NEW BATTING RULES.

CHANGES MADE SOME LAST YEAR.

Batting as an Art—Progress from the Elastic to the Dead Ball—Holding Ahead of Bunting Science.

The batsman in base-ball ought just now to be familiarizing himself with the new rules for his position of the play as fixed by the recent convention, and spectators of the sport next season will be puzzled unless they know what the novelties mean. Henry Chadwick, the expert, appears to foresee a general revolution in the game which, in a few years, will make it as unlike the game of our elder brothers, not to say fathers, as possible. He says:

"The radical changes made in the playing rules of base-ball by the conference committee will materially change the character of batting for the coming season; and that, too, to the advantage of the batsman and in the way of improvement in handling the ball scientifically. Before referring to the amendments to the rules governing the batsman and his position, it will be wise, while to comment a little on batting as an art, and to see what progress has been made in this department of the game. Many years ago, when the game may be said to have been 'young and charming,' there was a period when for several seasons large scores characterized the contests. This was in the heavy hitting era of underhand pitching and elastic rubber-filled balls. From this extreme in the way of hitting an elastic ball sent the field a dead-ball period followed some years later, and in the year when this latter class of balls was used the other extreme was reached, a game at Manchester, N. H., between the club at that city and the Harvard College club, resulting in a score of 9 to 8 at the end of the twenty-fourth inning. One might imagine that the successive large scores of the latter years was a manifestation of great skill in batting, while the other phenomenal record was due to wonderful Yankee skill in fielding. But to neither extreme was either due to be attributed, rational as our views in relation to batting are. It was simply a case of elastic and dead balls from home runs. While there is not the slightest difficulty in telling dead balls from the bat, there is not the same difference in scoring these balls from those of a lively character. In batting for a dead ball the batsman has only to place the bat in the way of the ball and let the force of the ball do the work, while in batting for a lively ball the batsman must be quick to see the ball and time it, and then, by a quick movement of the bat, meet the ball with force enough to send it to the field. In batting for a dead ball the batsman has only to time the ball, while in batting for a lively ball he must time it and then hit it a blow of sufficient force to send it to the field. In batting for a dead ball the batsman will stand on either square of his base, if he desires to, but in batting for a lively ball he will stand on either square to the side of his base he prefers.

As to the effect the new rules will have upon the batsman's position, Mr. Chadwick says that the fair foul ball, in consequence of the change in the rule which places the foul ball when caught within the foul lines, will be a home run, as it should be, and the batsman will be forced to avoid the foul ball, which either touched the ball than or passed over it. For instance, if you take a position on the right side of the home plate, you will generally drive the foul balls over the third base line, and the balls over the left side of the home plate will be fair balls. Hence, the batsman will be forced to place himself on the left side of the home plate, so as to hit the ball to the right field. If the batsman does not do this, he will be forced to hit the ball to the left field, and the ball will be a foul ball