



The FAN and the UMPIRE

by BILLY EVANS
AMERICAN LEAGUE UMPIRE

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"No Chickens for Sale"

By DONALD ALLEN

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The same train that carried Miss Mildred Frayne up to her aunt's home at Long Point to spend the summer month also carried Mr. Winfield Chester. They sat in different coaches, however, and there was no coincidence about it. Had they sat in the same chair car he might have been reading a magazine and she looking out of the window.

A quarter of a mile below Aunt Taylor's house lived old Mrs. Ryder. She was a widow and lived alone, and now and then she had a bad turn with rheumatism. Miss Mildred had known her for several years, and it wasn't two hours after her arrival that she started out to see the old lady. She found her in bed and sadly needing nursing.

"What you need," sagely replied the girl when she had heard the lamentations, "is chicken soup. It's better than all the doctors. I know at least a dozen people who'd have died but for chicken soup. Chicken soup with a little rice in it will make a well woman of you in two days."

"Maybe it might help me," the patient sighed.

"It will. It must. It cured me when I had typhoid fever and the doctors had given me up. I can get the rice up at the house, but as for the chicken—let me see? We have none.

"But I'm going to take it myself," said the young man.

"And why?"

"I want to see the girl who owns that voice."

"Nonsense! Mrs. Taylor is as old as I am. I don't know of a girl within five miles of here."

Nevertheless, the young man insisted on going, and after the unhappy pullet had had her neck wrung he started off with the body dangling from his right hand. Before his two-mile walk had been accomplished dusk fallen and the moon had come up. Thus, as he approached the cottage he saw a figure of a girl standing in the highway, and heard a voice calling:

"If you are the man with the chicken make haste, please. Yes, you have it, and I'm so glad and thankful. You see, I want to get the soup made right away. Did you bring change for a dollar?"

"Well—er—n-o-o," was the reply.

"Why, you are not a farmer's hired man!" exclaimed the girl as she looked at the chicken carrier for the first time.

"No, but I have brought the fowl. Let me carry it in for you, please. It's bleeding yet. My name is Chester."

"But really—"

"And do you know how to pick and dress a chicken?"

"My stars, but I never thought of that, and Mrs. Ryder's sound asleep! I am Miss Frayne, Mrs. Taylor's niece. I'll have to run up and ask auntie."

"Perhaps I can help you," said the young man, trying hard to look wise.

"To get the feathers off easily you have to scald the bird, I believe. Can you get some hot water?"

"I've got a big kettle on the stove, and here's a dishpan. But you mustn't help. You must take your pay and go. That is—that—"

"That is, I'm going to help with the chicken. You might spoil it for soup, you know. We lay it in the dish. Now we pour on boiling water. Now we turn it over. After five minutes the feathers will be loosened."

"But you are a gentleman—and you are a young man—and you must live in the city—and how do you know? If I don't know how to dress a chicken why should you?"

"And now we take it outdoors," continued the young man with a smile, "and don't you see how easily the feathers come off? And while I'm holding the body over the flame of the stove for a minute you will please get me the butcher knife. The chicken must be drawn and then cut up."

"But why do you help?" asked Miss Mildred.

"Because I feel sorry for Mrs. Ryder, and because you don't know how to dress a chicken. Now the knife. Now to put the pieces in cold water and rinse them thoroughly. One piece will do for all the soup she'll want to night. Only about a quart of water. Now put in the rice and pepper and salt and boil for 30 minutes, and there you are. I must go now, but I'll drop in in the morning to see how the patient gets along."

"But who—who asked you to?"

"Oh, I furnished the chicken, didn't I?" he answered with a laugh. "Good-night."

Forty minutes later, when old Mrs. Ryder was taking her chicken soup, and telling how good it was, she noticed a serious look on Miss Mildred's face and asked what had happened.

"Why, yes, we have chickens here."

"And will you sell one?"

"I don't think we have ever sold chickens."

"But this is a special case. A chicken is wanted for an old lady who is ill."

"Then that alters the case, and I can promise you a fat pullet."

"How much is it?"

"No charge."

"But I'm willing to pay and want to. If you can send it down to old Mrs. Ryder's I'll give you 50 cents for it. Have the man bring change for a dollar."

"As I said before, we have no chickens for sale, but—"

"And send him soon, please. Good-by."

That message had gone to the house of Mr. Chester's mother, and he it was who had answered it. He believed the voice to be that of a girl. He hadn't hung up the receiver before he believed her to be good looking. His mother hadn't come into the room before he had made up his mind to be the bearer of that chicken.

"I know there is an old woman named Ryder living about two miles down the road," said the mother, "but she can't have a telephone in her cottage. It might have come from the Taylor's. I'll have James kill a chicken and take it down there."



Started Off With the Chicken.

but one must be found somewhere. I'll go back and telephone to some of the farmers around here. Some of them will surely spare me a chicken."

"But it will be too much trouble."

"Trouble? Don't you think I'll willingly go to some trouble to save your dear old life? Just be quietly ill I come back. You can groan all you want to, however. Our family doctor says that groaning is a great help in curing any one."

Back to Aunt Taylor's the girl got down the telephone book and called up one farmer after another and inquired about the chicken market. It was not encouraging. Some had chickens and some hadn't, but those who had answered that none was for sale. The very last address proved hopeful. The call was answered by a pleasant voice saying:

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ET your glasses on."

"You better consult an optician."

"Don't we ever get a close decision?"

"Who ever told you that you could umpire?"

"Back to the ribbon counter for you very shortly, Percy."

"Say, honest, how much are you getting for throwing the game?"

"Don't you know enough to retire when you have gone totally blind?"

"You certainly must have something on your boss to hold your job."

"The only thing about you that looks like an umpire is your mask and protector."

"You better start to run for the back fence as soon as the game is over, for we are going to get you."

These, and a few million more "complimentary" expressions of a like nature are hurled at the umpire during the course of a closely contested game.

It is really strange and wonderful into what a frenzy the average baseball fan can work himself during the progress of an exciting game. It is almost incredible to think what he will do, or say when he imagines the umpire has made a wrong decision that has apparently put his club out of the running.

Prominent attorneys, distinguished doctors, well-known actors, staid business men, in fact men of all classes, will invariably jump to their feet at what they consider a "punch decision," and shake their fists violently, utter all kinds of incoherent remarks, and insist that nothing will satisfy their thirst for revenge but the life blood of the poor, defenseless umpire.

The next day, when some one meets one of the frenzied rooters, and in a joking way explains to him how he acted and tells him some of the things he said about the umpire, Mr. Loyal Rooter takes a row then and there that he will never again open his mouth at a ball game, no matter how thrilling the situation. Perhaps the very next afternoon, if the proper occasion arises, he will unknowingly commit the very act of the previous day.

Civic pride is to be admitted in all things. A baseball fan who doesn't want to see the home team triumph is surely a peculiar sort of man. Perhaps it might be well for him to have his sanity investigated. Desire to win at any cost however often makes intelligent persons absolutely unfair in their views and opinions.

The extent to which the fan will allow his civic pride to dominate his opinion was well illustrated to me one day last year. While on my way to the hotel after a particularly brilliant game, which the home team had lost by a score of 1 to 8 after a desperate struggle, I was much amused at the conversation of a number of dyed-in-the-wool fans who happened to be in the same car.

It was the unanimous opinion of every one that the home team peeded good-sized boards instead of regulation bats, if they were ever to win a game. They cited a half dozen instances where a hit, or even a fly to the outfield, would have won the contest. All of them were sore over the loss of the game, principally because of the weak hitting of their favorites. They proclaimed the visitors stronger in every respect. That one run was the big event of the day. The fans seemed to forget that for 11 innings the hitting of the visitors was just as feeble as that of the home team. That the hit that sent the only run of the game across the plate was due to a lucky bound which sent it over the second baseman's head. To me it was one of the best games of the year.

The following day the home team won by a very one-sided score of 12 to 1. As a fate would have it, I bumped into several fans of the previous day on the car down town. The contest was a decidedly poor one. I thought, the one and only redeeming feature being the hard hitting of the home club. The fans were satisfied, however, for it was unanimously agreed that the home boys had recovered their hitting crew, and that from now on they would make the best of them step the limit to win.

I shall never forget a little incident that happened to "Silk" O'Loughlin during a game at Washington, one day, which illustrates what some fans will do when the home team is getting trimmed.

I happened to be working back of the plate that afternoon, while "Silk" was performing on the bases. All the close plays seemed to come up on the bases. "Silk" had at least a dozen plays that could have been given one way or the other, because of the extreme closeness. Practically all of the plays went against the home team, and while "Silk" had little or no trouble from the players, a fan, who was sitting in the third base section of the grandstand close to disagree with the arbitrator on practically all of his rulings. He kept up a volley of remarks throughout the game, and before its close had exhausted quite a few volleys.

Because of the actions of this one lone fan, "Silk" was subjected to a rather strenuous afternoon, although his work was well nigh perfect. "Silk" discovered that his enemy was sitting in the front row of the grandstand, also that he wore glasses. He made up his mind long before the close of the game that he would express himself to the gentlemen in question.

The home team managed to win out by a brilliant sixth inning rally. In his jubilation over the winning of the game, the fan has forgotten entirely that a person bearing



DIFFICULT PLAY FOR THE UMPIRE TO DECIDE



WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO THIS?



CLOSE DECISION AT FIRST



AN ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE PLAY TO SEE



WHEN AN UMPIRE NEEDS EYES

the title of umpire ever existed. The Irish in "Silk's" blood was up, however, and he managed to work his way through the crowd to where the frenzied rooter was celebrating over the victory. The fan was a well-dressed chap, and appeared to possess more than the average intelligence.

"You have a lot of license to be roasting an umpire, when you have to wear a pair of thick glasses to be able to even see. I can't see how you ever managed to break into the grandstand. Your place is on the outside, looking through a knot hole."

The fan said many a word in reply, and "Silk" having gotten all the venom out of his system, was content to drop the matter. It was evident from the look of embarrassment that came over the rooter's face that he was thoroughly disgusted with himself. He just began to realize what he had been doing throughout the afternoon.

Shortly after we had reached our dressing room there was a knock at the door. We made our visitor enter. He introduced himself as Dr. "So and So," a very prominent eye specialist. We both began to wonder if he had come to examine our optics.

"I just overheard your conversation with that excited fan, Mr. O'Loughlin," said the specialist. "I really can't blame you for saying what you did to him, but I would advise you to ignore him in the future. I've been treating that chap for a year or your eye trouble. His sight is decidedly defective. He really can't see 90 feet with any kind of accuracy. He wouldn't have known whether it was you or Jack Sheridan umpiring the bases if some one hadn't told him."

"Silk" almost keeled over when he heard the news. It simply goes to show what baseball will do to a man, especially if the home team happens to be losing. This chap with the defective eyesight was getting an excellent umpire into trouble because most of the decisions were going against the home team, and he was so partisan in spirit that he could see only one side of the argument.

When you come to think it over, and weigh carefully the cold facts, it is really remarkable the work that devolves upon an umpire during a ball game. In the course of a regular nine inning contest he is called upon to render between 375 and 400 decisions. Rather remarkable figures. Considering his arduous duties, it is not to be wondered at if he errs. Indeed it is remarkable that the judges of play do not slip up more frequently. Here is a little data that is mighty interesting. Possibly a perusal of it may cause the umpire to receive more favorable consideration.

In a nine inning game on an average of 35 men on each team will face the pitcher, making 70 men in all who step to the plate in an attempt to outguess the twirler. Thus the umpire is called upon to pass judgment on three score and ten batters.

It has been estimated that the umpire makes four decisions on each man. In these modern days of baseball "groove" pitchers are mighty scarce. The pitcher is constantly trying to make the batter hit at bad balls on the outside and inside, while the batter is trying to make the twirler get them over. Consequently the game resolves itself into a continual battle of wits between the pitcher and batter.

Should the batter strike out on three balls, it would require three decisions. If the batter works the pitcher for a pass to first on four balls, it requires that many decisions. Often the count before the batter is finally retired or reaches first is one strike and three balls, two balls and two strikes, two strikes and three balls, three balls and three strikes, four balls and two strikes or any of the many other combinations that may arise. Thus it would

seem that four decisions on each batter in connection with balls and strikes would be a fair estimate.

With 70 men coming to the plate in a nine-inning game, and each batter averaging four decisions, the umpire is called upon to render in the neighborhood of 280 ball and strike decisions.

That there are 20 decisions to render on balls in the immediate neighborhood of the foul line during the ordinary game is a conservative estimate. The decisions are often a matter of inches, and many times change the entire complexion of the game.

Of course, in a full nine inning game, 54 men must be retired before it is completed. If the home team happens to have made more runs in eight innings than the visitors in nine, they will refuse the last half of the ninth, making it necessary to retire only 51 men in order to complete the game. A decision is necessary on every one made, although frequently it is evident to every one that the man is retired as on a fly ball or when a man takes a healthy swing for the third strike. Such decisions are more a mere matter of form than anything else. On the other hand, there are perhaps 20 plays that come up in a game where the umpire rules the player is safe on a very close decision.

A resume would show 280 decisions on balls and strikes, 20 decisions on fair and foul hits, 54 rulings on outs and somewhere near 20 plays in which the runner gets the benefit of the doubt, and is called safe, making 374 rulings an umpire is called upon to make during a nine inning contest.

It is easy to sit in the grandstand or bleachers, surrounded by a lot of friends who see things just as you do, and umpire the game, when you are not busy munching peanuts. It is entirely different on the ball field, however, where you are a stranger in a strange land, with a hostile crowd ever ready to criticize and 18 active ball players and as many substitutes, together with two foxy managers, trying their level best to outwit you.

I happened to have an off day in Cleveland last year, and I decided to journey out to the ball park and call on my brother umpires, "Bull" Perrine and Bill Dinneen had been assigned to the game. After making them a friendly visit I told them I intended taking a seat in the grandstand to look them over. They laughingly assented and informed me that they would give their best performance of the season.

Bill Dinneen, the former star pitcher, worked the bases, and it seemed as if every decision was close. Philadelphia was the opposing team that afternoon, and despite the closeness of many of the plays there was scarcely a kick from any of the players. Cleveland was losing, however, and the fans

made considerable fuss over several rulings on the bases by Dinneen. From where I was sitting in the rear part of the big grandstand it really did look as if he had slipped up on four plays. Observing that not a kick was made, I was convinced that something had happened in each instance which the fans in the stand—myself among them—had not noticed. I made note of the plays with the intention of asking Dinneen about them, just to satisfy my own curiosity, and after the game I went to his dressing room.

"Why did you call Collins safe at first, Bill, on that throw from Turner?" I asked.

"Why, there wasn't anything to that play," said he. "The throw you will remember was a trifle wild. It pulled Stovall some distance off the bag, and when he lunged back his foot was about three inches shy of touching first."

"Why did you call Baker safe at second?" was my second inquiry. "From the stand it looked as if the ball beat him to the bag by a yard."

"The ball beat him all right," said Bill, "but the force of the collision in touching Baker caused that young shortstop Knapp

Mexicans' Favorite Dishes

Frijoles and Tortillas From Almost the Entire Diet for the Poor People.

People at home in the States may think the food of the Mexicans is very simple. It is comprised chiefly of frijoles and tortillas, supplemented by the fruit of the garden when in season. Tortillas are thin little cakes made of corn, baked with lard and they usually shape the tortillas in their own shape.

has a metal, a sort of stone trough, which rests on the ground, and on this the corn is crushed to a paste and then patting into thin round cakes and tossed on a clay griddle to cook. Don't think as you ride down the street that in every house a child is being spanked; it is only the patting sound by the women as they shape the tortillas in their own shape.

The lime in which the corn is softened is said to account for the very strong white teeth of the natives. Frijoles are, of course, beans, and after being boiled a long time with onions, chile and other savory bits, are put into boiling lard for their final flavor. Knives and forks are not needed where a tortilla can be folded in the middle and used as a scoop for the beans. These two articles of food form almost the entire diet of the poor.

All food is very hot, from the chile put in it, and one doesn't realize the peculiar flavor that cinnamon will give to many dishes until he has eaten it in everything, from coffee to ice cream. While pulque, the fermented juice of the maguey, our century plant, is the national drink, if a peon is very drunk it is probably due to mescal or tequila, two stronger drinks made from the same maguey. Often have I seen women cook an entire meal over as little charcoal as one hand can grasp.

A Legal Mind.

"No use whispering soft things to that girl. She's a law student."

"How does that affect her case?"

"Well, she's prompt to detect the incompetent, the irrelevant and the immaterial."

Too Cautious.

"How can you distrust your daughter's suitor when in this letter he proposes to lead her to the altar?"

"Well, in its very nature, isn't that a mis-leading proposition?"

Poker Not American Game

Judge Declares Pastime Ceases to Be Sport When Host Furnishes Lunch, Cigars and Money.

A California judge has ruled that poker is not an American game. To any man who has ever furnished the lights and the lunch, the table and the chairs, liquors and cigars for a gang of friends, and right on top of all that hospitality, has been forced to provide all the money also, poker ceases to be a game and becomes a slaughter.

When guests will eat your sandwiches and raise you out of hands that you have won, isn't the California judge right? Poker isn't a game; it's a misdemeanor. When men will smoke your good cigars and remind you that you were ten cents shy on a pot 20 minutes ago, poker isn't a game; it's grand larceny.

And on top of all this, when your guests depart, their pockets bulging with your money, instead of thanking you for your hospitality, they chuckle among themselves and remark:

"Let us know when you're going to do this again, will you? It's the softest thing we know of."

Then you quietly put out the cat for fear she'll suffocate in the tobacco smoke downstairs if she's left indoors, turn out the lights and crawl into bed, wondering what fool ways men had of getting rid of their money before poker was invented.—Detroit Free Press.

Once Was Enough.

Dr. Topham is a surgeon at the Central Emergency hospital. It wasn't his fault, but when the reported wrote his story of the accident he wrote too much and the copy readers had to cut it down to space requirements at the office. So that is how it happened that this appeared: "The man was treated by Dr. Topham and the body removed to the morgue."—San Francisco Chronicle.