pitcher has no time to use so many

varying deliveries. In the first place, after one or two bad or unfair balls have been delivered by the pitcher, he is then compelled to pitch the ball properly over the plate. In such cases he will generally rely on the ball that he has the best command of, which is, in eight cases out of ten, the fast, straight ball. A good, quick out-curve and drop, a fast in-ball and a slow ball, are about all that is necessary for a pitcher to have command of to be effective. Indeed, very few of the most noted pitchers use anything but this delivery, and, with good command, it will enable any pitcher to go through a season's campaign successfully.

The pitcher often finds himself placed in very trying positions. Nothing but a cool head and perfect control of his temper will bring him through creditably. He is sometimes placed in such straits through the incompetency of the umpire, or through some error of his support, or perhaps through his own blunder. At a critical point in the game, when the score is exceedingly close, the umpire, through poor judgment, gives the batter his base on called balls; the next man makes a safe hit. The pitcher, who, at this point, is working like a "beaver" to deceive the following batsman, has four unfair balls and two strikes on the latter. He then has one ball to pitch in which either to dispose of the batsman or give him his base. He delivers it just where the batter called for it, but the umpire doesn't agree with him, and gives the batter his base on called balls.

This is enough to demoralize the most undemonstrative pitcher in the profession. If he loses his temper at this stage of the fight, his chances for saving the game are very poor indeed. There is only one course to pursue: settle down and work all the harder. Continue pitching as if you

were sure of winning under all circumstances. Never mind what the umpire's decisions are ; it will do no good to fume and fret over them, for he will not change them. All that can be done is to make the best of the situation and work with a greater determination.

I have seen some pitchers who, when their support was poor or the judgment of the umpire did not suit them, would lose heart and toss the ball in carelessly, thus throwing away every opportunity for winning. Sometimes when the opposing team has punished his delivery, instead of taking his time and working the batsmen, they have put on all their speed and pitched ball after ball over the plate where the batsman calls for them. The faster they have pitched the harder their delivery is hit. In such cases the pitcher should settle down and not lose his head, take his time, and try as faithfully to deceive the batter as he did at the beginning of the game. When he sees that his fast ball is not effective, he should change and use his slow ball or his out-curve. Any change may be beneficial. The pitcher must not get mad, use all his strength and throw nothing but his fast straight ball over the plate. The latter ball will not deceive the batsman. He knows that it is coming, for he knows that the pitcher has lost his temper and will pitch nothing but a fast ball.

THE SUCCESSFUL PITCHER.

The successful pitcher is the one who will pitch as well at critical points as when his club has a sure lead and the result of the game is a certainty. Anybody can pitch when there is nothing at stake or when victory is certain. Practice until you can pitch as well at critical points as when

you have a winning lead. Never lose your temper or get discouraged, no matter how poor your support may be. Always remember that you are paid to pitch and not to find fault with anybody on the field. Do your best every minute. Go into the game with all the confidence that you can muster. When you step into the box at the beginning of the game, consider yourself the best pitcher in the country and the only one. With such confidence and good command of your delivery there is nothing to fear.

The batters whom experienced pitchers have the hardest work in deceiving are those who stand up to the plate and drive at the ball with a short, quick snap and hit out straight with their bats. These are always hard men to deceive. Ryan of the Chicagos is a good illustration. The easiest victims are those batters who step away from the plate the moment the pitcher delivers the sphere and who make a desperate lunge at the ball. A slow ball or a fast one on the outside corner of the plate will generally deceive those batters.

“CONSIDER YOURSELF THE BEST.”

The hint given by Mr. Keefe, “Consider yourself the best pitcher on earth and the only one,” recalls some advice which I once heard the editor of the *New York Sporting Times* give Ryan of the Chicago team. “Jimmy,” he said, “when you step up to that plate remember that a man with a microscope may go all through Ireland and not find your equal as a batter.”

Ryan has quoted that remark to me many times. His batting in 1888, and during our recent tour around the world, proves that Jimmy has gained in confidence. Possi-

bly he believes to-day that the man with the microscope may search several continents in vain for a better batter.

The secret of success with Captain Anson is confidence. That he has a sharp, true eye for curves and angles his potency with the billiard cue clearly demonstrates; but this gift would be worth little were it not supplemented by an abiding belief in himself. Lack of assurance has blasted the career of so many players that I am disposed to declare that a man in this profession cannot have too much confidence in his own prowess. This thought I might amplify, but the elaboration would hardly be in keeping with such a plain and practical treatise as this on "SCIENTIFIC BALL."

THE CATCHER.

Never having had practical experience behind the bat, it would be presumption in the writer to offer any observations as an individual with the idea of urging them upon the consideration of any one as being standard authority. I have, therefore, preferred to present in this connection the views of Mr. A. J. Bushong, the well-known catcher of the Brooklyn club. The base-ball profession contains no member who, in a quiet and modest way, reflects more credit upon the calling than does the catcher named. I therefore congratulate my readers that I am able to present the following article from his pen, prepared expressly for these pages :

"Catching in a ball nine, is, without any detraction

of the other positions, the hardest and most responsible. Certainly the physical excellence which a pitcher is required to have, especially in his arm, to stand the severe strain which is put upon it, may make his place equally as hard physically; but for responsibility the catcher has the most.

“This is a broad assertion to make, especially when one considers how responsible all the other positions are, and what an immense amount of time and money is spent in having them ably filled. The great number of games the New York club won last year by such a close margin as one run, might easily have been turned into victories for the opposing teams but for the fact of superb catching and throwing, and thus preventing any more runs from being scored.

“The same may be said of all ‘champion’ teams; for, let the pitcher do his best, base-hits and errors will be made, and during these times the excellence which has been attained in base-running generally, makes it hard to determine whether a run will not be scored, unless the catcher is at the ‘top.’ Weighed in a financial balance, it would seem, from present indications, that pitchers have the preference. We are all aware of the large sums of money their releases have brought. However, catchers, in both Association and League, if they were put up for sale and competition allowed, would bring just as high prices.

“Catching has peculiarities about it unknown to other positions. This question will be indorsed by many who have been and are good base players. The skill or ‘knack’ required to catch a pitched ball after it has been struck at, is one marked peculiarity. The fact of the bat going between the sight and the ball makes a sensation upon the mind. That makes a man invariably jump, throwing his hands and body

away from the ball instead of standing perfectly still and reaching for it. To the million it is an impossibility to get rid of this feeling. It was this which, in times past, made catchers so scarce. It is this which, at present, gives the really good catcher one of the most solid situations in base ball.

“Again, the work of a catcher is difficult, because it requires such endurance. He must sustain a vast amount of punishment upon the hands. The only thing that saves his mind from fretting is the fact that he *must* do his work, and it comes upon him so quickly he has no time to worry.

“Certainly the position then is one of skill as against physical strength, and on that account, in many cases, light-weighted catchers are frequently in the front rank with their heavier comrades. In fact, catching depends most upon the correctness of the sight, suppleness of the legs and body, ability to reach with the hands and arms, and the absence of fear, either from being injured or the fact of great speed in the pitcher. Throwing to second base especially is the test by which most catchers are tried and found wanting. The acknowledged advantage which superior base-running gives in winning games, makes throwing to second base harder than ever. The catcher not only has to make an accurate and quick throw, but he has to take into consideration the man at the bat. The latter is frequently in the way, or, if he is not, he tries to be. By either a motion of the body or bat, it is his aim to balk the catcher. Again, the pitcher is directly in the line of the throw, so that effective throwing to first requires skillful play.

“No other position poorly played can cause so much distraction among spectators and one’s own team. There

is nothing like poor catching to make the opposing team strong and jubilant. The famous base running teams, when they run up against a good-throwing catcher, and a pitcher that holds them on the bases, know that their chances of running are lessened twenty-five per cent.

“All pitchers and catchers have a system of signs by which they have a perfect understanding with each other about what kind of a ball is to be delivered—a straight ball or a curve. If the pitcher is young and has had no previous knowledge of the batsmen that he is about to face, and the catcher has had experience with them, and noticed as much as possible the strong and weak points of batting, it is then the catcher’s place to give the signs, until the pitcher has himself mastered the batsmen. After that the pitcher may take all the responsibility of his position upon himself, allowing the catcher to make the signs, but reserving the right to give the sign of refusal, using his own judgment as to whether the ball delivered should be high or low, in or out. Let a catcher notice a man’s batting ever so much, yet he is not in position as a pitcher is to notice so well his weak and strong points.”

This admirable essay by Mr. Bushong is certainly the most satisfying and instructive presentation of a catcher’s difficult work that has ever been condensed into so limited an amount of space.

FIRST BASE.

In considering this position, I confess that I am somewhat embarrassed. I do not know how to do justice to the many expert men of my profession who have figured in this position. Nor do I know who the best first-baseman is. I have played with some of the best in the world. I have watched the play of all and seen so much to admire in each first-baseman that I go through the list in vain to single out one man whom I can point to as an exemplar.

The position of first-baseman is growing more difficult as the game acquires age. Managers are realizing more and more the importance of placing heavy men on the first bag. No light-weight should be stationed there. Only a courageous man should be expected to play that position for all it is worth. It demands brute force and iron nerve, added to an even temperament, caution and genuine enthusiasm. Anson is a great first-baseman, but I like John Morrill's play better in some particulars. Morrill's patience, his coolness, his quiet earnestness, have impressed me beyond my powers of description. Morrill has assured me that from his own experience he considers first base as difficult as any in-field position. He says it is true that there are men who play the base who cannot play any other position, but, when it is properly played, there are few who fill the bill.

The first-baseman should be tall, with a long reach. He must be a sure catch of high and low as well as widely thrown balls. He must be sure on fly-balls and grounders,

and a good thrower. Though there is not much throwing to do, if a man cannot throw well he will find base-runners taking chances that will materially interfere with his club's success.

There are plays in every game that the first-baseman should back up, thereby giving the fielders confidence in throwing. On a long hit to the field he should watch the other players to see what position they take, and should place himself where he can do the most good. At all times when there is no play to make at first base, he should back up the man the ball is thrown to.

On taking his position in the field he should stand from ten to twenty feet towards second base and about the same distance back of the line. He should judge the distance according to the batter, and try to stop all balls hit to his field. If the pitcher covers the base on balls hit to him, he can cover more ground. Should he not do so, the first-baseman should not get off too far, or the runner will reach the base ahead of him.

He should go for all fly-balls hit between home and first base ; never let the pitcher take a fly if he can reach it unless he is a sure catch. When the first-baseman is sure he can get to the ball, he should say, "I will take it" loud enough for the other players to hear. If he cannot get to it he should tell the man who calls for it to take it, as it will give him confidence, and assure him there will be no collision.

When the ball is hit to an in-fielder, the first-baseman should run to the base as quickly as possible, and stand in an easy position slightly in front of the base. Should the ball come straight, put either foot on the base and

reach as far forward as possible. By doing so he will put out many a runner on close plays when he would be safe should the baseman take the ball over the base. Never stand behind the base in catching a thrown ball. Should the ball come to the right, put your left foot on the base; if to the left, your right foot. By doing so you can reach farther, and will not get tangled up. Never cross your legs when reaching for any kind of a throw. If the ball is thrown so wide that you cannot reach it and keep your foot on the base, get off and return, or touch the runner as he passes. If the ball is thrown on the ground, make sure to stop it, so that the runner cannot take an extra base.

When a runner is on first, play close to the base to prevent him from taking too much ground, also to catch him napping should the pitcher throw the ball for that purpose.

The instant the pitcher delivers the ball to the batter, run off about ten feet towards second to cover ground in case the ball should be hit to your field. If you get it in time throw to second, forcing out the runner from first. Then return to your base to receive the ball for a double play. It is a hard play to make, and is seldom accomplished.

When first and second are occupied by base-runners, play off about fifteen feet and behind the runner. Keep moving towards the base every few seconds to keep the runner from taking too much ground. Watch your catcher for a sign which he should give you to run to the base for the purpose of catching the runner napping. It is a play that is made very often, and is done as follows:

When you get the sign, run to the base the moment the pitcher delivers the ball to your catcher, who will

throw it to you, and you must touch the runner at once.

When a runner is on third base and only one or nobody out, and the score is close, play about ten feet inside the line, so that you can field a ground-hit home in time to cut off the runner. In making this play you should come inside the line only by order of your captain, as it is necessary only in close games where every run counts. When the ball is thrown to you and there is a runner on another base, get in position to throw with the same motion that you receive it. In fact, a fielder should always get in position to throw when the ball comes his way, though there are some ground-hit and wildly-thrown balls that require all your skill to stop without thinking of making any other play.

When you catch a runner between the bases keep him in the center. Never allow him to get too close to the base before throwing. You are apt to hit him, and this, I am sorry to say, happens too often. You should always have your mind made up what to do when you get the ball, and when you complete the play at your base look around quickly to see if you cannot put out another runner.

The first-baseman ought to be a very popular man, not only in his own team, but among all who play in his league. There are many ways in which men who throw to him can make things unpleasant. There are frequent collisions at first, but I have observed that players, as a rule, are extremely cautious about "smashing up" a man they have a personal liking for. It is at first that the closest decisions are the most frequent, and because of this fact, if for no other, the first-baseman should be a man of brawn, of great self-possession, and of character.

Before dismissing this subject, permit me to say :

Looking back over my career on the ball-field, and calling to mind the men with whom I have been associated, I feel the heartiest admiration for those who have borne the heat and burden of the day at first base. It is the first-baseman who must stand as steadfast as a rock. Spectators are too prone to overlook his service. They applaud a catch in the far field when the fielder has plenty of time and is unmolested. They too often ignore the catch at first base, when the ball is thrown like a cannon-shot, and the runner's speed threatens collision and injury.

This is my sincere conviction.

For much of the specific direction in this chapter I am indebted to John Morrill.

SECOND BASE.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.—As the writer has made a specialty of second-base work all through the book, and has given all points in former pages, the reader is referred to them.

THE SHORT-STOP.

I do not know a short-stop from John Ward down to "let her go Gallagher" who, if asked concerning the importance of his position, will not reply .

"It is the key to the whole in-field."

I have never experienced a pang of jealousy when this remark has been made in my hearing, If, however, I were not a second-baseman, I would elect to play short. Whether that position or mine is the key to the in-field, does not matter. It is well, however, to consider carefully the qualities which go to make up a successful short-stop. He should be the best athlete in the team, quick physically, cool and deliberate mentally. He must think rapidly and act without the slightest hesitation. He must know all the fine points of the game. He should be able to throw both over-hand and under-hand, as, in making quick plays, he must throw the ball in all kinds of positions.

I like the way that Arthur Irwin of the Philadelphia club handles ground balls of all varieties. He is an expert in "trapping them," as the phrase is. His aim always is to get in front of the ball, keeping his hands as near as possible to his body or his feet. By so doing the short-stop finds that even if he fumbles a ball it will generally "trap" in front of him. If he reaches forward to meet the ball, and it hits his arms, it is apt to bound away and the chance to recover it in time is lost.

Irwin, Ward and Williamson always keep their heels together when preparing to capture a grounder.

Every successful player of this position has little peculiarities of style which give him individuality. George Wright was without doubt able to cover more ground than any man who was ever stationed at short. By this I mean he would run out into the field farther to get a fly-ball than do the majority of the players to-day. While George Wright is by no means a "back number," I am sure he will admit that there have been modifications and improvements in the game which render the short-stop's work more elaborate and more difficult than it was in 1874. I realize that in making this assertion I invite dissenting rejoinder from A. G. Spalding, A. J. Reach, Harry Wright, and possibly Henry Chadwick. I have heard Harry Wright say to Mr. Spalding that the playing of fifteen years ago was, in most particulars, fully as sharp as it is now.

With due respect to these worthy gentlemen, my humble opinion is that the pitching of to-day is superior to that which was done in the '70's. The catching of to-day is more hazardous and requires stronger powers of endurance than ever before. The base-running and sliding to-day have never been equaled, and the short-stop work has certainly grown to be a more important factor in the game than it was fifteen years ago. I mean to say that more double-plays are made now than in 1874, and that these same double-plays require more rapid work than was needed in the earlier days of the evolution of the game. I believe I am justified in claiming that the short-stop of 1889 does more work in backing-up the bases.

It is Arthur Irwin's plan the moment a ball is hit in the

air to turn and throw off his cap so that he can see the ball more distinctly as it passes over his head. He generally plays about fifteen feet back of the base line so that he can handle fast hits of right-handed batsmen that pass the third-baseman. In anticipating the batting of left-handed hitters, he plays farther in. They reach first base quicker than right-handed batsman, and the short-stop has no time to spare.

I hold that I am correct in asserting that the short-stop of to-day does more work at second than did the short-stop of 1874. For thrown balls some captains now have the short-stop cover second almost as much as the second-baseman. There are many fine points of the position under consideration. When first and third bases are occupied, it is a very common thing for the runner on first to start to steal second. The second-baseman runs well into the diamond and the short-stop covers second. The catcher throws the ball shoulder high to the second-baseman, who, instead of catching it, allows it to go by him to the short-stop, who handles the ball and puts out the runner. Nine times out of ten the man on third will hold the base because he expects the second-baseman will handle the throw. This is certainly a fine point, and, with great deference to my elders, I hold that such work on the diamond was not executed fifteen years ago.

An understanding between short-stop and second-baseman is quite as essential to success as is the sign telegraphy between pitcher and catcher. If there exist entirely harmonious relations between short-stop, second-baseman and third-baseman, their combined effectiveness is an element which will go far toward compassing victory. It is with a

feeling of profound satisfaction that I declare that the work which has won for the Chicago club the happy characterization of "the stone wall in-field" has been executed by four men who have never known jealousy and who have always labored as one man for the success of their brothers.

Everything that the writer has said touching the desirability of a code of signals applies with peculiar force to the short-stop. A short-stop without signs may be well compared to a ship without a rudder.

THIRD BASE.

The third-baseman should be a strong, accurate thrower, sure in catching fly-balls and a quick starter on ground balls. He should also be able to snap, or throw, a ball underhand, as in many instances he would not have time to gather himself for an overhand throw. A third-baseman has many chances for errors. He is a long distance from first base. If he fumbles a ball he is naturally hurried and has to send it to its destination as quickly as possible, in order to complete the play. Often, in throwing the ball, he sends it wide of its mark; sometimes it is on the ground, and, if the baseman fails to handle it, an error is charged. A slow hit ball is one that the guardian of the third bag often encounters. He runs in, clutches it with one hand, and snaps it underhand to whatever point his judgment tells him is best. Third base is a difficult posi-

tion to play ; not only must the baseman be able to handle thrown balls, but he must understand thoroughly every possible contingency.

“Any one at all versed in our national game,” says Burns, of the Chicago club, “must at once perceive the responsibility resting with the guardian of this most important corner of the diamond.

“In the first place, a man who selects the position from choice, or by his adaptability is placed there, must not only be a brainy player, but one who is exceptionally active and a thoroughly reliable and quick thrower. It is needless to say that he be a sure catch of fly-balls hit within his reach.

“In my estimation, a third-baseman has greater chances of making errors on ground balls than any other of the infielders, chiefly due to the fact that he is farthest away from the initial bag ; a fumble always necessitating a hurried and accurate throw to first or whatever point the play may call it.

“A cool and steady man in this position—and none but such should attempt to play it—is essential above all other qualities.

“His play in the handling of thrown balls is similar to that of the second-baseman,—requiring good and quick judgment at all times.”

RIGHT FIELD.

I should define the right-fielder as "Old Probabilities." When he is not running after, receiving or returning the ball, he is calculating the chances—estimating the probability of an opportunity to execute a so-called phenomenal play, with which to win the admiration of the spectators. John C. McGeachy believes that right field should be played short ; or, speaking more definitely, within a radius or limit of 175 feet of the home plate. This Mr. McGeachy lays down as a general proposition. He has told me, however, that he never fails to recall the batter's ability, taking short or long field according to his previous experience with or the general record of the individual batsman. He examines the record of every opposing player. He is particular to remember whether the striker is accustomed to put the ball in the air or on the ground, as the opportunity to secure an out on an otherwise safe ground hit depends much on whether the fielder receives such hit at short or long field.

To illustrate this point :

With a man safe on first base, a ground hit to right field is generally a safe one both for batter and base-runner, unless the fielder receives the sphere in short field. Then, with quick handling, it is sometimes possible to catch the runner at second or the batter at first. Either one or the other throw-out has won many a game. It is a noteworthy fact that the opportunity for such plays most frequently presents itself at some critical point of the game. Then,

by reason of a false position or a misjudgment of the ball in its motion toward him, should the fielder fail to take advantage of the chance offered, the winning run may be scored.

The put-out at first base on a ground hit can only be accomplished by a right-fielder when he is in his position, not more than ninety feet back of first base. Every right-fielder should be well drilled so that he may throw out men at home. I honestly believe that if there is one obvious duty that is neglected more than another, it is in the failure of team captains to require the right-fielder to take his position in practice-play and throw to the home plate.

In making this important throw, the fielder will make no mistake in putting every ounce of his muscle into the ball. The propelling force should be applied in such a manner that the flight of the ball from the hand to the bounding spot before the catcher should consume the minimum period of time possible. Mike Kelly has well illustrated the value of right-field work. How many games do I recall when, from the beginning of the first inning to the close of the last, his attentiveness and earnestness have inspired every man in the team, Captain Anson not excepted. An observant right-fielder can sometimes detect points of weakness in the opposing team that the first-baseman will not notice. The former has more opportunity for observation, while the latter is kept close to his bag, his attention riveted on the pitcher, who is watching the base-runner "take ground" from first.

Kelly, McGeachy and McClellan are nimble thinkers. They always know just how the game stands. They are quick to detect the working signs of their opponents. Show me a

SCIENTIFIC BALL.

strong, winning-confident team and I will guarantee that the right-fielder is a man in whom every player has the utmost confidence. It is unfortunate that there are so few notably effective men in this station. It is time that "Old Probabilities" became something more than a probability.

CENTER FIELD.

"The center field," said George Edward Andrews, the center-fielder of the Philadelphia club, "like every position, requires close study and observation." Andrews continued: "The fielder who fills this important spoke in the baseball wheel satisfactorily, and meets the many requirements of the position promptly, must possess *all* the qualities of an out-fielder in general, and many belonging particularly to the 'center-pin' of the out-field, besides."

The remarks quoted were addressed to me one evening last summer, after I had informed my friend Andrews that I intended to write a book, and thereby become a target for the quills of the base-ball writers of this continent. I must confess that I like the style in which Ed. Andrews covers his position. A truly successful center-fielder must be a fast runner, not only to cover the great amount of ground necessary to capture the long, hard drives to right and left center, but particularly so in order to promptly back up his *two* out-field companions on sharp hits, which they are running in to get, at the top of their speed. Backing-up promptly in the out-field saves many a hard contested game,

and shuts off many an opponent from taking an additional base, which if secured, would be a big factor in winning the game for his side.

A center-fielder should, as soon as the ball is hit to either of the other two fielders or to second base or short-stop, promptly back up, and in doing so, allow plenty of ground between the player backed and himself, in order to have room to stop a ball which his companion may, by chance, turn to one side, and which would surely pass both if the player was backed up too close.

The center-garden man has also to deal with wide and over throws from the catcher, which must be promptly handled and returned in order to prevent the base-runner from taking third. This is a very important part of the center-fielder's duty, and in performing it it should be done on the run-in so as to save time. His eye must be quick and sharp to accomplish it.

A failure to stop that ball means a run for the opposing side, and in this connection his sharp and accurate throwing comes in valuable play, without which quality the position immediately becomes weak. Many nice points are worked between the catcher and center-fielder which require a thorough understanding of each other, and this bit of team work is a power of itself to the club. Base-runners caught napping, or who are out-generaled on the bases, are usually considered as runs killed. Such work renders the game clean-cut and brilliant, and helps lift it another notch in the public favor. In fact, skillful team-play from center-field is valuable in many ways, which would require much space to describe.

A player full of dash and vim, fearless of injury or

errors, should make the best center-fielder, for he has many hard hits to take right off the fences in our necessarily contracted grounds. He has to go in for a ball with a desperate rush, and stand in imminent peril of collision with the outcoming short-stop and second-baseman. Here it is that a center-fielder's staying qualities are put to the surest test.

The center-fielder must have decision, and marked decision, too. His eye must instantly note whether he can cover the ground. If it tells him he can, he must have nerve enough to dash in, and in so doing call himself to take the ball, which, if missed, becomes fatal at once. If by his eye he is assured that he cannot reach it, he must have equally as much decision to coach the nearest man to take it, thus bringing out another point of clean, sharp out-fielding team work. This, when successful, seldom fails to bring thunders of well-merited applause. The Philadelphia team has an out-field hard to excel from this fact. They back each other promptly, and seldom fail to coach in quick, inspiring tones, which, in the majority of cases, are unheard by the audience; but you can set it down that when three fielders play the points as herein described, they are strong for their team. When the left and right fielders play their team work, and the characteristic points of their respective positions, in conjunction with the center-fielder, then, indeed, the whole beauty of out-fielding is brought out.

LEFT FIELD.

Theoretical writers and practical men have written much concerning this field. Regarding the duties of a left-fielder, I am glad to note that there is a decided unanimity of expression. I can, therefore, neither edify nor instruct. Indeed, I have no recollection of any specific instance of conflicting opinion between those who have written treatises on this position. The rules governing play here are well nigh inflexible. Should I disagree with any one, it will only be with relation to details.

My friend O'Rourke, of the New York club, although a modest man, does not hesitate to insist that the importance of left field is not as fully recognized as it should be. The left-fielder must be

- (1) A rapidrunner.
- (2) A sure catch.
- (3) A strong and accurate thrower.

As a general proposition, these are the qualifications in chief; but to be effective, they must be combined with a true conception of other points. These can only be mastered by experience. Given agility and fleetness of foot, there must be a keen perception in judging fly-balls which, as O'Rourke has expressed it to me, "often come out in a zigzag fashion extremely puzzling to the eye."

There is an element in every man's brain which phrenologists characterize as "locality." This mental property must be strongly developed in a left-fielder. He is not only

required to make long runs and rapid movements in every direction, but as soon as he receives the ball he must know just where to return it. He has no time to survey the infield and note the changes which have taken place since he started for that particular ball. He must reason as he runs. He must remember what runners have probably done while he has been hunting leather. To catch and return a ball by almost one and the same motion, is the aim of every good left-fielder. Upon that rapid return victory often depends. It is in sending the ball back to the exact spot demanded by exigencies that this trait or faculty of "locality" must come into play. Prominent left-fielders, like O'Neil, Richardson, Sullivan and Tebeau, have told me that on their home grounds they have been able to return balls to the desired point by an almost unerring instinct. They say they have often wondered at themselves, because they have been able to turn with lightning speed, and without premeditation, and almost without looking, they have sent the ball where it has done the most good.

On other playing grounds, however, they have not been so successful. This, of course, is owing to their lack of familiarity with the geography of strange fields.

Andy Leonard, who has passed into history as the emperor of left-fielders, used to say that a brick in a wall of a different color from other bricks surrounding it was a sort of compass by which he steered in turning and throwing the ball to third base. He said that a chimney, whose outline he could half distinguish while speeding for a left-center ball, enabled him to wheel and drive the ball on an air-line to second base. "Locality" was strong in Leon-

ard. Few people, who think they know all about base ball, realize the wonderful extent of territory which a left fielder must cover. His work is not appreciated as in-field execution is, because his position is isolated. He must give close attention to each batter as he appears, note the positions of the in-fielders, get the pitcher's signs if possible, and govern himself accordingly. He must act in concert with third base, short-stop and center-field. O'Rourke does this by one of the prettiest systems of signals ever devised. He regards signals as "an absolute necessity," and has often dilated to me upon their vital importance. Those who recall my utterances on sign codes will not need to be informed that the famous fielder has had an interested listener in the writer.

HE SAW SOME LIVELY TIMES.

GROUND-KEEPER KUHN GIVES HIS BASE BALL EXPERIENCES.

Charlie Kuhn, the wiry, wide-awake care-taker of the grounds of the Chicago Ball Club, consented to give me his experiences the other day. "I began my professional career," he said, "back in the seventies. I was water carrier for the 'Come Sevs,' of the West Side. My chief duty consisted in guarding the sacred pail. We did not have enclosed grounds. I held my position from patriotic motives, and from no desire to 'git into de game free.' I gained promotion after two years of service. I was one day allowed to keep tally.

"Was I proud that day? Well, sir, words fail me. As I sat there that day with a blank envelope and pencil, I was the envy of every third-niner who ever played on the glucose factory grounds. Yes, I was chosen to score, and admonished by Sully, Reddy, Brocky, and every member of my team, that I must strike a balance in our favor. All the kids in the crowd thought we were badly beaten until I counted up the runs and announced:

"'Forty-two to sixteen, favor of de Come Sevs.'

"Fight? Why, there was blood on the moon; but we cut our way out, shot up a grain elevator and escaped. I had the new ball that we'd played for in my pocket, and Brocky's little brother got away with four of their bats.

Talk about keeping a record of stolen bases! Maybe we didn't have a record of stolen bats in those days.

"After this I kind o' dropped off the ball business and took to mercantile pursuits, selling papers with Charley Curry. One day, about 1879, I received the first telegram I ever got. It read: 'Take first train for Joliet. Want you to umpire against the Canaries. We play for \$15. Don't fail us, Charley.' I sold my stock of papers to Curry at half price, and caught the train to Joliet. When I reached the penitentiary city I found that the betting was about two to one in favor of the Canaries. Brocky, captain of the 'Come Sevs,' slipped me a two-caser and that just about made me good for the stock I had slaughtered to Charley Curry.

"It was a mighty good and a mighty close game. The 'Come Sevs' managed to get in two runs on balks in the ninth, and took the lead by one run. The Joliet crowd said they didn't see the balks, but finally bowed to the superior judgment of the umpire. When the Canaries came to the bat we started in to dispose of them, one, two, three. But the first three batters hit safely. The bases were filled, with nobody out; I had had nothing to decide and was powerless. The next batter got up on his toes, smashed the buckskin way over into a cornfield, and everybody started to come in.

"Fortunately for the 'Come Sevs,' the last batter had stepped over the line, making a foul strike—at least I so decided. According to the rules I was obliged to declare the batter out and send the Canaries back to their perches. The next two men were called out on strikes. The 'Come Sevs' were winners by one run. My popularity as an um-

pire for Chicago clubs dates from that day. I sold my newspaper corner to Curry for \$18, and when the snowball season came had \$40 in bank. That winter I helped to take care of the grounds of the Chicago Club—they were on the lake front then. My duty was to skirmish through the grand stand every hour, and if I found a tramp asleep to return to the office and report the presence of the enemy to my superior. Just my experience that winter would make a good story for *The Sporting Times*, but I'll tell it another day.

“When the blue-birds warbled their first notes I received a commission as a full-fledged umpire in the Pilsener League. The first game, I remember, was in Milwaukee between the Spaldings, of Chicago, and the Milwaukee Mutuals. When the last half of the ninth was reached the Spaldings were at the bat with the Mutuals two ahead. Two men went out in succession on flies. The third man took his base on balls, and on the first pitch started for second like a shot. He made a great dive, struck an iron spike which held the bag in place, and slid past the base, leaving more than half his pants on the spike. The baseman got the ball, put it on both the runner and the pants, and claimed an out, which, had it been allowed, would have ended the game in favor of the Mutuals. It certainly was a pretty point and required quick concentration of faculties.

“I mustered my forces for the effort. In the first place the Spaldings had to win that game. There was a spring suit in it for me aside from the cazerinas I had up on the outside. I had to think quick, for the crowd was closing in around me, and at last I called for order. ‘Gentlemen,’ I said, ‘all who are familiar with this game are aware that one

of the very first rules of the Guides relates to the very point at issue. That is : "Players must appear upon the grounds in uniform." Is this not a case where this rule has been violated?" They thought it was. 'Does it not therefore follow, gentlemen, that this man, having violated a most important regulation, cannot technically, without his pants, be called a player and therefore cannot be put out? I hold, gentlemen, that this change from a legal into an illegal player occurred on the second-base spike and before he had been touched by the ball.' Well, sir, my eloquence was too much for them and they returned to their seats.

"The second-baseman, however, was not so easily appeased. He kept at me with a continual fire of 'wat's de matter wid you? I tetched de runner and de pants, too!' And so to pacify him and even things up as it were, I called the runner safe and the pants out. The next five men got their bases on balls, forcing in the winning run for the Chicago club."—*DeWitt Ray, in the New York Sporting Times.*

A FRAGMENT.

CHICAGO, Dec. 1, 1888.—There is probably no more momentous subject engaging the attention of the country than that embraced in the thrilling query : "Where will Ward play next year?" Ah, yes, where? as M. Coquelin, the French comedian, asked me :

"Vill M. le Vard ze ball pick up for ze Boston, ze New York, or vill ze magnifique stop for ze short of ze Vashington?"

I told the great comedian (I speak French un peu) that I didn't know—that the matter was like the question of a general European war—undecided.

“Mon Dieu! I pity ze Americaines. Ze packer of ze pork, and ze merchant of ze grain, and ze clerk of ze store, all to each other say : ‘Vere vill M. le Vard make ze sign? Vat, Monsieur, you call ze sign?’”

I explained (I speak French un peu) and the famous comedian continued :

“Sacre ! I it upwards give !”

“You mean you don't understand it—that is, you give it up?”

“Certainment. M. le Vard shall go ze world around. How then he shall make ze sign to ze Boston, to ze Washington?”

It took fully five minutes (I speak French un peu) to present the conditions in Ward's case. Coquelin's countenance brightened.

“Oui, oui; M. le Col. Day shall twelve thousand dollar first receive. He is ze merchant of ze tabac, also ze merchant of ze Vard. Perhaps M. le Col. Day ze French speak?”

“Yes, like myself, un peu.”

“Voila ! To M. le Col. Day I shall soon myself announce : ‘Ah, Monsieur le Colonel,’ I shall say, ‘I have come ze sign to make. Not for twelve thousand dollar—non, non, that is too great much. I shall make ze sign for seex thousand.’”

“But you can't play ball—not even un peu.”

“Alas, non ! Then to ze Paris I shall quick return. I shall meet M. le Vard at ze Paris as he shall go ze world

around. He shall me ze ball teach *au fait* to make ze sign for twelve thousand dollar ! Ala !”

And the merry comedian warbled :

“ I leave ze actor’s life,
 To play ze ball base game ;
 Seex time each year I make ze sign
 And there get just ze same.”

—*DeWitt Ray, in The Sporting Times.*

IT IS EVER THUS WITH THE SMALL BOY.

The small boy is a recognized and an unrecognized factor in professional base ball. Recognized when he has the necessary amount to insure a seat on the bleaching boards, and unrecognized when he is penniless. The small boy who lives in the neighborhood of the Polo Grounds knows more about professional ball, and can identify a player on a team quicker than a man who might have attended every game played there during the season. Perhaps the precocious youngster had never been inside the fence, but with his sharp American ingenuity and get-there spirit, it is hard for the management to keep him out. He finds many ways of seeing a game, either by boring a hole in the fence, burrowing under the fence, climbing up the telegraph poles, or even going so far as to render himself liable to be arrested for house-breaking by tearing boards out of a fence. One day last season I saw two youngsters, neither of them over eight years old, pry a small piece of board out of the fence

on 110th street. One of them had got in and the other was preparing to do likewise, when a crowd of boys got onto the racket and gathered around that hole like a swarm of bees around a hive. Four or five got in, and then just as one was half way in, some one shouted "cheese it." The little fellows scattered, leaving the trespasser in the hole wriggling his body and kicking his feet. The policeman got there one minute too late. He rapped his stick against the fence in anger and mortification.

I have also seen men bring boys in with them, paying for a grand-stand ticket, so that the boy could explain the mysteries of the game and point out the good plays, errors and the like to them. This was quite a fad among the dudes last season. Just look at the small boy at a ball game. Does he go crazy and make a fool of himself by applauding at the wrong time? No. He sits in his seat as immovable as a marble statue. He would remind you of a Philadelphian at church. But wait till a good play is made, and you will hear him in all his glory. "Hi yi ! hi yi !" his little feet stamp, his hands clap, and a moment later, when everything is quiet, he will convulse the crowd by yelling to his chum, who is perhaps a block away from him, "Whatjer tink ov dat tree baser, Mickey ?"

The rising generation will be ball players who will exceed two-fold the players of nowadays, as the latter did their predecessors.

JOHN KENNY

NEW YORK, April, 1889.

"I'M GOING TO BE AN EMPIRE."

BY DEWITT RAY.

A CHARACTER SONG.—High-water lavender pants, Byadere vest, Gendarme coat, long side whiskers, and catcher's mask :

My name is Tommy Finerty,
 With hose-reel No. 3 ;
 Well posted in the Base-ball Guides—
 They all say that for me.
 For there is something in the sport
 I greatly do admire,
 And I've got my application in
 To be a League empire.

Chorus :

For the empire is the thing, my boys,
 My boys, my boys.
 He rules with iron sway ;
 His fiat all obey—
 He's king of all the play,
 My boys.

When my credentials are received,
 I do be tellin' you,
 The nabobs they will crowd the stand
 To witness my *debut*.
 The fire-alarms will be turned in,
 Like any third call fire,
 To show the population that
 Tom Finerty's empire.—*Chorus*.

I'm asked to empire near the dumps
 Whenever there's a game,
 For all the boys are well aware
 That I've sent in my name ;
 They say both Leagues will want me sure—
 That each will bid up higher,
 And that they've agents on the dumps
 To witness me empire.—*Chorus.*

They had a game last Saturday
 In the lot by Av'nue B;
 At each decision that I made
 They gave three cheers for me.
 They tried to play a funny joke
 And take four strikes—d'ye see?
 But when the game was half played out
 I called them down to three.

Six stories high, upon a roof,
 I witness each League game,
 And though it always costs a dime,
 I get there just the same.
 The crowd all yell: "Look out there, Tom!
 Your whiskers will catch fire!"
 With friends like those I'm bound to be
 A favorite empire.

Chorus:

As an empire I shall shine, my boys,
 My boys, my boys.
 And if they talk to me
 I'll show my dignity;
 I'll fine them a big V,
 My boys.

I have a nine, or tenor, voice,
 As you can plainly hear,
 It's trained to notes harmonious for
 The most fastidious ear;
 And when I warble, "Out! Come in!"
 Like Signor Brignoli,
 The ladies all will throw boquets
 And billet-doux at me.

I'll wear a little cardigan,
 And sweet lawn-tennis shoe;
 A Coney Island bathing suit
 All striped with red and blue;
 And with my sea-green polo cap
 I must look somewhat gay,
 As off the tally-ho I spring
 About the time for play.

No drawling dude or bold upstart
 Will dare to speak out loud,
 For there I'll stand like Bonaparte,
 The idol of the crowd.
 I'll prove my claim to royal blood
 And noble ancestry,
 While base-ball subjects cheer and shout:
 "Hurrah for Finerty!"

Chorus:

I'll be the king of empires, my boys,
 My boys, my boys.
 Guarded against attack
 From any base-ball quack,
 I'll wear my chest protector
 On my back!

INDEX.

	PAGE.
A Fragment,	75
A Little Talk About Fielding,	36
“Backing Up,”	23
Base-Running,	28
Biographical Sketch of N. Fred Pfeffer,	5
Center-Field,	66
Double Plays,	26
First Base,	54
He Saw Some Lively Times,	72
Hissing a Great Play,	35
“I’m Going to be an Empire,”	79
Introductory,	11
In the Matter of Advice,	13
In the Matter of Signs,	15
It is Ever Thus with the Small Boy,	77
Left Field,	69
Points for Nimble Thinkers,	30
Right Field,	64
Second Base,	58
Sliding,	31
The Catcher,	50
The Pitcher,	42
The Short Stop,	59
Third Base,	62
Worth Remembering,	33

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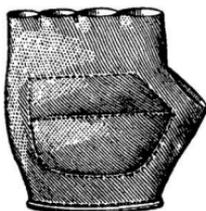
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