

"IT'LL BE A HARD CAMPAIGN, ESPECIALLY ON CHECK BOOKS"

SAYS THE HOTEL CLERK BY IRVIN S. COBB



"I SEE there's been somethin' said about Taft not standin' on his porch this Summer and makin' speeches," said the House Detective to the Hotel St. Reckless.

"I'm glad of it," said the Hotel Clerk. "I wouldn't look right. Taft's got a swell front porch all right. Did you ever see him? Well, he's got one of the room-fest circular front porches of any statesman in the business. I don't know whether it's as big as it was before he began reducing himself, but it's plenty big. It extends out over the foundations like an Italian balcony, running thence in a series of hanging gardens in a northerly direction to where it meets his last and his second to his last chins. It's indeed an edifice with a noble shape to it. In Taft's front porch, and an ordinary frock coat is no more than a half-awning for it. But it wouldn't do for him to stand on it this Summer, making speeches. In the first place, he's no contortionist—his running mate may be, but Taft's not—and in the second place, how would it look for the chosen champion of a great party for the most august place in the gift of the people, a man who must carry through this harassing campaign the policies of Roosevelt and 349 pounds of his own and Jim Sherman—how would it look for him to be standing on his pergoles, with one foot caught negligently in his watch pocket and the other slipping up and down the terrace scraping all the buttons off his vest, while endeavoring to properly elucidate the questions of the day, and maybe of the next day, unless Teddy should wire differently over night, to a visiting delegation from the Samuel J. Gompers Supreme Court Altering, Hastening and Fitting Union, of Piqua, Ohio?"

"It wouldn't look right at all, Larry. And it won't be done, either. It will be Taft's duty to remain anchored where he is, like a sturdy captive balloon, as you might say, with not too much gas aboard and just the right amount of sand, hanging out at intervals a few selected lines of especially sterilized wisdom such as a truly careful candidate always hands out as election day draws near, and save his strength. It promises to be a hard-wearing strain, especially on Brother Charles P. Taft's checkbook, and it behooves the nominee to hold his own forces in reserve."

"Bryan'll be on the stump, won't he?" asked the House Detective.

"To be sure," said the Hotel Clerk. "Ever since that historic day 12 years ago, when he fed the Crown of Thorns to Grover Cleveland and David B. Hill, one thorn at a time, he's been almost constantly on the stump, or up one. Bryan belongs on the stump just the same as a canary bird belongs on a perch.

He can take his meals there and think up his strongest thoughts there and I suppose in a case of necessity he could go to sleep there. He'd rather travel on the rear end and make all stops than to block up the right-of-way in the drawing-room section of the Twentieth Century Limited, with his feet resting on one of Mrs. Pullman's drawn-work throws. Say what you please about him, but William Jennings Bryan is the best friend the flag stations of this country ever had. And if anybody should ask you, he hasn't alighted the places where they pull up to water the engine, either. If there is an audience on hand or one forming. Others may tear carelessly by in their imperialistic pomp, surrounded by coon porters and plush upholstery and hard-finished tidies across the back seat, but as for Bryan, give him but the opportunity to expound the immortal Jeffersonian doctrines to those residing in the shadow of the stop-look-listen sign, hard by the grade crossing, and he is well content, especially if he's got a good, new immortal Jeffersonian doctrine that came to him since they made the last turn up the road.

"No, Larry, Bryan's not one of that haughty school of through-vestibled, Pintsch-gas statesman, that stop on signal only. They tell me the first sibilant hiss of an airbrake slowing down will instantly bring him out of the soundest slumber with his properly tied and the palm of the left hand thrust in between the second and third buttons of the coat. It's never been necessary for Mr. Bryan to leave a call with the night clerk. He's shown that by the way he beats out some other party to a nomination from time to time. Whether it's the back platform of the rear day coach of the Pewee Valley accommodation, or the platform of his party in convention assembled, you'll find William Jennings Bryan stepping on it and occupying most of the available space long before the brakeman can get his stool down alongside the step and begin helping off the passengers that ain't going any further along that line. So we can feel reasonably safe, Larry, in assuming that Mr. Bryan, having got his hand in, stumping the Johnson boom in Minnesota, will soon be stumping the rest of the country."

"I s'pose we'll have Mr. Hearst in the forum too, as soon as all his poor, tired copy readers and zealous circulation managers and faithful out-of-town agents and a few invited guests can get together out at Chicago and nominate him for President or Governor or whatever it is he's going to run for this year. When it comes to being what you might call a professional nominee, William Jennings hasn't got much on William Randolph, and as for William Howard, he's out of the run-

ning altogether. He's a rank amateur and the other two'll look down on him, I have no doubt. There'll be doings when Hearst takes the stump, for he has the forceful oratory and strong personal magnetism of a frozen fish. He's the kind of speaker you can go to hear and then go straight home and not care if you never hear another word spoken above a whisper as long as you live."

"I s'pose there'll be a lot of mud-slingin', now that both the big tickets is made up," said the House Detective.

"We do have a pleasing habit in this country of showing up a man's trifling imperfections of character and person when he enters politics, don't we?" said the Hotel Clerk. "Our campaign civilities are invariably marked by a charming spirit of candor that's just as pleasant as skimming a man alive with a dull pair of scissors. And we have such a way about us of finding out those little things in a gent's past life. He reads what the Congressman from his home district said in nominating him and he fills up with a double-yolk dignity and 50-candle-power importance and he shoves his chest out until he has a front elevation like a Jumbo squab, and he feels like the orator of the evening looks while sitting up on the rostrum listening to the remarks of the president of the self-help Club introducing him to an audience composed of the elite and culture of Anthracite Junction, Pa. You know, Larry, how the orator of the evening always looks on such occasions?"

"And then that comes a loud, rushing, rending sound like a hurricane hitting a plank walk and the next instant the candidate is feeling as asked as a frankfurter and as popular as a smallpox patient, and he's enjoying those same delightful sensations that a modest man has in his sleep when he dreams he's been suddenly dropped down at a public place among a lot of his society friends, attired in such a manner as to qualify him to sing 'None of Them Have Anything on Me' as a vocal solo. What's the trouble? Oh, merely the opposition press looking into the private record of the chosen tribune of the people."

"But don't think it'll be that way with the two most prominent Williams this time, Larry. We know all about both of them already. One of them's been before the public many years and the other's been behind the returns for practically the same length of time. As for Mr. Hearst, I have a notion he may be able to induce his own papers to speak a different word of kindness for him once in a great while."

"Will Wall street be for Taft if he carries out all of Teddy's policies?" asked the House Detective.

"It will be if he carries them all out and buries them," said the Hotel Clerk.

The Writing Game.
It is hard to establish a family on a literary man's income—Rudyard Kipling, Denver Republican.
It's the pleasure of cinema that no man should try to write.
"Let's he wants to travel streetcar, with an auto as a spare."
Two dollars don't buy much, when you've made a merry quip.
And it's hard to get the butcher with a blue rejection slip.
When you've tried to hit the public with a Summer-time romance,
And you've picked the style and setting that you think will have a chance,
Then you learn that kind of reading stands upon most wobbly legs—
And a novel that's a dead one doesn't gather hams and eggs.
Then you try a melodrama that is startling and unique.
You are sure to trip to Europe will be yours in just a week.
All the critics will praise it, and the word is understood—
And a play that's been hoarse-hooped cannot be a success for a board.
And suppose that you are lucky, and get fifty cents a year, and you get a swindle that's absurd,
For literature and money never CAN get very thick.
Do not write, you are healthy and can wield a spade or pick.

The Spittball Hero.
Chicago Record-Herald.
A few weeks ago at a baseball game Miss Florence Sausser, aged 19, of Lebanon, Ohio, said to Earl Yingling, of the Dayton team: "You that was out and I'll marry you." Yingling fanned the batter and won the game and the girl—Baltimore News.
Or if the swab he carried!
Some goodly fights by him were fought,
Some hard blows dactly carried;
He jousted very well, no doubt;
He had his knightly graces.
But he never struck the spittball out
With three-men on the bases.
They that would laud Sir Galahad
Indulge in praise of Launcelot,
He never made a lady glad
By fanning out a batter.
King Arthur, Bah! Who deems him great!
He never learned to twist 'em
With lightning speed across the plate,
Where heavy hitters missed 'em.
Poor old Sir Kaye the seneschal!
His was a dismal story.
He never used the spittball
To wait himself to glory;
No maiden sitting in the stand
Ever, as he knew, saw spittball
Cried if the next man up were fanned
She gladly would be his'n.
Ah, poor old knight! The fights they fought
Call forth admiration;
They never caught strong men to swat
The air in desperation.
Today the man who swirly twirls
Our admiration captures.
The spittball heroes win the girls
And str their sweetest raptures.

Conversations with an Old Sport

IN WHICH HE TELLS ABOUT SOME BASEBALL RECORDS AND CASTS SOME LIGHT ON THE ORIGIN OF THE GAME.

BY JIM NASIUM.

"WELL," said "Rube," the big pitcher, "if things keep on at this rate they'll be moving the pitcher back to the second bag in order to give the hitters a chance. Guess maybe us pitchers are going bad this year, huh? With the big hitters of other years hitting around up a 300 notch. You don't see many games these days with either team hitting in double figures. We've sure got the Indian sign on the hitters, and I guess that shows where the grains are planted on the baseball lot. I tell you if other departments of the game had kept up with the pace set by the pitchers you wouldn't see guys with a .300 average leading the league in hitting. And you can take it from me that if the pitchers weren't packing around the best noodle the teams would be hitting like they used to instead of only having a half dozen in the .300 class. Guess we're too fast for the rest of you dough-heads, and you'd better get a wiggle on." Rube stuck out his chest like a bay window on a third-story flat as he got this out of his system.

"Guess maybe us guys who are digging 'em out of the dirt and going up into the milky way to pull down hits don't get any credit for the low batting averages then, do we?" replied Shorty. "Guess maybe they wouldn't be hitting all kinds of double figures against you, Rube, if we'd pull in our fins and quit stretching our spinal columns so much to kill hits."

"Well," put in the Old Sport, "you guys could argue that question till the cows come home, and wouldn't get any nearer the answer than you would to telling the exact age of Ann. You hear a howl all around the circuit about the weak hitting in the games this year, and whenever a sporting writer hasn't anything else to do and finds time dragging heavily on his hands he sits down and writes a double column story on how to make the game more attractive by improving the hitting. They dump a lot of dope in the public trough about the fans being hungry for home runs and the ring of the bat. They shove it into us with every revolution of the printing press that pitchers' battles aren't popular, and on the same page they tell us that the attendance at the local games exceeds anything they've known for years."

to go as clean, healthy hits. Take my tip, the foul strike rule isn't shrinking batting averages half as much as the faster fielding, and the best way to bring back the hard-hitting days of past ages is to hoppel each fielder to a stake, so he can't cover so much territory.

"But they can howl about us not having enough hitting in the games today till they're blue behind the gills, if they want to, but you can take it from me that the only kind of hitting

slammed out a three-base hit and then dropped dead. Now, I've got a hunch that guy has done more to shrink batting averages this year than all the sling shovers in the business and the foul-strike rule combined. The players read about this guy dropping dead after knocking out a three-base slam and they're all afraid to take chances. Most all ballplayers would sooner plug along right on this little old earth with a .200 batting average than to chase himself into the New Jerusalem with a

you don't see many of the rest of 'em breaking any records either, do you?"

"Maybe not," replied the Old Sport. "The hitting records he moulidy and mildewed with age along the misty aisles of change, and are but ghosts of a dead past. You will never again see players pull off the swatting stunts that Ed Deleahanty and Bobby Lowe did when they slammed out four home runs in one game, and Deleahanty copped his four in one game against Chicago, too."

"Another record of the mellow past, when the King of Swat reigned, is the one 'Doggie' Miller, the old Pittsburg catcher, copped, when he slammed out two home-runs in one inning. But I think the long hitting record that has them all skinned is the one made by old Roger Connor. Now, don't laugh and think that I'm kidding you, but that big guy actually knocked a ball from Philadelphia to New York, and that's no nature fake."

"It was in a game at the old Phillies' grounds, and Roger caught one fall on the nose and slammed it over the one-way across Broad street and down to the railroad tracks at Huntington-street station, where a train was just pulling out for New York. John I. Rogers was on the train, and when the ball Roger hit came smashing through the window of the coach in which he sat, he picked it up and took it to New York and the ball never stopped going from the time it left the bat till it landed in Jersey City. Can you beat it?"

"I want to tell you boys, that's hitting some, if he did have to ring in an express train to help him out."

"And getting down to the present day, fellows, Spike Shannon pulled off a play in an exhibition game at Newark, N. J., that has fiction skinned a mile. You've heard the little exaggeration about the 'rookers' dropping dead when so-and-so made a star play that robbed them of the game. Well, it remained for his 'epikelets' to pull off this stunt in real life, thereby proving that 'truth is stranger than fiction.' Last Spring, when the New York Giants were playing an exhibition game in Newark, 'Spike' turned a complete somersault over the outfield ropes and pulled down a long drive at a critical point in the game, and a spectator out in the bleachers jumped to his feet and fell down dead than a mackerel. That is the first time I've ever heard of this stunt being pulled off outside of the hot air that is handed out by the sporting writers, and 'Spike' has set a new standard of perfection in fielding. However, there aren't many people over in New York who are dropping dead these days over the feats the Giants are pulling off."

"Clarence Beaumont also copped a record that is likely to stand for some time when he was with Pittsburg. 'Beau' got five clean hits in one game without putting the ball outside of the diamond, and let me tell you that's beating 'em out some. And the best feature about 'Beau's' hitting at that time was that he was likely to step up in the next game and hit the fence at every swipe. The game hasn't produced many who could keep the fielders guessing as to whether he was going to lay it down or slam it out-

the county like 'Beau' could when he was right."

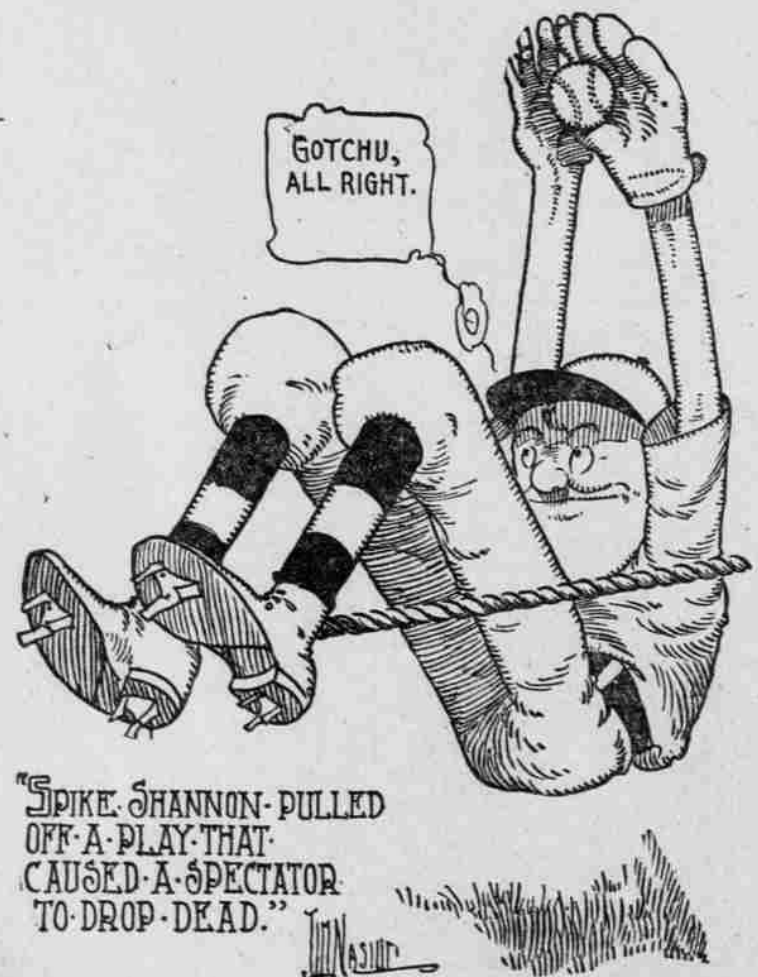
"Well," broke in the manager, "you'll always find it the case that 'distance lends enchantment to the view.' The marvelous performances in everything have always been in the past. It takes

among American institutions, and that's no idle dream.

"And take my tip, the public is in wrong in regard to the origin of the game of baseball, too. The ignorance regarding our National game that is splattered around is something fierce.

Now, it seems to me that this ought to settle the controversy about who originated the game, as it shows that all these plugs who have been claiming to be the real originator of baseball are a bunch of old bricks, and that the game was really in existence from the creation of man."

"Well," spoke up the manager, "if your dope is correct, now I understand why there is so much hot air connected with baseball today. Samson does his heavy hitting against the Philistines with the jawbone of an ass, and let me tell you that there is a thundering lot of people in this world today who are emulating Samson and trying to butt into the game by winking the jawbone of an ass."



The Great Shoshone Dam

Of several great storage dams at present under construction by the reclamation service perhaps the most strikingly interesting are the three high masonry dams known as the Shoshone, the Pathfinder and the Roosevelt. The highest of these, the one in fact that will be distinguished as the highest dam in the world, is being built in the canyon of the Shoshone river in Northwestern Wyoming, six miles west of the town of Cody, so named after Colonel W. F. Cody, better known as "Buffalo Bill."

The Shoshone, or the Stinking Water river, as it was originally named, because of the occurrence along its course of springs giving off noxious gases, rises in Northwestern Wyoming in the spurs of the eastern slope of the Great Continental Divide known as the Absaroka and Shoshone ranges. The drainage basin of the river above the Shoshone dam is about 1300 square miles in extent, varies in altitude from 8000 to 12,000 feet, includes many high peaks within the Yellowstone National park, and is remarkable for its wild and rugged scenery. The region is one of heavy snowfall, is well timbered, and, pursuant to the wise national policy of forest preservation, is included almost entirely within the great Yellowstone National park.

Just below where the two main forks of the river join is a narrow and deep canyon, the almost perpendicular granite walls of which rise to a height of several hundred feet. Through this gigantic crack in the solid rock the melting snows of the entire watershed just described find their only exit, carrying to waste during the annual flood season of a few weeks sufficient water to reclaim many thousands of acres of the desert lands of the lower altitudes. Within this canyon, at a point of almost ideal natural advantage, is being molded the solid wedge of concrete which is to be known as the Shoshone dam.

The height of this towering structure when completed will be 356 1/2 feet from lowest foundation to crest, its length at the top from wall to wall of the canyon about 200 feet, and its thickness at the base 108 feet. In plan the dam is of the arch type, wherein stability is secured by means of the form as well as the volume of the structure. The apex of the arch being turned up stream to resist the pressure of the impounded waters, and the foundation and abutments literally dovetailed into the solid granite, the completed structure will form a concrete monolith of imposing proportions as well as tremendous strength and stability.

"Now, fellows, I've looked the game over from the days in the mellow past when they used to take flies in the outfield on the first bounce, and you can take it from me that the fielders today are eating alive swats that used

the fans enjoy is when the home team is doing it. When the other fellows bang out 15 hits in a game you'll find them feeling pretty blamed blue about the increase in hitting. I've got a good-sized hunch that the only increase in hitting that the fans desire is for the home team to do the increasing."

"Now, in regard to the many explanations of the weak hitting this year that are floating around over the country, let me tell you that there hasn't been a blamed one that I've seen that has hit the nail on the head. I may be wrong, but I've got as good a right to my guess as the rest of 'em, and I guess it comes about as near being the true dope as some of the slush you get dumped at you anyway, so here's my guess: You may have read at the opening of the season where a guy up in New England some place

400 average for St. Peter's benefit. He'd sooner strike out and be able to go home and eat supper than to climb the Golden Stairs on a three-base hit. They'd far rather plug right along through this old dump of a world with an ambition unfrustrated and have the world say they're a bum bunch of hitters than to have people coming around to the house saying, 'doesn't he look natural!'"

"And let me tell you that there's a bunch of ballplayers not a thousand miles away from here that will be pretty strong and healthy when the season closes if they keep on at their present gait. And even if they would start to hit, take it from me that it would be the home fans that would drop dead instead of the players. The surprise would create a frightful mortality among the baseball going public."

"Well," interjected the Kid, "I guess

a perspective view down the misty aisles of change to show up the halo, and take it from me a lot of the stunts we never think about today will be spoken of as marvelous 20 years from now. But you'll notice, in spite of all this slush about weak hitting killing the game, that it isn't getting so ill-fred unpopular that we can't go right ahead packing the grounds till the fence boards bulge out."

"I should say not," replied the Old Sport. "And right here is a news item that the Judges of the Naturalization Court in Norrisstown, Pa., have considered a foreigner legally fit for naturalization as soon as he showed that he was familiar with the standing of all the clubs in both major leagues. And let me tell you that when the official standing of the baseball teams and questions pertaining to the game take the place of the old form of examination before the Naturalization Court, it comes pretty near getting to the top