CURRENT NEWS AND GOSSIP OF THE GAME.

Latham Wants to Return to Playing in Faster Company-Favors the Present Pitcher's Position—Base Ball Is on

Latham Wants Faster Company.



OU can't keep a good man down," said the old friend of the Columbus fans, W. Arlington Latham, the comedian of the diamond is a striking example of the old saying. When the "Dude" was cast aside by St. Louis

in 1896 he turned down an offer from Columbus and went to Scranton in the Kastern League, where he pulled the manager's leg for a larger salary than he secured in the major league. Scranton stood for this a short time, and then arranged it so Arlie could get away. Latham immediately boarded a train for Columbus, and, as the Senators were minus a third baseman, the "Dude" finished the season here. Last spring it was deemed wise to play Genins on third until McGarr was secured, and Latham drifted Mansfield in the Interstate League, where he played a fine first base, stole bases with impunity on the Rube catchers, and won many a game by his stick work. Lathan escaped reserve and has been trying to better himself. He is willing to umpire in the major league, accept the management of anything from the St. Louis Browns to the Crossland Blues, or play ball again, with a leaning toward a position as first baseman. To Arthur Irwin, of the Toronto team, Latham has mentioned his qualifications as a first baseman, and Irwin is said to have decided to turn Jack Carney down and give the "Dude" a chance, realizing what a drawing card the comedian would be.

No Change Needed.

Of late there has been considerable agitation on the subject of shortening the pitching distance from its present stretch of 60.5 to 55 feet. To the big majority it seems as though there was nothing wrong with the present distance. It can not be said that the games of the last few years-or since the pitching distance was increased to 60.5 feet-have been less interesting than those of previous years, when the distance was not so great. It required some time for pitchers to become accustomed to the increased distance. When they did master it, games went on just the same. We have had 1 to 0 games in as large numbers recently as when the distance was 55 feet, and also as many games with big scores. The increasing or decreasing of the distance seems to have had no effect on making the pitchers less effective. However, the decrease now contemplated would naturally increase the efficacy of the pitchers who are now accustomed to the 60.5 rubber. It would reduce batting to a minimum it is said Eustace himself is studying and not in any way increase the sci- surgery.-Louisville Dispatch. ence of the game. Record pitchers would hail with joy a rule decreasing the pitching distance. The public, which likes scientific play, with just enough batting to allow of clever base running, would object to anything that would curtail batting, as does the proposed shortening .- Cincinnati "Times-

## Baltimore's Center Fielder.

Jacob Stenzel, the great center fielder of the Baltimore Club, was born June 24, 1867, at Cincinnati, O. After playing with several local amateur teams, with considerable success, he, while yet in his minority, accepted an engagement with the Wheeling Club, of the Ohio State, for the season of 1887. His excellent work that year led to his re-engagement with the Wheeling Club for the season of 1888, when



JACOB STENZEL that club was a member of the Tri-State League. In 1889 Stenzel was that way, he finds time for occasional with the Columbus Club. Stenzel began the season of 1899 with the Galveston Club, of the Texas League, Later on, however, he and Luby joined the Chicago Club, of the National League, where he remained only a few weeks, when he was released. In 1891 Stenzel went out to the Pacific Coast Pacific Northwest League. In 1892 ning rapidity, but a Conner says they Stenzel was with the Portland Club of all have to step aside when Baldwin's the Pacific Northwest League, and name is mentioned, as Mark was surely ranked first in the official hatting the speediest pitcher he ever handled. averages of that organization. In the fall of that year he was signed by Manager Buckenberger, of the Pitts- "Married men," observed the philos-

ook part during that season in 51

National League. He remained with MAY BUY THE MOUNDS Pittsburg until 1896, when Baltimore secured him in a trade. He is a consistent batsman and a valuable player.

A pretty good expression this, coming from the Pittsburg News, in which journal we find it sandwiched in an excellent article on base and football:

"Football and other variety of games in which a ball of some description figures may come in between the baseball seasons to attract attention and physical energy, but the great national game is the thing after all, and there is no weather so cold or any winter so long that the interest weakens. There is almost about as much intensity about the games won and lost around the winter fires as in the championship contests in mid-summer. The American spirit is so strongly wound up in the game that nothing but extraneous causes will lessen the in-

terest in it." Adherents to football can never hope to see the sport dominate in this country. Unfortunately it is a game that cannot well be played in summer. That is the time the people give their attention to clean, healthy sports almost as a regular diet; and they turn to baseball.

Eustace Newton.

Six weeks ago the writer tried to locate pitcher Newton, the big lefthander purchased from Norfolk, and sent a lettter to his old home at Hope, Ind. No word came from him, however, until last Wednesday, when the young man wrote from Indianapolis, where he now resides, and sent along a photo of himself. In an inclosed note he said: "My career having been a short one, any notice of my work must also necessarily be brief. I began playing ball at Moore's Hill, Ind., in '95, pitching for the college team in that place. I then drifted over to the blue grass region the following season and pitched well enough for the Maysville independent team to be signed for Norfolk last spring. Of my work there



EUSTACE NEWTON. the recently published averages will show. I am not yet of age, weigh 180 pounds and stand an inch over 6 feet." Newton's brother is a physician, and From this a path wide enough for

Pointers for Young.

When President Young, of the National League, is making up his staff of umpires, it would be well for him not to hew too close to the line of the resolution adopted at the fall meeting to give the preference in appointment to old players. That resolution will act as a handleap to him in making up his staff, for just the qualifications needed for a good umpire are those in which, in nine cases out of ten, an old player is lacking. Thus, the prime requisite of an umpire is good eyesight. Do the moguls, who in a commendable desire to help those who have grown gray in their service, realize that one of the first signs of advancing years in a player is impaired eyesight? It is that that makes a player of little use to his club, and, if he cannot bat, his failure in that direction being a primary cause of his release, is it to be supposed that he can see and quickly judge a fast play that is being made? It is questionable whether a ball player at any time makes a good umpire, but certainly an old one would, in my opinion, be of no more use than he would be to the team that last released him. The duties of an umpire are judicial, and yet how few players possess the breadth of mind, firmness, agility, coolness to fill such a responsible position? Certainly very few new ones: equally certain still a less number of old ones.-"Philadelphia Ledger."

Fastest of All.

Catcher Jack O'Connor is wintering in St. Louis, and between indoor ball games and diamond searching expeditions, for Jack is a consolsseur on preclous stones and invests his savings chats with the sporting writers. Speaking of speedy catchers, Jack says the fastest twirler he ever caught was none other than Mark Baldwin, when he was the projecting end of the Columbus American Association team's crack battery. Silver King was speedy in his palmy days, and Cy Young can also and joined the Spokane Club, of the shoot 'em over the plate with light-

burg Club, for the season of 1893. He opher, "live longer than single ones." "Well, if they do," answered the sadonship games, and ranked first eyed individual, "it serves them right" in the official batting averages of the |- New York World.

CONCRESS TO PURCHASE PRE-HISTORIC WORKS.

Movement to Lay Bare Secrets and History of Bygone Race-National Park Is Proposed for Anderson, Indiana.



(Anderson, Ind., Letter.) HE question of converting the Indiana prehistorie mounds into a national park will be revived again this session of congress and more favorable action may be taken. As archaeologists continue the study of the

mound builders they find that the Indiana mounds are most remarkable of all in the nation. Recent discoveries have added a great deal of interest to the Indiana mounds and they have again demanded the attention of the Smithsonian institution, which was one of the prime movers some years ago in the attempt to have the grounds converted into a national park.

A camera cannot do the Indiana mounds justice. They are not great heaps of earth which show well in a photograph, as is the case with those in Ohio and along the Mississippi, and are not even as attractive as those in Illinois and the northwest, which follow the contour of snakes and wild beasts, but they do possess outlines well defined and precise Scientists are convinced that their builders possessed many of the talents of the ancients of Egypt and Asia. Like the other mounds, they are covered with forests which show that ages have passed since the builders occupied them.

The precision of the modern surveyor and the methods of the nineteenth century builder have been combined in the Indiana mounds, and the result is a work of art rather than a crude heap. If it was known that the builders had surveyed Saturn through telescopic lens and beheld the circles around the inner globe, it might be claimed that they had used the planet and its girdle as their pattern for the construction of earthworks. The five great mounds lie just east of this city. The outer circle of the greatest of the five is but ten feet in height, but broad enough to allow teams to pass over its crest. It is 180 feet in diameter, and measured from any point it is identically the same distance from the center mound. The precision of these outer ridges is so nice they at once attract attention. With a graceful curve the ridge slopes on an angle of about 120 degrees to a great ditch fifteen feet wide and about fifteen feet deep. Like the ridge, it is a perfect circle. From the ditch rises the inner, the great mound. The rise is rounded and evened off as prettily as though it had just been completed. In the very center of this mound, which is fully 100 feet across, is a prominence, and this is five feet above the outer circle ridge, and twenty feet higher than the inner ditch. teams to pass runs to the outer ridge, where there is an opening. It bridges the ditch. All mounds, large and small, are built on identically this pattern, all of the openings being to the north and on a direct line from the center mound to the north star. These openings have been much studied, but significance of their direction has not been determined. The recent discoveries, given later, all tend to the be-Hef that all of these mounds are buried deep under the present surface and were built on the strata of shale probably before the alluvial deposits were

The great mounds of the Indian group all belong to the Bronnenberg family, which is among the wealthiest and best known in this county. The Bronnenbergs, while enterprising farmers, have little idea of the assistance they might give to science by allowing excavations in the mounds. They have persistenly refused to allow



DORA BIDDLE.

any excavations made in any of the mounds, but recently a midnight party was organized, which dug in the center of the center mound. Although the men went down twenty feet they found nothing but loose alluvial soil that had evidently not been used in the construction of the mounds, but had accumulated later. This strengthens the theory that the real works of primitive art lie far below the present surface of the ground, and are built upon the underlying atrata of slate.

Dora Biddle of Anderson, a collector of antiques, has a skull, and another is on exhibition here which has been severed just above the ears, in such a road. manner as to remove the crown of the head and lay the brain bare. These skulls were found with others under conditions which would indicate that they were those of the mound build- the crown princess of Donmark,

ers. They are very large, show mark- NOTES OF THE WHEEL. ed intellectuality, and, unlike skulls of the present day, or of Indians, have a fifth skull bone in the back of the head. There can be no doubt that the purpose of removing the tops of these skulls was to remove the brain tissue. The skulls have been severed with some fine instrument, which did the work as precisely as the surgeon's saw of today would do it.

Recently, while making an excavation near the mounds, workmen who did not appreciate the find suddenly came upon a composition which resembled a baked cement or clay. It was round and secure. They broke into it and found they had opened a hermetically sealed cave which resembles greatly our cisterns of the present day. It was dry as a powder-house, and the air which came from its recesses was sickening and tainted with great age. Here in this small receptacle, scarcely large enough to hold more, were found six skeletons in a sitting position. All were propped up evidently when first put in. When the fresh air came rolling in they crumbled to pieces and but for a few bones which remain no trace is left of this remarkable find. The bones that are saved, however, indicate a people who were very large-decidedly larger than those of the present day. Parts of the skulls showed that the heads were very large alsothe foreheads were very large.

There can also be little doubt that this find is closely connected with the mounds and that the skeletons were those of mound builders. It is claimed a similar discovery was made some years ago near the mounds, and that this proves convincingly that mound bbuilders were the occupants of the cells. This mode of burial could not have been that of the modern Indians who occupied this part of the country at the time of the landing of Colum-

Francis Walker of this city, who has long advocated the converting of the Indiana mounds into a national park,



FRANCIS WALKER.

section were far advanced in the arts and sciences. If the mounds were, as supposed, built upon the shales which underlie the alluvial deposits, a reference to geological data would place the existence of these aborigines back as far as the time of the Pharaohs.

To the east of the mounds is a cave of artificial formation that leads in toward the great mound 150 feet distant, and is fully fifty feet below the present surface of the mounds. There is little doubt that here lies the solving of the great mystery. It is probable that following this would bring a person in the inner chambers of a work of primitive building that would solve the doubts now existing regarding the history of this remarkable peo-

Should the movement to convert these lands into a national park be successful the Smithsonian institute and other institutions of learning which have been greatly interested in this group will make excavations that are now impossible. They have long regarded the builders of these mounds as those from which they would get most knowledge, owing to the superiority and advancement these people evidently held over other tribes of builders. Many minor discoveries have been made in the past few months that throw additional light upon the mounds and the builders, but they do not differ greatly from the few set out above and simply serve to further the theories which have recently taken the place of the older ones.

To Change Ocean Currents.

At Vladivostok, a prominent Russlan port and the terminus of the Siberian railway, for over four months of winter the port is blocked up with ice. rendering shipping traffic impossible. For many years the Russian authorities have been endeavoring to overcome these natural difficulties, and some time ago ice-breaking ships were introduced to break open the ice, an operation, however, which has proved practically useless. It is now reported that a "certain engineer" has proposed a plan for reclaiming the narrowest part of the Tartar strait between Saghallen and the Russian mainland. The theory of such an undertaking is that, if this is done, the cold current which enters the Japan sea from the Arctic. via Rehring strait, will be checked, and the passage of the warmer tide, coming from the south through the Tshuma strait, will make the water on the coast of Japan as warm as Vladivostok, and the latter will be warm all tained that this remarkable engineering work will be entered upon after

Tallest of Royal Women. The tallest of the royal women in

MATTERS OF INTEREST TO DEV-OTEES OF THE BICYCLE.

Prices Likely to Rule the '98 Market-Good Wheels for \$50-The Would-Be Purchaser Must Use Great Care-"Tin Wheels."

> '98 Wheel Prices. S the plans and



prices determined upon by the different cycle manufacturers continue to be announced, it becomes more apparent that selecting a mount is going to be no less bothersome a task

in 1898 than it has been in years gone Omitting the chainless wheels at \$125, as being in a class by themselves, the range of prices on wheels which look alike to the novice is calculated to cause more confusion of mind than ever. It is plain that, broadly speaking, every maker will have at least one model for \$50, whatever others he may catalogue. Manufacturers have felt the necessity for meeting the demand for lower prices, and it now looks as though the popular price next year will be \$50, rather than \$75.

Registering Racers.

It seems likely that the L. A. W. will consider a proposition at its next meeting to enforce a registration of racing men. The idea, it is said, is indorsed by the chairman of the national racing board, who will advocate its adoption. It is estimated that there are now nearly 9,000 racing men in this country, about 6,000 of whom are amateurs. It is calculated that the enforcement of a registration rule will enable the league to maintain closer watchfulness upon the riders. A registration fee of \$1, as in vogue in the Amateur Athletic Union, is contemplated in view of the acceptance of the amendment. The adoption of such a rule would benefit the league financially, but it is likely to be strongly opposed. Opposition will be directed against the movement on the ground that the league will have no right to force meet promoters to pay for the privilege of holding a meet and then compel riders to donate \$1 to the organization for the privilege of competing. Advocates of a registration rule take the ground, however, that few racing men belong to the L. A. W. and that the organization is entitled to exact a fee from them for the privilege of racing, so long as the league maintains such a depart-

Gear Cases.

An advocate of the bicycle gear case has this to say about the chainless wheel: "The bringing out of the chainless wheel in its perfection has demonstrated very clearly that something must be wrong with the former style of chain construction. A careful study of the new model convinces one that the points of superiority claimed are obtained not only by substitution of beveled gears for chain and sprocket, wheel that requires no attention to this most important detail. It is a demonstration of the fact, with which all manufacturers are not familiar, that the natural line of improvement is in the direction of perfecting the running detail, but by securing absolute protection to the mechanical movement. whatever it may be. The points of superiority claimed for this construction seem, after careful study, to be obtained simply by this enclosing of the gear. What struck me forcibly is the fact that the points of superiority are also the points that mark the enclosed chain model. They are all obtained by inclosing the chain and sprocket with a gear case."



The Plucky Pennsylvanian who took second honors in the big international

Now the intending buyer is confronted by reputable makers, one of whom offers him a \$50 wheel guaranteed to be the highest grade, while the other offers his strictly high grate article at \$100, but in the same breath another one "just about as good" at \$75. The makers are trying to meet the public demand and offer high year round. The expectation is enter- grade wheels from \$50 up. As a maiter of fact, the average purchaser is unreasonable and expects too much for the completion of the Siberian rall- his money. It is illogical to believe the uninitiated fully expect to do so when it comes to wheels. The \$50 buyers want the hest wheel. Well, Europe are the queen of Portugal and the dealer meets their price. A careful buyer who knows something about I motors and their accessories.

cycles will be able to go out next year and get for \$50, or even for less money. a substantial wheel, sufficient for the requirements of an ordinary rider. There is likely to be, however, a lot of "trash" or "tin wheels" on the market. because of the cry for very low prices. and inexperienced persons will do well to take counsel of some friend before going among the stalls to shop.

Too Much Variation.

The troubles of the buyer will begin when he finds wheels running in pricefrom \$25 to \$100, and each one represented to be strictly "high grade" and the best produced. From this state of affairs the makers themselves are largely responsible. Alongside of \$100wheels they have offered for \$75 the same machine, except that it did not have this, that, or the other new wrinkle, the value of which was questionable. Wheel builders have been too contradictory in their methods. The drop had to come. The handwriting was on the wall long ago. Now that the general price of wheels hasfallen far below \$100, riders have found that the manufacturers, instead of proving their claims by getting out of business, are going blithely along. building high grade wheels, and selling them for 25 or 35 per cent less thank they averred was possible.

Should Be Salaried The office of chairman of the national racing board of the L. A. W. is and honorary one, being without a fixed salary. During the past two years, however, the national assembly has voted the surplus money in the racing boardtreasury to the chairman for his work. during the year. This is rarely less than \$2,000. On this account strong objection will be raised at the next annual meeting against the practice. Instead a movement will be made tomake the office a salaried one. At the last annual meeting such a recommendation was lost, but its passage next. year is quite likely. It is also felt that it should be an elective office.

Charles W. Miller



Winner of the six-day bicycle race its Madison Square Garden, New York.

President Potter announces that a. bill will be introduced in the legislature of New York state at its coming. session providing for the general conbut by the very complete inclosing of struction of cycle paths. Commenting the running gear, thus providing a on the plans outlined, he says: "Cycle path construction along the lines of country roads will be pushed more vigorously in 1898 than ever before. From the practical experience thus far gained it is shown that the best surface for cycle paths is a thin dressing. gear, not especially in its mechanical of crushed sandstone. This packs easily, forms a smooth, elastic road, with just enough grit to 'bite' the tire and prevent slipping, drains quickly, resists the formation of mud, and for ten months in the year supplies and ideal wheelway. It is superior to the cinder surface, as the latter sticks tothe rubber tire and is easily picked up and loosened by passing wheels. In dry weather it is blown off and scattered by strong winds. A cycle path should be not less than five feet wide in its narrowest part."

March of Improvement.

Experience has shown that it is not. the gears in a bevel gear wheel that are most likely to cause trouble. It isthe bearings. A few years ago, when the construction of bearings was far less perfect than now, the old leaguechainless wheel was ridden sixteen. centuries in sixty days by a well-known club man. Every night his wheel wasoverhauled and new bearings were continually being put into it. Thegears stood the racket, but the bearings did not. Now, however, the bearings in bevel gear wheels are of special construction, and are far superior towhat were used then. From this it. will be seen that the claim of manufacturers that the gears do not wear or break finds some corroboration in history.

Ever Marching Onward.

As an indication of the growing power of wheelmen in the world of polities, President Potter affirms that out of a total of 150 aspirants to the New York assembly 104 wrote to him in nouncertain vein of entreaty, with a view of gaining the support of wheelmen in the recent campaign. More convincing still is said to be the fact that nearly all the candidates who were known to be wheelmen themselves were elected. This must touch thofunny spot of those who believe thereis no bicycle vote.

Modern Rivals Exhibited.

A cycle and motor car exhibition is being organized in St. Petersburg, tobe held next autumn. A similar Engthat \$50 will buy as much as \$100, yet lish exhibition soon to be opened at Bradford consists of motor cars, motor wagons, motor cycles, bleyeles, tricycles, road skates, the coming method of travel, carriages, engines,