

# WIMMING WHERE THE COUNTRY MOUSE BULGES IN

## SAYS THE HOTEL CLERK BY IRVIN S. GOBB.



SITTING IN CLUB WINDOWS OF AFTERNOONS.

THERE was a long piece in the paper about the meteoric rise of a famous cotton speculator who had come to the city without a cent and after a few years had been able to fall in such a manner as to own nearly everybody he knew large sums of money. The Hotel Clerk read the account through carefully.

"Say, Larry," remarked at length to the House Detective of the St. Reckless. "I've remember that nursery yarn they used to hand us in childhood's bappy hour about the Town Mouse and the Country Mouse?"

"Come to think of it, I believe I do," said the House Detective. "That is, if it's the one about the Town Mouse going to see the Country Mouse and knocking the place on account of it being so dull and quiet, but when the Country Mouse went to visit the other one in the city he seen so many traps and plain clothes cats and things like that laying round waitin' for him that he was blamed glad to beat it back to the squash jungle."

"The same pleasant 'selection,'" affirmed the Hotel Clerk. "And it just goes to show what I was saying the other day. The late Aesop and the other literary parties who wrote the fables may have had the correct formula at the time, but they are certainly singing off the key for present use."

"As to how?" asked the House Detective.

"Well, take this Town Mouse and Country Mouse classic for example," said the Hotel Clerk. "Larry, since I came into this large burg I've met more than eleven million of these Town Mice, and I feel that I'm in position to give you the correct facts in regards to the case. We'll assume that our particular Town Mouse was born here because then the symptoms of the disease are apt to be more typical than if he moved in and caught it. From his Knickerbocker ancestry he inherits a middle name like a downy-tow street and enough cash reserve to enable him to live without prolonged mental strain. So he goes to Harvard, graduating eighty-fourth in the class of '85, and after that nothing in particular happens until his death, when the Sun gives him one of its native New Yorker two-line obituaries, stating that deceased was born in 1882, joined the Union League Club and will be buried tomorrow afternoon at half past two from the family residence on Fifth avenue. Palm Beach and Newport papers please copy."

"As long as he stays at home and takes on age and flesh in the regular way, which is largely done by sitting in a club window of the afternoon, he row along with a troupe of other

trained Pomeranian club men, all with the little tufts under their ears neatly trimmed and their paws up, he doesn't attract any considerable attention. It's when he invades the book-dolls of the interior United States that he begins to sort of fluff out and get weighty below the Pliomolls. The woods are full of these human snowballs from New York that get bigger the further they roll away from the place where they started."

"The town where he goes to give the peasantry a taste of pleasure is generally one of those places that got showed up a siding in its early youth and never found its way back to the main line. But even at that it's doing pretty well, considering the climate and the difficulty which the suburbs have in trying to keep from looking like farming land. It has in its midst at least one leading citizen who once went to a banquet at Fort Wayne, where they served watermelon with real champagne wine at \$2 a bottle poured in through the plug and then had the coffee after they got through instead of along with. There are several others of social prominence who are wise to the fact that a correct dinner coat is not one that can be taken off easily just before sitting down to the table. Wealthier citizens are often seen to smoke a noble 10-cent cigar called the Andy Jackson brand, on account of it being full of old hickory, with a gilt band around it, just the same as if it came from Havana, Cuba. There has been a debut party where a regular city caterer furnished brick tea cream and fully \$18 worth of imported mustard greens wrapped around the chandler."

"To be sure the annual engagement of the Besse Hopkins Stock Company with a change of bill every night and a set of plush furniture and a silver car receiver given away on Saturday evening to the lady and gentleman holding the winning coupons, is still reckoned as a gay week, and one replete with box parties and theater suppers. Also bottled oysters and chocolate layer cake have more or less of a lead on Camembert and yellow Chartrouse for finishing off the heavy meal of the day, but as I say, they still manage to do quite well in their simple urban way."

"But not for a holy second would it do for the Town Mouse to seem to be pleased with anything. If he was ever caught looking satisfied the Eyeducks might not know he was a regular New Yorker. So he calls the snuff-colored waiter at the Palace Hotel 'Garcon' and then wears a look of real pain on his face when informed that the latter answers only to the name of Roscoe. After eating his way through a line of food that would keep a poor familar two days he pushes his chair back and regrets in an audible tone of voice that outside of Sherry's and Reitor's a man can't get a decent meal in this country. He occasionally lets fall remarks regarding a little breakfast he

had the day before he left town with dear old Clyde, meaning Pitch, and may also be heard casually referring to Otis Skinner as Ots. Should the wealthiest citizen take him out for a spin in his new machine he will remark on getting back that it's really astonishing how well one of these inexpensive American cars can go sometimes.

"When he reaches the point where he simply cannot stand it to stay away from Broadway another hour, he gives the side-tracked metropolis a farewell treat by repairing to the depot in the regular hired conveyance, with his fussy traveling clothes on, consisting in large part of a shirt with a stripe like the awning over a grocery store, a waistcut with a

diagonal pattern, the same as a cross town carline, and a pair of English tweed trousers turned up so far at the bottom that he can scarcely be said to be wearing them at all.

"And then in due season when the crops laid by the Country Mouse from the junction comes to the city to see him. For awhile the Country Mouse endures it

patiently while the City Mouse, wearing a smile that begins at wisdom and ends at pity and has bore-to-death written all the way across, takes him around and shows him the Aquarium and the Eden Musee and Dead Man's Curve and the Flatiron building and feasts him betimes at those downtown lunchrooms where they ladle in the soup with the Australian craw stroke and beat the eggs at the same time they eat 'em. Finally the worm turns. The Country Mouse takes the City Mouse kindly but firmly by the faultlessly-cut lapel of his morning coat and as they say in the latest popular song hit, these words to him he then does speak as follows:

"You need not show me any more wax works. After the second visit, the sight of John W. Kern as he looks in parade, with glass eyes and Iceland moss whiskers, on a hot day, begins to pall. Likewise, I am carrying a full line of Aquarium products and would not care to look at any more sampas just at present. I know well there is no town to fish anyhow. The Mayor of my town is the original boneless sardine and the meanest man-eating shark in captivity is the president of our local building and loan association. I may also add that I am somewhat a-weary of the sort of fodder-shops that you have seen. I can now eat gravy without having to be undressed with a spoon afterwards. I would ask, is or is not Delmonico's still open? If so, lead me to it."

"While it is true that I have not yet been to a manure I am in training for that event; in fact I have often had the back of my neck shaved and bay rum

used on the hair, even when I was not used out in society, but merely for the luxury of the thing. I realize that the suit which I am now wearing looks like the kind you could get from Great Plumbago Specific Tea Company for 30 of the green coupons, but after you have led me to a tailor who's expensive enough to call himself a crafter, and have suitably adorned me with a few of the proper gauds, baubles and trappings, I have a feeling that I will be more of a bitthesome treat for the sated eye than I am now. After that I desire to be introduced into the haunts and homes of the rich, where the butlers have their faces enclosed in brackets and the footmen wear short pants. I wish to see personally if these wealthy parties can really call the hired help by their last names the same as they do in Robert Chambers' books, and get away with it. And then we'll look around for a business opening in the vicinity of Wall Street."

"But are you aware of the perils and foibles of a commercial career here?" says the Town Mouse. "I was born here and even I hesitate to risk my capital in reckless investment in this great ruthless city."

"Have no fear," says the Country Mouse. "Among the axgile-eyed perch who appear to frequent these waters most numerously is a genuine jack salmon fin from the headwaters of Bitter Creek with real teeth and a dorsal fin in good working order, ought to be able to pick a living. In about two years from now, I expect to be probably the most active little clown dog in the whole animal show."

"And nearly always, Larry, it turns out just that way. I'm told that Statistics will show there's a constantly increasing number of pale grey little Town Mice with pink eyes and nervous noses, running errands for husky ex-Country Mice who go around swinging large business deals and reorganizing the social register with the same aplomb and ease that they used to be pulling off a biased slant more in the incendiary line if they were treated differently."

"And now, Old Man, if you want to get help in why this great ball team of ours can't win games from some of these false alarms they stack up against, just let me slip a few words into your ear through the chinks in your armor, and then turn your searchlight on the team and look it over and get wise. And take it from me, there's a thundering lot of parallel cases in the business today."

# Observations with an Old Sport

IN WHICH HE TALKS ABOUT THE MAN WHO BLAMES IT ON HARD LUCK.

BY JIM NASHIM.

"WELL, it's a mystery to me why that team of ours can't win games," said the sporting editor of the Evening Star to the Old Sport. "They're good hitters, they're good fielders, and individually it's the best bunch of ballplayers in the league. But they don't get results, and here they are trailing along in the cellar, taking the dust of a lot of teams that they ought to be putting it all over. It's certainly hard luck, but why should hard luck hang on to one team like Spring fever?"

"Well," replied the Old Sport, "it's nothing new. You often see the same thing in this old dump of a world, not only in baseball, but in business. And it may be all right for you sporting writers to hand out the slush that the breaks of the game are against the home team, and that there's nothing to it but hard luck, and that when the team gets out of its slump it's all due up where they belong, and you can jolly the fans along this way for a while, but 'hope deferred maketh the heart sick,' and the public is apt to suspect that there's something more to it than hard luck."

"You know, a guy can plug along and keep scratching his back on the world on a few days and blame it on buckwheat cakes and get away with it. But if he keeps it up for a couple of months, he loses the confidence of his friends, and the public begins to suspect something. It's the same way in baseball. Hard luck, like a buckwheat cake rask, doesn't hang on long. It's migratory and after giving a few slams in the slats will pull its freight for other quarters."

"Take it from me, whenever you see a guy plugging in the air and blaming the world on his uppers and blaming his reverses on hard luck, if you dig down into his system, you'll find something that he's covering up. He's ashamed to let you take a peep at. The guy who makes the crack that the world owes him a living usually has no other asset worth mentioning, and if he took an inventory of himself, he'd find his stock in trade consisted mainly of liabilities."

"And let me tell you that it's the same way with baseball teams. Take it from me, the breaks of the game and this thing we call luck will always be found plugging for the guys who are playing the game. A team always out-teams him in a game and loses out to a bunch that only cope four, and then you pen pushers point to this fact to prove that the breaks of the game are against them. But let me tell you that this slush doesn't go down the throat that is operated from the think tank. There is nothing in the whole slush business but ball playing. It is nothing but good ball playing and steadiness in the pinches that gets hits when they produce runs, and it is the same asset that keeps their foesles from being costly and keeps the other guys' hits scattered like facts in a political speech. Luck hasn't a blamed bit more to do with winning pennants than it has to making nations or getting into paradise."

"I don't say that there isn't an element of chance in baseball, just the same as there is an element of chance in success in any business, but take it from me, this element of chance is always on the side of the guy who is there with the goods. Chance, luck or whatever you want to call this evanescent thing, can only supply the opportunities and you've got to have the goods to take advantage of these opportunities."

"Now, you may call it luck in baseball when a team takes all kinds of seemingly reckless chances on the base and gets away with them on account of the errors of the opposing

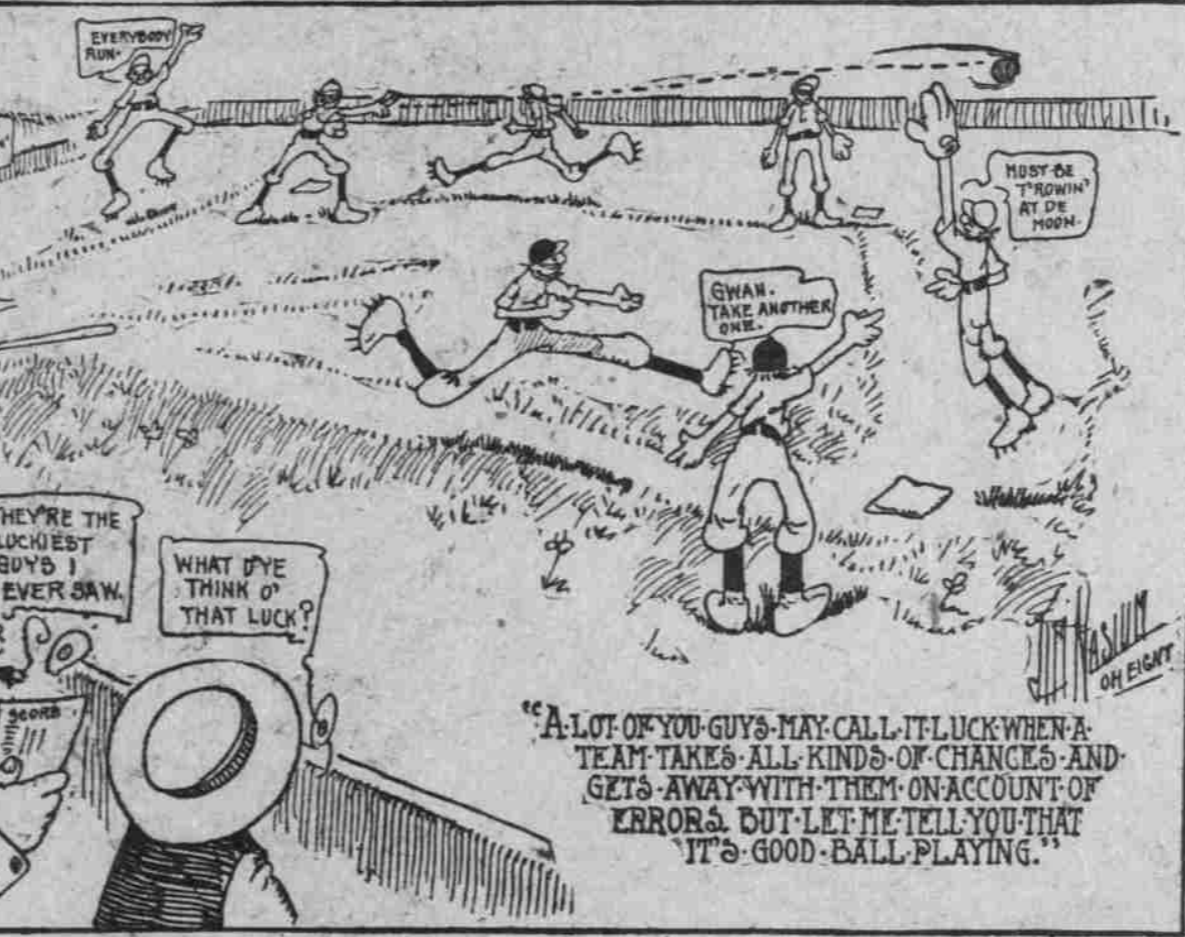
team. But let me tell you that it's the guys who take long chances who get the other guys up in the air and make them fuddle, and that's good baseball and not luck."

"You fellows who write the sporting slush may call it hard luck when the home team slams out a few hits and gets the bases populated, and then the heaviest hitters on the team, who have been banging the ball all day, come up to the plate and whiff and there's nothing doing in the run getting line. But you lose sight of the fact that there's a pitcher out there on the rubber who is drawing a salary on account of his ability to pull off this very whiffing stunt in the pinches, and you can take my tip that there's a blamed sight more good pitching by the opposing pitcher and punks pointing by the home sluggers in this painful occurrence than there is hard luck."

"No, take it from me, there is a blundering lot of little assets that go to make up a good ballplayer that isn't generally recognized or thought of by the public. Pennants have got to be won by something more than hitting the ball and fielding it. It is possible for a guy to lead the league in hitting and yet be the least valuable member of his team in producing runs, and it's runs that win pennants."

"The mentality and temperament of a ballplayer has a thundering lot to do with his success, just the same as if he was with the guy in the business world. A guy may be there with the physical ability all right, and he may be the greatest hitter in the business and the most sensational fielder that ever wore spikes under ordinary conditions, but if he isn't a quick thinker and cool in the pinches he comes a long way from being a valuable player to his team."

"Now, Old Man, speaking of local conditions, look over our team and pipe off the list and see if we haven't got a few



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THE WORLD OWES ME A LIVING.

WHY DON'T YOU HUSTLE OUT AND COLLECT IT?

WHENEVER YOU HEAR A GUY BLAMING HIS REVERSES ON HARD LUCK, TAKE IT FROM ME HE'S GOT SOMETHING IN HIS SYSTEM HE'S ASHAMED OF.

and let their nerve jump the governor belt in the pinches, and a bunch of star fielders whose think tanks run dry when they need them.

"Yes, we've got the best team in the league on physical and mechanical ability, but the worst at the thinking game. And when brave stacks up against brain in my old game of life, my money goes on the latter. Take it from me, there's a thundering lot of weak teams who put all over stronger teams simply because they are so blamed shy on physical ability that they have to rely on their mental machinery, while the stronger team is so jamed long on physical ability that they get it into their knot that they can win in this alone. There are some ball teams who are so blamed strong that they forget to use their heads."

"Then there are other things that enter into the success of a ball team. The fans do not generally realize how much a manager has to do with the success or failure of his team. In order to play the game he is capable of putting a player who has to be kept in the proper mental condition, and his peculiar temperament nursed along. Take it from me, a star player may be trying his hardest to deliver the goods and yet falling down flat simply because his manager or the directors of the club don't know how to keep him in the proper frame of mind to do his best work."

"The money stuffer in the bank, the prune clerk in a grocery store, or a kid in any other business can have it in for his boss and grutch it out, and the machinery in his counting tower may be jumping the governor belt and running amuck to beat the band, but he can plug along and pull off his daily work in a pretty decent sort of a way. But let me tell you that the ball player's peculiarity of temperament has to be nursed along and catered to or it's all off. It takes a better judge of human nature and more knowledge of how to han-

die the untutored human being in captivity to successfully manage a ball team that it does to run a steel mill or be a ward heeler. Some players have to have the life bailed out of them to keep them showing the best they've got, while others have to be bailed out to get the salve handed out to them every day to keep them just right, and the manager who knows his job studies his players' temperament and treats them individually in the way that gets the best results.

"The game is splattered full of a bunch of cases that I could tell you more than half a dozen good divers in the whole country.

"The graceful and spectacular work of the freedivers of the sport, on occasion, chief among whom were Thomas O'Callaghan, Walter Lee and Fred Wenck, caught the fancy of the spectators, and diving, as first, with the least possible disturbance of the water. It was on the part of the dive that so much discussion was created at the St. Louis World's Fair. Germany was represented by a team of splendid divers from the Continental point of view. In Germany points count for the diver's manner of approaching the takeoff, his form as he enters the air, and then criticism of his actions ceased. Magnificent work was shown by the Germans at the World's Fair, and all these particulars—in fact the completely outclassed the efforts of the American contestants. But the Germans did not care how they entered or struck the water. Walking down the plank of the springboard with head erect, eyes front, chest working out, feet close together, legs working like those of an automaton, hands rigidly held to the sides, the German diver with a spring of marvelous ease would describe a beautiful evolution through the air and then hit the water broadside with a resounding smack that would send showers of spray over every one near by."

"The American performers followed with a grand and beautiful performance, jumped far out into the air and entered the water head first, at times with such skill as scarcely to cause a ripple. When the contest was over, the judges had no other alternative than to award the event to the American contestants."

"Every young swimmer now knows the regulation. American dives sanctioned by the A. A. U., and these youngsters are becoming very efficient. While but five regulation dives are scheduled, still the rules in this country permit three special dives, as there need be no check upon originality."

"However, it is the object to confine even these specialties to evolutions which shall invariably end with the entrance head first to the water, although no attempt is made to hamper or restrict the movements of the diver in the air."

"Diving rarely has had results if a person will exercise just ordinary caution. Persons should make it a practice never to dive into unknown waters. Investigation of the nature and depth of the water should always be made before a dive is undertaken."

## Diving a Fine Athletic Art

DIVING is a sport which is taking up much of the time of American swimmers nowadays and in which they have made great advances during the last three or four years. Three years ago the New York Athletic Club endeavored to foster interest in the sport by adding a diving contest to its monthly programme of swimming events held at Travers Island. At this time it is true that we have not more than half a dozen good divers in the whole country.

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