

CHRISTY MATHEWSON'S REVENGE SEEN IN HIS CROPPED CROP OF 1913

BASEBALL GRIT

By CHRISTY MATHEWSON, of the New York Giants
(Copyright, 1913, by the McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

"He's well!"

The recruit is labeled, the toobogan has been graced, the player put on it, and he lands with a thump back in the minors. The accusation is the most damning in baseball. It means, in the vernacular of the game, the lack of heart or courage.

There was a recruit catcher training with the Giants in Marlin, Texas, three or four seasons ago, and he looked like a world beater. His throwing was accurate, his catching very nearly faultless, and his hitting fair. The newspaper correspondents with the club fairly burned up the wires with the thrilling accounts of the ability of this youngster. Then one day the club team was playing an exhibition game in Dallas, and the youngster was catching. The battle was close when a Dallas batter drove a fly to left field with a man on third base.

The throw came home straight, and the runner with the ball, trying to score the winning tally on the caught fly, was hit by the runner arrived simultaneously, and the runner shot out a pair of sharp spikes. The catcher sidestepped both the spikes and the ball, and the ball went to the back stop, and the game went with it. McGraw hates to be beaten by any ball league team in the spring.

"No, no," said "Mac" that night, "he won't do."

"What's the matter with him?" chorused some of the newspaper correspondents who overheard the remark and had been pegging this youngster as a second "Johnnie" Kling when "Johnnie" was in his prime. "I don't care to have any boy catching for me who is going to dodge spikes at the expense of the game," replied McGraw. "There is no use in a man getting hurt unnecessarily, but I don't want to see him refusing to block, especially when he has him guards on."

The young man glided down to the minors as if he were on casters.

Not a man ever lasted in the Big League who lacked heart. Although it may look like a very soft thing to the spectator for the players to get out on the field for a couple of hours each afternoon in the summer and play a game of ball, it has not the simplicity of its appearance. I have played both football and baseball, and I believe that the latter requires more courage. Once a man shows he lacks this quality, he is done for in the big league, because the word rapidly spread around the circuit and the players lay for him.

Trying Test For Newcomer

Suppose he is a young second baseman. It has been reported by the unexcited wireless service of the league that the man is "yellow." A runner starts to steal, and the second baseman goes to the bag to get the thrown ball from the catcher. It looks as if the base runner were going to be caught.

"Look out of the way," he shouts, "or I'll cut you in two!"

The baseman has a vision of a pair of spikes being driven at him, and, if he flinches and loses the ball because of this intimidating spectacle he has confirmed the report he is "yellow," and each runner repeats the act until he is finally driven out of the league. Now the good baseman does not absorb the attacking spikes in some part of his anatomy. That would be foolish. But he plays the ball so he can tag the runner and send him to the spikes. And, if he thinks the trick was tried with the intent of cutting him down, he says—

"Come out to the clubhouse after the game, and I'll knock your block off." Or, "I'll make you look as if you had been run over by a lawn mower."

And you must make good on your threats, too, if they call you, because that is the only way in which you can command respect. For some reason, the veterans in the big leagues appear to hate to be cut.

Ontario Woman's Fortune

Freed From That Weak, Languid, Always Tired Feeling, by Lydia E. Pinkham's Compound.

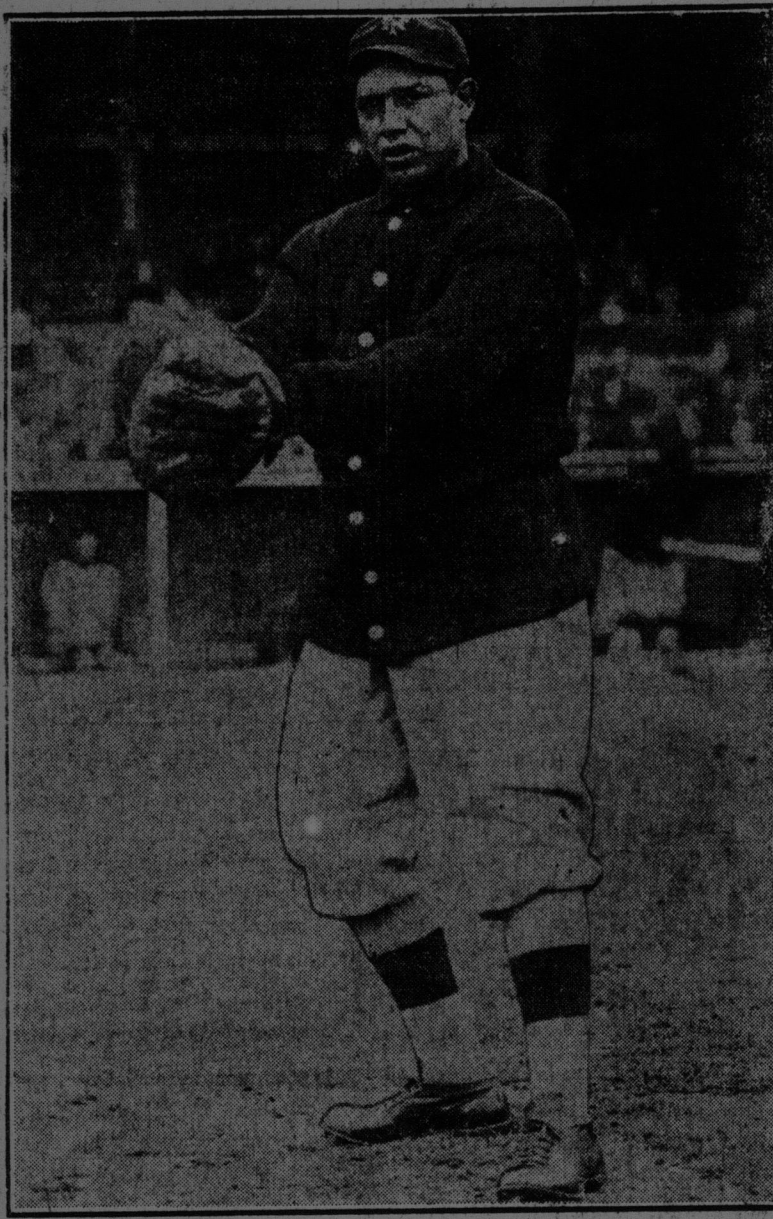
Chesalon, Ont.—"I cannot speak too highly of your medicine. When my appetite is poor and I have that weak, languid, always tired feeling, I get a bottle of Lydia E. Pinkham's Compound, and it gives me up gives me strength, and restores me to perfect health again. It is truly a blessing to women, and I cannot speak highly enough of it. I take pleasure in recommending it to others."

Mrs. ANNIE CAMERON, Chesalon, Ont.

Women who are suffering from those distressing ills peculiar to their sex should not lose sight of these facts or doubt the ability of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to restore their health.

There are probably hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of women in the United States who have been benefited by this famous old remedy, which was produced from roots and herbs over 30 years ago by a woman to relieve woman's suffering. If you are sick and need such a medicine, why don't you try it?

If you want special advice, write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman and held in strict confidence.



"Chief" Meyers, The Indian Catcher of The Giants

see a young fellow get along in the game. This used to be more noticeable ten years ago than it is today, because the game has improved along these very lines. But still the young fellow just breaking into the game receives his baptism of fire before he is accepted, and there is no room in it for the weak hearted.

"Chief" Meyers, the Indian catcher of the Giants, had a tough time establishing himself in the big league, and survived the test only because of his unflinching nerve. Some players on opposing teams seemed to be very desirous of driving Meyers out of the game because of his unflinching nerve. And, if he thinks the trick was tried with the intent of cutting him down, he says—

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Some pitchers are what managers call "born busters." That is they apparently have all the "stuff" a trifle needs to make a good pitcher, but they lack the very essence of the game and they are scared half to death every time they get out on the field.

Once a young pitcher joined the Giants with promising prospects. He came to the club in the summer of 1908, and he was a big fellow, a well-known baseball scout now dead, told McGraw that if he limited a snare drum it would drive McGraw out of the league. The whole club roared like a snare drum for the first time he went, to work for McGraw, and he never won another game from the Giants.

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young pitcher by conversation or in any other way. He probably could if he wanted to, but his batting is enough.

Clark Griffith, when he was in the National League, was a great man to "hedge" a pitcher. He would start before the game. His habit was to take up a position near where the opposing pitcher was warming up while he batted "fungees" to the outfielders during the practice period. Then he would start a conversation something like this:

"Get anything today, old boy? They all look good in practice. Guess there ain't many games left in you. You're getting pretty old."

Griffith was an annoying manner when on the coaching lines and he worried many a young pitcher out of the league. Men like Alexander and Twiliver of his sort just laugh at Griffith when he pats that stuff, but some young fellows are very timid about their chances to make good anyway, and this talk upsets them. Griffith is one of the nicest fellows in the world off the field, too, but he plays the game to win, and he believes that this conversation may help him.

The Snare Drum Business

I told in a story I wrote last year how we drove Coveleski, the twirler who, with a disinterested club, practically pitched the Giants out of a pennant of 1908 by working against us out of his turn, out of the league by imitating a snare drum. McGraw was a ball club as some at one time as the Giants were at this pitcher after the season of 1908, and we laid for him. "Jack" Johnson, a well-known baseball scout now dead, told McGraw that if he limited a snare drum it would drive McGraw out of the league. The whole club roared like a snare drum for the first time he went, to work for McGraw, and he never won another game from the Giants.

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deal while he was catching and if he could draw a young fellow into conversation would often work him up so that he did not know whether he was playing baseball or croquet. They tell a story about Kling attempting to worry "Eddie" Collins, the second baseman of the Athletics, when the Cubs played the Philadelphia team in the world's series in 1911.

"Collins went to Columbia university, and I knew him when I worked out with that team in the cage spring before he broke into the game. He is slightly built, but very wiry and fast. He is also boyish looking. Kling thought he could make him useless in that world's series. The Cubs had the impression they were playing a lot of boys that fall, anyway."

"So you are 'Eddie' Collins, the leading base stealer of the American League, are you?" Kling remarked to the Athletics' second baseman the first time he came to the plate in that series, according to the stories of the verbal encounter.

Never a murmur from Collins.

"Well, let's see you steal a base on me," continued Kling.

Collins reached first base and by clever leading off, induced Kling to believe he intended to do so, and that he asked for piteous, thus getting his twirler into the hole. Then, when the Chicago pitcher had to lay the ball over or walk the batter, Collins got his start and was down like a flash of light. He stole the base cleanly and smiled at Kling as he brushed off the dirt. Kling did not engage him in conversation after that.

We found the Athletics to be a courageous, aggressive bunch of ball players without indulging in any unfair tactics in the 1911 world's series. You could not scare them, but they were just in there playing ball and that is all. Once or twice, during the series, we tried to get "trues" out of some of them, but they refused to come back.

In the games with the Red Sox last fall, there was much more conversation exchanged between the players of the two teams, but I do not think that either side gained in the end by the repartee. That was also a clean series with the Red Sox. In all the games, I do not remember hearing any player on either side using any bad language. There was a lot of talk such as "We'll get you yet," "You're team tried any unfair tactics. All around it was a great series for baseball.

Host by His Own Petard

Frequently conversational catclars are made by their own talk. There is a story told about how Hal Chase crossed Fire, the catcher on the Athletics, by giving an old sign, which Thomas knew perfectly well, but he refused to accept it as on the level. Years ago Thomas was on the New York American league club with Chase. This anecdote is laid in 1910. Chase was at the bat, and Thomas was catching for the Athletics. It was in the eighth inning with the score tied with a New York runner on second base. After Chase had arranged himself on the plate, ready to hit, he rubbed the side of his nose with his finger.

"What are you doing?" exclaimed Thomas. "That is your old sign, and you run sign you are giving. Is this a fraud?" Thomas evidently did not expect any returns from his question, but Chase, who was watching him, took the bait and said: "Sure, that's my hit and run sign, and you run sign you are giving. Is this a fraud?" Thomas evidently did not expect any returns from his question, but Chase, who was watching him, took the bait and said: "Sure, that's my hit and run sign, and you run sign you are giving. Is this a fraud?"

"Kidding me, I guess," ventured Thomas. "That sign goes as it says," Chase answered.

Plank was pitching for the Athletics at the time and had been pawing around in the pitcher's box while this conversation was in progress.

Chase was trying to throw him off to get a pitchout and thus to work Plank into a hole as he ordered a fast ball for it. The runner on second was on the move with the wind-up and Chase met the ball for a perfect angle to center field which scored the run that eventually won the contest. Chase had beaten Thomas as at his own game, the conversation one, and had cleverly outwitted the Philadelphia catcher by giving the run sign, which the catcher refused to believe.

The remains of the system a married friend of mine used to adopt when he had temporary lapses and would absent himself from home for the evening. He would tell his wife the truth, and she would always refuse to believe it. Off course, she all his nothing whatever to do with baseball.

"James Smith," the wife would say, "is your husband's return, 'where have you been'?"

"Well," he would answer, "you see, I met a friend of mine, and we took two young ladies to dinner."

"Now you know you don't mean that at all. You have been leaning up against some bar drinking. I can smell it on your breath. Why don't you tell me the truth?"

"Eddie" Collins, who was formerly a New Yorker in the winter, once told me the story of the first time he faced the great Walter Johnson. Collins was at that time only a stripling of a boy and was still in college, playing ball in the Big League under an assumed name. The Washington catcher tried to scare the youngster with talk, but there was no scare in the Collins makeup even then. I know he has none now because I have pitched against him. In relating the story, Collins says:

When Rahoe Overreached Himself

"It was put into a game against Washington to bat for 'Doc' Powers, the Philadelphia pitcher, now dead. Walter Johnson was pitching and 'Mike' Rahoe catching. I had heard a terrible lot about Johnson and was pretty nervous."

"This your first time against Johnson?" inquired Rahoe. "You haven't any more chance than a bottle of beer in the desert. You'll never see the ball go by, and if it hits you, they'll have to call a nurse. It will be too late for the ambulance service."

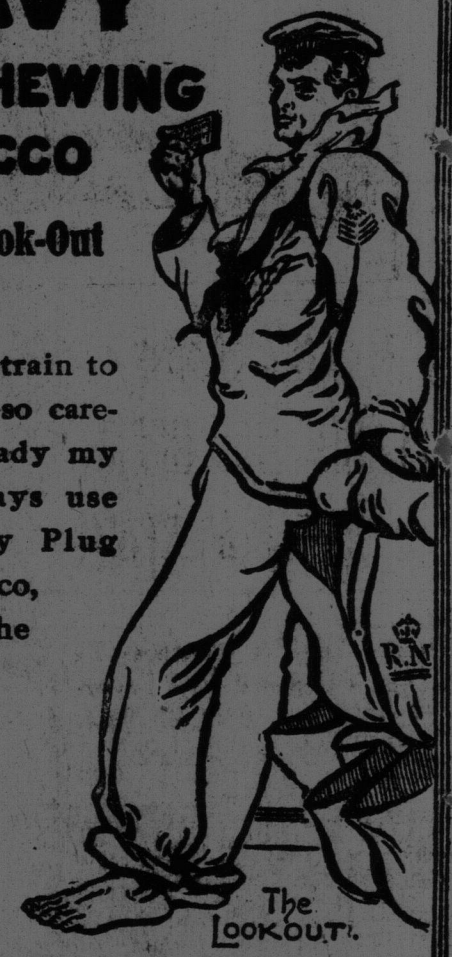
"I was pawing around for a tow ball in the batter's box while Rahoe was talking, and, as I looked down, I saw that he had one finger down against the back of a big black mitt he was using. I took one and found it was a straight ball. Again I looked down at him, and saw two fingers. The ball was wide and a curve. Then the one finger again, and I set myself for a fast one. I got a two base hit on it. Rahoe had been so busy trying to scare me to death that he had neglected to cover his sign with his chest protector flap. I got that hit off Rahoe

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What the Look-Out Says:

"It's a great strain to have to watch so carefully. To steady my nerves, I always use Empire Navy Plug Chewing Tobacco, when up in the 'Crow's Nest.'"



and not Johnson. But I have never been able to hit the big Washington pitcher much since, because it has not been my luck to find a catcher who exposed his signs as Rahoe did."

Grit is the great thing in baseball. Certain players are best when the strain is the hardest. "Joah" Devore is of this type. He will sleep along all year and then be one of the stars of the world's series because of his grit. I must just "go" in one little story to give the reader a line of "Joah's" nerve.

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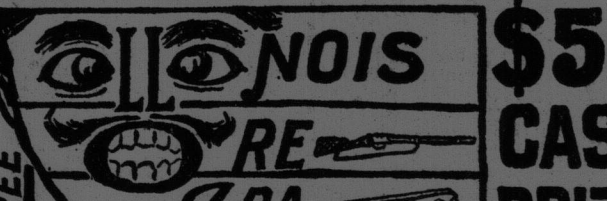
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