

IN DEEP CENTER DESCRIBED Samuel E. Crawford

"Most of the Time an Outfielder Is Nothing but a Spectator, Except When an Accident Happens—Then He Becomes a Factor on Whom the Result of the Game May Rest"—So Says Sam Crawford, the Great Outfielder of the Detroit Tigers—Using William E. Wiston as His Quill-Wielder, He Tells of the Victories and Vicissitudes of the Outer Garden.

The outer garden of baseball is a lonely place much of the time. A man might almost as well be watching the game from the bleachers, except when his side is in. But now and then the time comes when an outfielder has resting on him the responsibility for the winning or losing of the game. It is then that he counts.

And Sam Crawford, crack fielder of the Detroit Tigers, is one of the best little spectators now in fast company except when the occasion, just specified, arises. Then he's there with bells.

Perhaps there is no one in either of the big leagues who gets more drives to deeper center or right than this same Sam. By "gets" I mean annexes, grabs, scoops, nails—anything you choose.

Wherefore I went up to see him during the recent series between Hughie Jennings' aggregation of willow-wielders and the New York Americans, otherwise yeelp the Highlanders, to get some pointers on the gentle art of watching the game from the vantage points of the outer garden.

And Sam bore me out in my promise that it is a lonely place most of the time. Afterward he condescended to give some opinions on the angles of the National game, as it is viewed from his standpoint. Nor did he try to tell me that the reason most outfielders hold their jobs is because of their batting averages. His own speaks for itself.

Yet for all he said one might think that the men in right, left and center were there for decorative purposes only, excepting—always excepting—when there are two or three on the sacks and the man at the plate "finds" just the curve he likes. Then, of course—

But let Sam speak for himself.

"DURING the greater part of most games the outfielders are nothing more than spectators," said Sam, in response to my question. "But when anything does come their way, they become very important factors, because when a fielder muffs a fly or boots a grounder it generally means extra bases for the runner, and sometimes the game.

"You see the men in the outer garden

are unable to hack each other up as closely as the infielders. They are practically alone, whereas with the men in the infield, even though they may miss a fly or a grounder, the runner seldom gets more than a base.

"Except on rare occasions, I have never played any position other than those in the outer garden, and at those times I felt very much like the babes in the wood. When a man has played the same position on a ball field for any length of time he becomes like a man who has learned a trade. He is a good workman in his chosen line, but he attempts to change to some other occupation he's lost. No two positions on the diamond can be handled alike, and the same may be said of most players. No two men play the same position in the same manner.

"Some men spend two and three seasons longer in the minor leagues than is necessary, simply because it takes them that length of time to discover that they are not suited for the position they are playing. They like some certain spot, and there they stick until turned loose or chance puts them in their proper place.

"Sometimes a manager will discover where a player belongs by good luck, but as a rule, when a ball player changes from one position to another it is merely a shift made necessary through some accident. The most important part of fielding is to be able to judge at a glance just the distance a ball will travel. As soon as a ball raises in the air you must be able to tell, within a few feet, where it will land and then manage to get under it. Practice and a good pair of legs will turn the trick as far as the fielding end goes, but you have also got to be able to hold your own with the stick.

"The hardest ball for a center fielder to get, or instance, is a hit to 'deep center.' As a rule a player who can manage one hard enough to send it there is sure of a home run, or at any rate he's bound to get extra bases on it, providing it isn't caught.

"No matter how deep you play, some of the boys manage to get one past you now and then, and if you are unlucky enough to be playing in close when a 'deep center' or deep right drive is made, all you can hope to do is to relay the ball in, in time to stop the runner from scoring. On some of the American League grounds a 'deep center' hit will land in the bleachers. Then, of course, you are only allowed whatever the ground rules prescribe.

"There is one thing you will notice

about most big league fielders that is just the opposite from their brothers in the minor leagues. It is that they seldom make 'grandstand' catches during a game.

"The outfielders are the boys who like to rake them in one-handed, so that they can take off their caps in acknowledgement of the applause of the admiring fans. As a rule, most young fielders get this habit, and while they may be able to get away with it in the smaller leagues, they will find it a great handicap to overcome if they ever make the major leagues.

"I don't mean to convey the impression that all one-handed catches are accomplished simply because the player wishes to be spectacular, because an occasion often arises where a fielder has done his best to get under a ball and dives after it one-handed only as a last resort.

"No matter how easy a ball may appear to a player, he should never try to get it one-handed, when it is possible to use both. Every ball hit has a bearing on the final result, and it's just possible that the very ball missed through trying for a 'grandstand' catch will turn the tide of victory against his team.

"When you visit a ball park in either of the big leagues, just count the number of one-handed fielders you see. You may go for weeks and weeks and never see a fielder do any 'high and lofty' work.

"Why? Because he knows that a ball missed in that manner will cost him more than he can earn in two or three weeks. Big league managers know as well as the players whether it was possible for a man to put both hands on a ball, and if it was and he didn't the player is sure to receive a reprimand and perhaps a fine.

"Then men in the outer garden must follow the game as closely as the infielders. They must actually know, or at least have a very fair idea, of what the man at bat can do against the pitcher who is working. This knowledge is obtained only by playing against the same men many times.

"I often try to recall just where some certain player generally hits, and I can't do it; but as soon as I see him come to bat it comes to me like a flash. The knowledge enables me to gather in many drives that a new man wouldn't get, simply because he'd have to cover too much ground.

"Most 'homehead' plays are made by fielders who lose track of the outs. For instance, you sometimes see or read of

a fielder who, with a man on first and third and two out, tries to catch the man going home, when he had a sure out at second. You will find that in close, as though they expected the man at bat to bunt. The men on bases would naturally take as big a lead as the basemen.

"Then like a flash the catcher would give the signal for a wide one, make a quick return to second, where the center fielder would be waiting to receive the throw. As a rule this play would catch the man as he attempted to return to the middle sack or give the infield a chance to run him down between bases. The game is played to be worked very often, but it could be put over once in awhile, because it is supposed to be on the dead list and it's always the unexpected that counts the most in baseball.

"When I was with the Chatham club in the Canadian League there was a little catchman named O'Day who was always thinking up tricks which would give his team the best of it. Some of them were very crude, but at one time or another he managed to get most of them over.

"He worked one on me in the deciding game of a series with Hamilton that I will always remember. The score was 3-2 in favor of Hamilton when I came to bat in the ninth O'Day was playing center field and I drove a hot grounder to him.

As I turned first I stopped only long enough to see the ball bounding out toward the bleachers and then started for second. O'Day made a bluff to go after it when to my surprise I saw him stop, turn and throw to second. I was caught standing up.

"We made an awful kick to the umpire, but O'Day claimed that he never knew the other ball was there, until he kicked it, and as we couldn't prove at the time that he wasn't telling the truth the play was allowed. I afterward learned that he had been carrying an extra ball all during the game in hopes of getting the very chance that he did.

"When a big league player figures out a catch play it's got to have merit to it or he won't be allowed to try it. The play I just related couldn't be used in the big leagues because no manager would stand for it. Catch plays today have got to be within the rules and the man who can figure out practical ones can earn a good salary.

"My baseball career has been smoother than most of the boys in the big leagues. In the first place I only played professional ball half a season when I joined the big show and

have remained with it ever since. I opened the season of 1909 with Chatham of the Canadian League and was sent to Columbus, O., on July 4, in exchange for a pitcher.

"Grand Rapids, Mich., secured the Ohio team's franchise about this time and I was with that outfit until September, when Tony Loftus picked me up for the Cincinnati Nationals. When the National-American League broke out I jumped the Reds and played with Detroit, but as soon as the two leagues decided to work in harmony I was ordered back to Cincinnati, and

in the Fall of 1902 the Tigers bought me.

"There are few men, if any, playing in the big leagues who have the record for games played that I have. I have missed just ten games in as many years, or an average of one a season. This, perhaps, accounts for the number of fans who imagine that I am an old man, when in reality I am only a little past the 30-year mark.



Samuel E. Crawford, Fielder.

"The records show that there are only 15 or 16 men in the league this season that are batting better than .300, which I think speaks volumes for the National game about 12 years.

And as last season was the best I ever put in, I have hopes of remaining with the Tigers for some time to come.

The Rise of Margie Smith A REAL ROMANCE OF THE BUSINESS WORLD



Any young woman who has to earn her living thinks her lot is hard and she has serious handicaps to overcome will read the story of Margie Smith she may be heartened. Margie Smith has been a toiler for more than 20 years. For more than 10 years she assumed to make little progress. She worked early and she worked late, gave the best of her mind and strength, but all that time conditions seemed to be against her. She could just make a living, nothing more. And then, in the next 10 years, there came a change. She made a little money at first, and then a lot. Once she turned the corner it was easy. Probably she did not realize, but all that long time of trial, disappointment and small returns was merely a period of schooling, preparation and instruction that fitted her for the big role she was to play.

Thousands and thousands of men and women in the dry goods business in New York and throughout the United States know Margie Smith. She is the head of the big house that does business under the style of the M. M. Smith Company. Twenty-odd years ago there

came a crisis in her life. Her father was in a railroad accident and so badly injured that he has been incapacitated ever since. He had a large family—eight girls and one boy. Marguerite was the oldest, and she had to become the bread-winner of the household. She never had worked before, but was handy with her needle, quick to learn and eager to do her utmost to assist in the support of her family.

A Mrs. Wolfbrink, sister of Justice Blumenstiel, had a dressmaking business in New York, and the girl got work there. She sewed for a while, and proved so adaptable and so smart that she made rapid headway. It was not long before she was designing garments. The work was congenial, the pay was fair and she was comparatively happy. But it takes a good deal of money to support an invalid father and a lot of growing children. The item of rent is considerable in itself. Growing youngsters have surprising appetites. The butcher and the grocer bills of a large household are enough to appall a girl who works. The item of clothes for a tribe of the size of the Smith family was staggering.

No wonder, then, that Margie Smith, as her sisters came along, got employment for a few of them in Mrs. Wolfbrink's establishment. Their earnings, added to her own, made the burden a little lighter for her, but not much. Somehow, the more the workers earned the more was needed at home. Illness, misfortune, or if some unexpected happening made a sudden demand, and no matter how hard the girls worked they just managed to get along, and not much more.

Then one day, after Margie Smith had been at work in Mrs. Wolfbrink's for some years, a calamitous thing happened. One of her sisters had a difference with her employer. It was not a serious matter, and it might have been bridged over, but Margie Smith thought her sister had been unjustly treated, and foolishly, she and her sisters resigned then and there.

It was not so easy to get a congenial employment again. But after a while she got an engagement with Gus Lurie & Company. She had a lot of confidence in herself and had all sorts of ideas which she thought were worth exploiting, and when she put these to Mr. Lurie he thought very well of them. She inaugurated a white dress business for him on lines which were absolutely new in his establish-