League Stories By CHARLES E. VAN LOAN IV.-THE PHANTOM : : : : LEAGUE : : : From "The Ten Thousand Dollar Arm and Other Tales of the Big League" Copyright, 1912, by Small, Maynard & Company

OBERT DAVIS FRISBEE, Pop Prisbee for short, was a big league scout.

For the benefit of those who not know the exact status of the ball scout we will lay a finger on w of the conditions which created particular branch of the sporting

long time ago baseball was a rection. Then it grew into a commerexperiment, broadened into a payaltion and is now, in point of invested, interests staked and lar following, the greatest outamusement enterprise in the

Then baseball began to pay the nagers set about securing performwho would draw money at the box e-that is to say, players who id win games. The game itself deped along scientific lines, and the league came next, with its ever

reasing demand for new blood. The big league is an unfeeling sort an octopus. The player who strugto the top holds his job just so ig as he can play his position a litbit better than any other man om the management can find, and management is everlastingly on lookout for that other man. That where the scout comes into play. job is to find the boys who are to the stars of temorrow.

Pop Prisbee was a good scout. Beeen his teens and his thirties he a ball player and a team capus in the minors. His insility to hit high class pitching had sped him to spend his active ye just outside major league organitions, but he was a marvelous field g dret baseman and had a knack developing raw material in a short ce of time.

Then Frisbee started to take on ight and could no longer "spear" bed throws at first be began to about him for a permanent post of some sort, and Timothy Cabill that time managing the Wanderers m the bench, employed Frisbee as out. Cabill had once played secd base under Frisbee, and be had pect for Pop's judgment of a year-

Friabee went about his work silent He never hunted ball players with brass band or a torchlight procesand he kept his mouth shut. during his first year he had opend bie beart to a friend, and it had ot him a wonderful right handed on whom he had discovered itching in a timber league in Michi-That taught Pop a lesson. He ot his own counsel, covered his traff



Marvelous Fielding First

[Posed by Ball of the Red Sox.]

be could and when on the scent secretive as a detective. Cometition was stiff, and all the clubs wondering where Frisbee "dug live ones.

Pop Frisbee has another job now. He is an inspector for a public service corporation. Into his work he puts no enthusiasm, and out of it he gets pleasure. His salary check is maller, too, and it may be that he otices the increased cost of living.

His judgment of a ball player is evbit as keen as it was ten years ago, ind he still retains the qualities of mind which made him a success as a Then why is he an inspector? ise he was laughed out of baseguyed out of the business to which he gave the best years of blu He was the victim of a practical which was certainly never aimed at Robert Davis Frisbee.

Be patient, for the story begins-begins with Johnny Meegan sitting in front of an adobe house in the namiet of San Miguei, county of Rio Arriba,

state of New Mexico.

In most of the little towns of New Mexico, far away from the main lines of the railroad, there are men from east of the Mississippi. Some of them live in that high, dry atmosphere because they find the fug end of life sweet to them. There are others who. as they say, have "taken it in time." These expect to get well and return some day to God's country. That phrase is as old as the garden of Eden. and it was invented when Adam looked back over his shoulder and caught the flash of the sword at the bounda God's country is never the land in which one lives, but the land to which one cannot return. Thus to Johnny Meegan "God's country" meant Chicago, to Billy Kilbourne it meant Boston, to Fred Parks It meant Shamokin, Pa., and to Jefferson Davis Johnson "God's country" meant Balti-

The Chicago sporting writers gave Johnny Meegan a farewell banquet and a loving cup to take with him when he went away, and they drank his health with a choke in their throats, for they did not expect to see bim again. Sentence had been pronounced upon him by a specialist of international reputation after the star baseball reporter had coughed all win-

"There is a chance," said the specialist. "Try New Mexico or Arizona.

"Never let it be said that I quit while there was a chance," said Johnny Meegan. "I'm on my way, doc."

Johnny had seen the local specialist at Albuquerque, who had given him hope and good advice. Open air had been recommended, and Johnny had made a long, rambling trip with a mustang and a pack horse. San Miguel had been at the end of that journey. That was because of Billy Kilbourne.

Billy was existing in San Miguel with more comfort than he had been able to find elsewhere. Billy was only twenty five, but he had lived his life in a tremendous hurry and crowded so many things into it that it had been New Mexico or heaven, and Billy took | Item: no chances. He mourned for Roston and the Maine woods and nearly wept with joy at meeting some one who the probable strength of the Boston Nationals. Kilbourne's people were guite wealthy, and he had turned an adobe house into a very comfortable affair. The furniture had been bought in Denver and freighted from Chama at the foot of the Cumbres pass.

"You'll stay here with me for awhile," said Billy. "Nothing happens by chance, you know. You were sent here to cheer me up. Just think of a regular big league baseball writor dropping in out of the clouds! It's too good to be true. Now, how is this young Hawley going to do in the outfield? And why did they tie the can to Homer Kennedy?"

So Johnny Meegan stayed on at San Miguel, filling his lungs with the clean. dry air and his stomach with the excellent nourishment furnished by Jefferson Davis Johnson, who had once been Kilbourne's valet, but through love was now his cook.

Besides Kilbeurne and Meegan, there was Fred Parks, a wandering printer. who had reached the end of his earthly pilgrimage at San Miguel. Parks ing "Soaked!" had a small general supply store and managed to make a living mainly through the large orders which Kilbourne gave him. There was also Antonio, a young Jacarilla, who had been to Carlisle, and sometimes liked to remember that he had played center field with the fastest ball team that that school ever produced. Antonio was interesting. He took Kilbourne and Meegan on long rides through the reservation, and Kilbourne pretended that he was making collection of Indian blankets. It

gave him a slender interest in life. One evening Meegan, Kilbourne and Parks were sitting in front of the Hotel Tournine, as Kilbourne persisted. in naming his house. He sale it had a homelike sound. They had exbausted seven-up, cinch and dominoes, and Meegan had been recounting some

of his newspaper experiences. "Gosh," said Johnny; "I wish we had a paper here!"

Kilbourne mughed until he coughed. "Man alive!" he panted. "What

"Why, just for the fun of getting it out?" said Johnny. "Think of the things we could put into it! No copy desk to get by, no city editor to howi. Why, we could 'kid' the whole south

"It wouldn't pay," said Parks solemnly, whereupon both young men hooted at him.

"Oh, laugh if you want to," said be. "A fellow tried it once. He must have been nutty. He died. I found his whole plant put away in the back room of the store when I bought out Moreno. The Mexican took the works for a small debt-an old 'army' press, some type, ink".

Where is that stuff now?' demanded Kilbourne.

"Ob, it's down there yet," said Parks easily. "I never bothered with it, and there ain't any market for junk closer than Durango."

Kilbourne looked at Meegan, and to-gether they looked at Parks. Right here, on this very spot," said Kilbourne impressively. "we found. create, institute, organize, and incorporate the San Miguel Messenger, I speak to be owner and publisher because all any owner ever has to do is furnish the money. That lets him

out." "Me for the editorial department!" said Meegan. "And I'll show these folks around here what a real sporting page looks like, believe me!"

"That being the case," said Parks solemnly, "I'll print it. You sin't got a thing on me. I'm as game as you And as much of a blamed fool," he added softly.

Pop Frisbee had several good friends among the newspaper men, and whenever he was in Chicago he made it a point to drop in on Charlie Hough. Chartle was an old timer and had a record which reached back to the days of the Brotherbood. Pop had known him for nearly twenty years.

The big league pennant races were drawing to a close when Pop dropped into Chicago on his way west. While did not mention the fact, he was bended for Albuquerque. By slow stages he intended to reach the principal city of New Mexico in time for the great annual baseball tournament which takes place in the fall after the close of the big league season. This tournament is the great attraction of the state fair, and the cities of the southwest often hire the best pitchers in the country to represent them in the annual struggle for glory and the \$1,000 purse. Pop Frisbee never missed that Albuquerque tournament, for there he knew he would find the flower of the southwestern diamonds.

Charlle Hough was glad to see Pop and chatted with him for several minutes. Then be was called to the managing editor's office and left Pop alone beside the roll top desk.

A pile of papers lay upon the top of the desk, and Pop ran through them. glancing at the sporting pages. Halfway down the plie he came upon a stranger-the San Miguel Messenger. It was a queer looking sheet, and when Pop saw that it was published in San Miguei. Rio Arriba county, N. M., he slipped it into his pocket. There might be some news of the coming tournament.

That night at his botel Pop remembered the Messenger and drew it forth. It was not much of a newspaper, as it contained only four small sheets, and under the title line appeared a peculiar motto:

Vim, vinegar and vitriol; frijoles not regarded as legal tender

Pop glanced at the front page. Leading the paper was an amazing news

We regret that we must once more call public attention to the habits of our es-teemed fellow townsman Senor Juan de la Cruz. Juan was over at Tony's again could give him an expert opinion upon last night, bathing his vitals in liquid tumult. After he was pretty thoroughly potted he proceeded up Tin Can boulevard until he reached his bungalow, where he was greeted by the charming and popula Senora de la Cruz, the beautiful and tal ented society matron and leader of San Miguel's Four Hundred. In the excess of his alcoholic exuberation, the ebuiltion of his spirits. Senor de la Cruz settled a right haymaker upon the delicate smeller of his queen consort. Senora de la Cruz did not quit under punishment. She im ediately retaliated by biffing her lord and master between the eyes with a per kettle. Senor de la Cruz took the long count and is around town this morning with his lamps trimmed low.

We have frequently deplored the prevalence of such occurrences in our circles, and it would seem that alco excesses are undermining the foundations of our social fabric. The fundamental principles of our social structure are

threatened We intended to print in this number a great blank verse poem entitled "The Demon Rum," but our staff poet sought his inspiration in the subject of his lofty lines and found so much inspiration that he is now confined in the bastile until such e as he ceases to see herds of red white and blue elephants, pink mice and other peculiar animals.

This gem appeared under the head-

On the same page there was another

startling item:

APACHE UPRISING! was rumored that upon Wednesday last there was an uprising among the Jacarillas. This we wish to deny in the strongest terms. We were on the inside of the insurrection, so to speak, or at least we had some dope on the inside of the uprising, and we now explain the

whole sad affair. Our late printer's devil, whom we christ-ened Sockalexis P. Bender, better known Man-Who-Lays-Down-on-His-Job-and-Refuses-to-Get-Up-Again, was an aged Apache of the Jacarilla tribe. He claim-ed to be the second cousin of Henry Clay conimo, formerly a citizen of pro-nce in these parts and well known Washington. After the late Socks had ncealed about a pint of squirrel booxe family resemblance became most

striking Last Wednesday, being thirsty, the aforesaid Sockalexis P. Bender horned the editorial sanctum and snared there from a half gallon jug of St. John's Cele-brated Spavin Cure, believing the same to be rye whisky Citizens who saw our late employee throwing handsprings in the middle of Lafayette boulevard placed the wrong construction upon his actions. The uprising was a personal affair and entire-ly internal. The interment yesterday was

private. Pop Frisbee read these items with a

corrugated brow. "Huh!" he snorted. "Some bush league newspaper man trying to be

funny Then he opened the paper to expose the inside sheets, and his opinion of

was devoted to sporting news, and the thing which eaught l'op Frisbee's eye and caused it to bulge slightly 'was the column of box scores and the "Official Standing of the Independent Northern New Mexico League."

"Suffering snakes!" grunted the scout. "I never knew they had a league in northern New Mexico! Outlaws, of course!"

There it was under his very eyesthe percentage column of the league. with four clubs in the order named: Won. Lost. P. C.

San Miguel Sidewinders.. 20 Johnson's Coyotes "They've been playing all season. Saturdays and Sundaye!" thought Frisbee. "Well, well! I wender if

I know any of those players!"

He cast his eye down the line of the box scores. There was not a professiona! name that he had ever heard before. The San Miguel Sidewinders had a Mexican lineup judging by the names-Ortiz, Gonzales, Martinez, Valdez, Morales, Garcia, Gomez, Vigil and Meegan. The last name jarred slight-Evidently the Sidewinders had an Irish pitcher.

The Apache team contained such warlike souls as Running Wolf, Singing Mule, Raw Dog. Howling Henry. Hungry Coyote, Baid Hornet, Footloose Pete, Sweet Evening Breeze and Aztec Antonio, the pitcher.

"Well, what d'ye think of that?" mused the scout. "A regular Indian team, and holy Moses, how those boys can bit."

Indeed, the box score of the game between the Apaches and the Boston Terriers proved it. The hit column was thickly sprinkled with twos and threes, and in the summary the list of extra base bits was a long one. Aztec Antonio was credited with two home runs and a double; Singing Mule had two doubles and a triple; Footloose Pete with four hits out of four times up had a home run, a triple and two singles, and Bad Hornet had two triples.

Then came the crowning surprisethe name which appeared at the beginning of the story of the games. There it was, just as Pop Frisbee had seen it a thousand times in days gone by. in ten point gothic-"John Meegan.

"Johnny Meegan!" said Pop. "So that's where he went! And he's working on a rotten little paper like this! Too bad: Well, there's one boy who knows a ball player when he sees one. What does he have to say?"

John Meegan, Jr., had a great deal to say. His account of the game betweep the Apaches and the Boston Terriers left no vague shadow of doubt in Pop Frisbee's mind. From the instant his eyes alighted on the "standing of the lengue" be had felt the inclination to make a trip over into Rio Arriba county, wherever that should prove to be, and take a look at this unknown collection of ball players. When he ran his eye down the figures which represented the terrific hitting ability of the Apaches the inclination grew stronger, but when he read what Johnny Meegan had to say about Aztec Antonio, Singing Mule, Footloose Pete and Bald Hornet the fate of the Independent Northern New Mexico league was settled. Thus wrote Johnny Meegan:

Never has such a hitting team be gathered together in any league of the country. Kilbourne, who twirled for the Terriers, had all his usual con curves and change of pace mixed up his repertoire with all the skill at his command, but man after man the Apaches walked to the plate and smashed the ball to the fence. If the Terriers fumbled at times it was because the ball which were hit through the infield trav eled at such terrific speed that it was physically impossible to handle them cleanly. On the other hand, Antonio, using his lightning speed at all times. held the Terriers helpiess and all but hit-less. Kilbourne's men were game and fought hard in the face of an overwhelming defeat, but no pitcher seems able to stop the Indians when they begin to hit.

Frisbee stopped off in Denver to greet a few old friends and ask some questions about western leaguers. On the second afternoon, as he was loafing in the lobby of the Brown Palace. he saw Davy Martin limp in with his suit case and write his name on the register. Davy was the scout for the Benedicts-the very miscreant who had robbed Pop of the timber league pitcher aforementioned. Pop beld a newspaper in front of his eyes until Martin was safe in the elevator, and then going to his room be hurriedly packed his suit cases.

"It wouldn't surprise me a bit if Davy was after the same bunch," be thought to himself. "Well, if be beats me he'll know he's been traveling!"

A night spent on a Denver and Rio Grande Pullman landed Pop in Alamosa in time for breakfast, after which he embarked on a narrow guage train for the long, joiting ride over the Cumbres pass, with Chama as the objective point. The train was delayed so that a night at the Chama House was necessary, and the following day Pop climbed into the buckboard for

"A mistake," thought Frisbee. "Baseball in a dump like this? Not in a thousand years! Hey, boy, what's the name of this place?"

A fat, pock marked young Mexican chandise emporium in time to answer the question. It was indeed San Mig-

Pop stood in the whitish dust between his suit cases and felt in an inner pocket. His brain staggered between doubt and certainty, and he clung desperately to a printed word, as men have done since newspapers were invented.

"Amigo," said Pop, pointing to the

sudden change. The entire inside sec- his hands, "where will I find the sport- by the shoulders, he began to laugh tion of the paper-two full sheets- ing editor of this great religious

dally?" The Mexican appeared troubled and began to roll a cigarette.

"Quien sabe!" he said. "Meegan is his name," said Pop-

"Johnny Meegan." "Ab," said the youth, with a smile. He pointed toward a large adobe house which stood on a slight rise of ground on the outskirts of the vilinge.

The front door of the adobe house was open, and, as no attention was paid to his knock, Pop Frisbee stepped inside. In the middle of a large room two men were seated on opposite sides of a table-a negro and an Indian. A white man, little more than a skeleton, sat at a so.: if typic with a pencil in his fingers and a pad of paper before him. It was Fred Parks. Not one of the queer trio looked up as Pop

entered the room, and the two men



Pop Friebee Scouting For New Base ball Talent.

[Posed by the Brooklyn Dodgers.]

at the large table were deeply engrossed in some game which they were playing.

There was a click, a whirring sound which ceased suddenly, and the white man said:

"That was a strike, Jeff. You of fered at It."

Pop Frisbee was about to speak, but this remark joited the conversation out of him. "A strike!" He "offered at it!" What nonsense was this?

Once more the Indian bent over his end of the board. His blue black hair tumbled down over his crimson blanket, and he squipted hard at a trigger which should release a round white pellet the size of a small marble. At the opposite angle of the board the negro crouched in an expectant attitude. "Come on, Antonio!" he coaxed. "Get 'em oveh! Get 'em oveh!"

The Indian jerked smartly at a string, the trigger fell, and the pellet shot forward. The negro made an abrupt motion with his wrist, there was a click, and the pellet went flying back until it was stopped by the railing about the board. The thin man arose and examined the spot where the

ball struck "A two base hit!" he exclaimed. "That scores the man on second. Who is that-Hayes or Tilden?"

The Indian picked up a small counter which had been lying on the board. turned it over and spoke in excellent English.

"Neither one. This is Cleveland. You'll have to be more careful with that score, Parks. You'll get it all balled up again."

The negro crowed. "I been a-layin' for that curve ball of yours for three innings." he said. "Stick it over here again, and watch what I'll do to it!"

Pop Frisbee started to edge toward the door.

"I've got into a private asylum." he thought.

Just then there came a quick step on the hard baked earth outside, and two young men burst into the room, A voice cried:

"How's the game going, Tony? The Apaches eatin' 'em alive, as usual? Come on, you Singing Mule! That's the- Well, for beaven's sake! Pop

Frisbee! And before Frisbee knew how it happened there was Johnny Meegan, thin and brown and evidently as hard as a wire nail, pumping away at his right

hand and trying to thump him on the back with his left. "Johnny." said the scout. "it's good to see you again-good to see you looking so well. Your Chicago friends would never believe it was the same fellow. Why, you look fit to go ten

rounds with a champion!" "Sure!" said Meegan. "It's the country does it. A fine place to spend the summer if you say it quick. Oh, excuse me! Billy, I want you to meet Pop Frisbee, one of my old friends. emerged from Parks' general mer- Pop. Mr. Kilbourne of Boston, and a grand fellow. That's right, get together. Now, then, what on earth are you doing in this God forsaken country? Pop produced his copy of the San Miguel Messenger. "What am I doing

here?" he repeated. "That's what I expect you to tell me. Johnny, what does this thing mean?"

Meegan glanced at the sheet, looked at Pop for a full two seconds in order to make sure that he was in earnest. deal if the Phantom league had never the San Miguel Messenger suffered a heading of the paper which he held in and then, suddenly seizing Kilbourne existed.

as he had not laughed in six months. He cackled until his breath was all gone, and Pop Frisbee, watching him, began to perspire about the temples. The light was breaking in on him at last.

"Oh. Billy!" panted the sporting editor of the San Miguel Messenger. "This is immense! This is the best ever: I forgot to tell you that Pop here is the scout for Tim Cahill and the Wanderers, and he's come down here-Lord. I'll die in a minute!-be's come down here. Billy, to look over our league! Our league!"

Then Kilbourne began to cackle, and the two boys clung to each other and laughed until poor Billy went into a spasm of coughing. When he could recover sufficient breath he reproached Frishee weakly.

"You oughtn't to make me laugh that way," he panted. "It's bad for me." Pop Frisbee, whose sense of humor was never his strong point, clamored for further information.

"And this stuff," said he, tapping the paper accusingly, "is all bunk, I suppose? There ain't any league here at all?

"Pop," said Meegan tearfully, for he had laughed until he cried, "you do us an injustice. You are now in the presence of the Independent Northern New Mexico league! Allow me! Mr. Kilbourne here is the Boston club-Paul Revere, first base; John Adams, center field; John Harvard, catcher! Our friend, Chief Antonio here, is the Apache club-Raw Dog, Baid Hornet, Singing Mule and others too numerous to mention. Jefferson Davis Johnson is the Coyote club-nothing less than a statesman in the lineup, and 1-1 represent the Mexican population with the San Miguel Sidewinders. This gentleman is our official umpire and score keeper, Mr. Parks. The games are played upon the board which you see on the table-the invention of a Chicago fan and the cleverest thing of the sort I ever saw. You have interrupted a great double bender between the Apaches and Coyotes, and the score is-Parks, what is the official score?"

"Eight to three, favor of the Apaches," said Parks gravely. "Singing Mule got two more home runs." Pop looked about him, discovered a chair and found his way to it upon his

shaking legs. "Well, Johnny," he remarked grimly, "all I've got to say is that you and your bunk newspaper have made an

awful sucker out of me." "Oh, I say!" cried Kilbourne. "You're mistaken, Pop," said Meegan earnestly. "It was the fellow who handed you the copy of the Messenger who made a sucker of you." Here Frisbee turned very red and

sank still deeper into his chair. "You see, it's this way," continued Johnny. "We get out that paper for our own amusement, and it's not for general circulation. We print just enough to send to our friends. We fake everything in it, and there's never been any intention to fool any one. You don't know how slowly the time passes in a place of this sort, and if a man hasn't something to keep him

busy he's likely to go nutty. "A pal of mine in Chicago shipped me this mechanical ball game device because he had found it interesting. We discovered that we could not only play a regular game on it, but could score it if we gave names to the counters. It struck me that we could get up a four team league and bave a pennant race and at the same time get some live news for our sporting page. It has been a good laugh to us and to our friends. If anybody told you this league was on the square be iled, and you'll have to fight it out with him."

There was a long, awkward silence. Then Pop Frisbee swallowed hard and acknowledged the corn.

"It's up to me." he said bravely. "I swiped that paper off Charlie Hough's desk-and I guess it's coming to me. Johnny!"

The Coyote team of th Northern New Mexico league stood humbiy at Frisbee's elbow as befits a tailender. He carried a tray upon which were placed several long glasses in which fifty cent a pound ice tinkled expensively.

"Let us all have a little drink," said Billy Kilbourne. "Johnny, a toast!" Meegan smiled over the top of his glass at Frisbee.

"I give you the Phantom league, gentlemen!" said Johnny. "There'll never be another one like it!"

"Amen to that?" said Pop Frisbee. It would be a pleasant thing to end this story without mention of its sequel. The joke carried too far some-

times becomes a tragedy. To do Johnny Meegan justice, he never intended that the facts concerning Frisbee's visit should become public property, but the friend whom Johnny asked to regard the letter as confidential had a sense of humor develeped at the expense of his good taste. Inside of two weeks the story appeared in 400 newspapers, copied from the original, which was printed in Chicago. Pop Frisbee and the Phantom league became the standing joke of the "winter leagues" and hot stove fanning

They laughed Pop Frisbee out of baseball, and they came near laughing him into an asylum, so in the end the Phantom league became very real to him. The joke broke his hear; and spoiled the best scout in the country to make a second class street car in-

Johnny Meegan is back on the job again. Sometimes he comes across Pop Frishee in his blue uniform, but Pop always happens to be looking the other way, and Meegan would give a great

spector.