SPORTS FOR MERRY CHRISTMAS

A Disquisition on the Popular Pastime of the Day.

A DAY IN THE PHELPS COUNTY STUBBLE

Guess on Coming Fights—Lugubrious Diamond Gossip—The Byker's Merry Budget and the Sportsman's Melange.

REALLY, it doesn't require half an eye to see that the present winter and coming spring will be the busiest era in Fistiana known since the days of the earliest English championship. The daily press is filled with the dates of coming events and the contest committees of the various metropolitan clubs throughout the country are about the busiest set of men to be found in any line of traffic or trade. Matches are being made at a rate that is simply prodigal, and the exponent of the manly art who fails to get in his work in the next half twelvemonth will prove himself a sloth and a laggard, indeed.

That it is the fighter's golden epoch accumulating evidence leaves little chance for doubt, and that it will prove but short-lived is another incontrovertible fact. The pace is entirely too rapid to be maintained, and the very men now straining might and main to augment and further the general interest in the game are the ones who will indubitably prove instrumental in killing it outright.

Like base ball, prize fighting is bound to outstrip itself, as the enormous wealth figuring in the dozen or more of prospective events makes this outcome patent to all close observers. Ten thousand dollars makes a tremendous sum to be contended for in any line of sport, let it be on the turf, in the field or ring, and is an amount hung up, or even wagered, but few times in the history of the world. Even $5,000 is a big bet or purse either, but it is a poor dub of a fighter who hasn't cheek enough to ask this figure for the same performance that ten years ago could have been secured for as many hundreds.

However, the climax may be deferred until the big affairs that have been arranged by the New Orleans Crescent and Coney Island Athletic clubs come off, when the cataclasm will come, if it comes at all, as swift and devastating as a thunderbolt from heaven.

That any set of sensible business men would for a moment contemplate offering such a sum as $40,000 for an event that is as likely to terminate in twenty minutes as it is to terminate at all, surpasses all understanding. Still that is what the Crescent club proposes to hand over to Jim Hall or Bob Fitzsimmons at the close of their little manuel argument next March.

Is the offer genuine? is a query being frequently propounded, and while much doubt is being expressed in this regard, I think it is. The assertions of the New York dailies, who are bending every endeavor to controvert the idea that New Orleans is the Mecca of pugilism, should be taken cum grano salis. If New York remains New York she must be on top in all matters of public moment, in religion, trade or amusement. If possible she would have frustrated the scheme of a World's fair, but in this single instance the tide set in and overwhelmed her, but Chicago is not New Orleans, and it will require some very deep pocketbooks and some very long heads for the city on the gulf to beat her out in her maddening chase for short-haired distinction, as the Coney Island club's latest political stroke, the offering of $45,000 for a fight between Jack McAuliffe and Dick Burge, unquestionably attests.

But to go back to my original proposition—the downfall of the sport.

Can New Orleans bring to a successful issue another carnival even approximating in greatness that of last September? I think not. The secret of the success of this collossal achievement was due to the fact that the greatest pugilist time has produced—the unrivaled John L.—was the premier figure in the same, the resistless magnet that drew Louisianaward the eyes of the civilized sporting world, the electrical force that quickened the pulse, and started the blood in the veins of every game man on top of the earth. Where is the bruiser who ever had the following of the Big Fellow, both in and outside of sporting circles—an interminable retinue of business men and tradesmen, bankers, brokers, lawyers, doctors and professional people, musical, literary and dramatic? There is no gainsaying the correctness of this, as degenerate, low and hoodlumish as he was. There is no accounting for human patronage or servility, in this case, one and the same thing. General Grant's advent in London created no more of a stir than did the entree of John L. Sullivan. The prospective head of the kingdom, the Prince of Wales, was a special and frequent caller, as were dukes and lords and marquises without number. I might tell a good story, one of Frank Lane's, in this connection, but will leave it for another time. Suffice it to say that this was the man who made the New Orleans carnival a possibility.

Is Jim Corbett today the man John L. was before September's surprise party—not by a thousand yards, off hand. And if he, even, pitted against either Jackson, Mitchell or Goddard, was to be one of the spring attractions, there would be no such an exodus of northern, eastern and western men to New Orleans to watch the sport as there was to see the mighty John L. That was a scene that will never know a duplicate.

But this is not all. New Orleans has another cause for apprehension aside from the Coney Island club, and that is the senseless rivalry and competition that has been inaugurated between her two leading clubs, the old Olympic and the new Crescent. This has been the influence that has elevated purses to their present ruinous and idiotic altitude. A single failure, and bankruptcy is the resort of either of these organizations. That this is sure to follow, I have but meagre doubts, and I think New Orleans is on the verge of receiving a smash, pugilistically, from which she will be many moons recovering.

As to Hall and Fitzsimmons, in spite of the numerous shady stories emanating from the claquers of the Coney Island club, I think their match for March before the New Orleans Crescent club is on the dead square in every detail, including the genuineness of the $40,000 purse, although the acme of folly, as well as the bitter feeling existing between the two men.

Of course the amount of money offered for the affair is preposterously large, but what is the matter with the majority of the purses being hung up these days? There is but little rhyme or reason in the accusations of the Coney Island cohorts, in testimony of which it is but necessary to reflect that this club has just gone the Crescent $5,000 better in offering $45,000 for the McAuliffe-Burge fight. If there is a leg chain attached to either purse it is that proposed by the New Yorkers.

They claim that Hall and Fitz understand each other from the simple fact that Robert adults having laid down to James for the paltry sum of $25. On the other hand, Hall claims that he licked him on the level, and is borne out in this by the corroboration of "Smiler" Hale, the Australian sporting authority. Admitting that this episode has always encompassed the movements of Hall and Fitzsimmons with suspicion, and that $40,000 would be a nice little fortune to split between any two men, I cannot help but think that the coming fight is to be on its merits. It would be a difficult matter for these two to make a fake now if they were so inclined. There is too much suspicion hanging over each man. If they ever fought on the square, and has any of their fights since they came into prominence in America and England been suspected in the smallest way, they must fight so this time.

As to which man should win, that is a problem as is a problem. When I went up to St. Paul two years ago; when Frank Shaw, the old Omaha gam, had these two Australians matched for a purse of $12,000, I was a firm believer that Hall would tote off the boodle. I had seen him work in a setto with Jack Davis at the Grand opera house, this city, and then and there made up my mind, that he could whip most anybody. Davis was a mere plaything in the good looking middleweight's hands, who, in the entire three rounds in which they figured, never took a single backward step, but kept right after Jack from start to finish, walking fairly over him, dealing him out straight lefts and crosses with the right in a style that was simply electrifying.

At one stage, after getting a rather warm punch in the mouth, Jack said:

"Here, young feller, your getting a trifle fresh! I thought this was to be only a friendly bout, I'll have to get back at you if that's your game."

"Why this is friendly enough, Jack," responded Hall, "but cut loose, paste me a couple, I wont mind it, we can't hurt each other with these pillows."

And without any apparant exertion whatever, he continued his walk on the heavyweight, smashing him indiscriminately until the Parson called time at the close of the setto.

Well I never say Fitzsimmons stripped for action until last September at the carvinal, when I saw him play a wild and weird mazurka at the old Academy of Music, on the ribs and jaws of Johnny Cash, the southern middleweight pet.

Then I voted him a wonder too, and mentally resolved that if he and Hall ever did come together, I would be extremely cautious in any attempt to prognosticate the result.

They are undoubtedly a very good match. Both can put up a good jab and get away sort of a game, or mix up in an effective way if the occasion demands. In fact they are both thorough ring tacticians, strong as bulls, and capable of adopting the respective manouvres of of the other, cut them out as they may, when once vis a vis in the ring. From these facts it is but reasonable to expect a long battle, a superlatively scientific and supremely good one.

Fitzsimmons is a monster in build, from the hips up, and of abnormal shape, and I think possessed of considerable more muscularity than Hall, and yet I do not think he is as stiff a puncher. The latter has a driving force that is marvelous, his triceps being of that peculiar development which anatomists tell us give the greatest facility in striking a hard blow. But leaving their individual merits and demerits out of the question they are so evenly matched in weight, height and reach that it would be foolhardy to essay anything better than a guess on the outcome of their fight.

Now that the lightweight champions of England and America, Dick Burge and Jack McAuliffe, are matched for a finish argument, makes it doubtful whether the Hall-Fitzsimmons fight will have the call on public attention and patronage. That the first named affair will come off at Coney Island, with all the superior advantages and attractions of New York available, makes me believe that it will be the best patronized event of the two. There never will be another such a stampede to New Orleans as was witnessed last September, that can be relied upon, and that the Crescent City must depend upon the whole country to make her prodigious undertakings a success, is another undisputable fact. But not so with Gotham. She has within a radius of 500 miles, easily 10,000,000 people to draw from. Everybody wants to go to New York at least once in his lifetime, and as the sporting element is the high-life element of the great commonwealth, a card like the one in prospect will cause an influx into Gowanus from all directions such as was never witnessed before, that is if the card in question is seasoned with a side dish or so, after the fashion of the big event in New Orleans last September.

In this mill I am perfectly free to pick the winner. It should be a gift to Gentleman Jack. Burge is said to be clumsy and slow, with an awkward guard, and unstable action general, and if this is true, the American champion will make a hash out of him. He is the fastest fighter on the turf today, uses both mauliks as if attached to piston rods, has the eye of a geometrician, and makes every punch count. If Johnny Bull is no more than his fight with Jem Carney showed him to be, he would have been lucky to have remained across the drink.

And our own friend Tommy Ryan, and George Dawson, they meet in March at New Orleans. What do I think of them? That they are a corking likely pair of lads and will put up as lovely a fight as has been witnessed in many a day. Dawson has proven himself a worthy opponent of the champion welter by his victories over Danny Needham and Doc O'Connell, who was a deal cleverer than anyone hereaway dreamed. In both of these fights, however, the Australian was quite as badly punished as the loser, and at a stage in each it looked as if the beaten man had the fight going his way. Ryan whipped Needham, and although it took him seventy-four rounds to do it, he jumped out of the ring as fresh as when he entered it, without a bruise, scratch or blemish. Ryan is certainly a catbird. Cool as a cucumber under the most trying conditions, as quick as Areil, and with a left on 'im capable of stopping the rush of almost any man. Dawson fights with a wide open guard, and in his onslaughts I shall expect Tommy to beat his face off.

Next Monday night Frisco will be treated to a couple of numbers. The Palo Alto and Pacific clubs have caught the fever and are clashing, and they have changed the dates of their respective events in order that they will come off on the same night. At the Palo Alto Charlie Johnson and Jack Hall will try conclusions, and at the Pacific Tommy White and Billy Murphy.

Next Wednesday night Billy Plimmer, the English bantam, and Joe McGrath will run afoul of each other before the Coney Island club, and on Thursday night Johnny Van Heest and Solly Smith. My combination is Johnson, Murphy, Van Heest and Plimmer.

In the Field and at the Trap.

Nebraska City claims to have the champion quail shot of the state. So far this season he has killed 1,000 birds.

Dr. H. G. Miller has returned from Montana after a ten months absence. He had some royal sport among the big game out there, bagging twentysix deer, eight elk, five black bear, two mountain lion and four lynx, besides a cartload of small fry. He says he intends hereafter to make a limited hunting trip annually. While absent he visited all the big cities of the slope, but found no town as good as Omaha.

W. H. Harrison, my genial sporting friend from Grand Island, has been in the city several days. If W. H. tells the truth, and I see no reason to doubt but what he does, Will Simeral, Harvey McGrew, Dr. Gluck and a number of other gallant nimrods are not in it with him. He says he went before a notary public last fall and took oath that he killed thirty-seven avosets at one shot, and on the same day caught a catfish that weighed 700 pounds. By the way, Harrison ran for county treasurer of his county last autumn, and declares he would have been elected if he could have told as big yarns as his opponent. Wouldn't that jar you?

What has become of the much talked of challenge from the Bemis Park to the Omaha Gun club? The Bemis boys challenged the Raymonds for a live-bird shoot, and the Raymonds not accepting, they gave it out that the Omahas were about their size. I can assure them, however, that Omahas will accept any sort of a challenge they see fit to issue. Go for 'em.

Policeman H. C. Cook was down in the wilds of Sarpy county last Sunday, and says he bagged forty-eight quails, thirteen prairie chickens, thirteen cotton-tails and two jack rabbits. He says there are slathers of game down there and he would have killed more if he had only taken an axe with him.

Well, didn't Champion John Petty put it all over Fredericus A. Fuller a week ago! Fred's challenge gave evidence that he was quite a rifle shot, but his score incontinently refutes the suspicion. Fred now declares that he intends to keep on challenging Old John, as Petty is familiarly called, until he beats him. But if Fred will take my advice he will drop him now like a hot potato. He will never see the day he can beat him. Appended is the full score of their late meet:

PETTY.					FULLER.				
24	23	18	21	22	8	21	22	15	24
22	19	21	15	23	15	25	21	18	22
23	23	20	17	22	20	19	18	13	21
23	20	20	17	21	19	21	21	24	21
19	19	22	23	15	20	18	19	15	17
19	19	25	20	23	22	20	15	10	18
23	21	22	22	22	21	10	20	19	17
25	23	23	24	23	16	20	16	22	13
21	23	21	17	19	22	13	20	23	19
22	22	22	24	21	18	17	18	23	10
221	212	209	200	211	181	181	193	182	182
Total 1,053					Total 916				

J. E. Knowles and Frank Carmichael returned a day or two ago from a two days' hunt in Iowa. They say they killed 102 quail, thirteen squirrels and forty-two cottontails, and that game wasn't very plenty either. Jack says that along the large creeks all the quail were covered to the depth of eight or ten feet by the late snows, and that all have doubtless been smothered or starved, and predicts a poor crop next season.

I have also reports from this vicinity that a large majority of the birds met a similar fate. The snow came in the night, and the birds being at roost, were buried beneath the enormous drifts, and next season's outlook is indeed very poor.

Some of the crack rifle shots of the country can get a game by calling on John W. Petty, and, indeed, I believe there are but few who can beat him at 200 yards off-hand. Look at the score he made against Fuller last Sunday, despite the cold, wind and flying snow—1,053 out of a possible 1,250. That is shooting. He led Fuller from the start and could have even bettered his score had it been necessary. He is probably as good an off-hand, long distance shot as there is in America today.

Whisperings of the Wheel.

Merry Christmas!

E. B. Smith sojourns in Chicago this week.

Council Bluffs will have a bicycle club next season.

C. G. Fields (papa), F. Rockwell, C. C. Candy and J. W. Fulton were all in last week.

Art Mahan of Crescent Cycling club, New Orleans, La., was a visitor in the city one day of last week.

The Tourist Wheelmen will give a social and ball in the near future. A committee is now out working up the event.

Jack Cully and Billy Schnell of the Tourists are running lines and driving stakes in the Hawkeye state. Good exercise, which will harden their muscles for next season's work on the path and road.

The Omaha Wheel club entertained the club members and a few of their friends at the club house Christmas eve with an old fashioned X-mas tree. Many gifts were distributed from the tree and everyone who attended had a good time.

W. M. "Pap" Brewster, treasurer of the League of American Wheelmen, located at St. Joseph, Mo., and George Collister, member of the National Racing board, called on "Jess" one day of last week. Mr. Brewster is the great league hustler.

The postponed business meeting of the Tourist wheelmen was held last Thursday evening at which business of great importance to the club was transacted. It is earnestly requested that all members of the club be on hand at the next regular meeting which will be held Thursday evening, January 5. A surprise awaits every one.

Resplendent with gold leaf and all the colors of the rainbow the Xmas number of the Bearings comes to its readers this week enlarged and replete with numerous photo engravings of prominent wheelmen, short stories, interesting bicycle history and resume of the past year. The magazine is truly a model of printers art and a credit to its editors, the Xmas number surpasses any journal of its kind gotten out this season.

The secretary-treasurer read his annual report showing a substantial gain in the division finances, also a goodly economic expenditure by the state officers. The report shows a balance on hand December 1, 1892, of $286 against balance on hand same time in 1891 $112. It is claimed that renewals will bring this up to $400 before July 4, 1893. The annual division meet for '93 was discussed and indications point to the most successful meet ever held by the division. Another meeting of the board will be held in Omaha shortly.

The officers of Nebraska division League of American Wheelmen met at Fremont December 17 and reviewed the work of the past year and made plans for the campaign of next. Chief Consul Perrigo read his annual report, showing less growth in 1892 than in 1891 comparatively, he also recommends the publication of more requiting literature. A hand book will be published at once. A scheme for giving prizes for new membership was introduced and accepted. A circular to all members of the division will be mailed, setting forth the inducements of the scheme. Ten prizes will be given for memberships, and will be distributed as follows: For one new member, gold plated League of American Wheelmen button; for two new members, gold plated League of American Wheelmen watch guard; for three new members, gold plated League of American Wheelmen pendant pin; for four new members, gold plated League of American Wheelmen locket; for five new members, solid gold pin; for eight new members, solid gold pin; for ten new members, solid gold pin; for fifteen new members, solid gold watch chain; for twenty new members, fifteen-year, Foley's, screw bezel, open face, Elgin or Hampden watch; for twenty-five new members, fifteen-year, hunting case, stem winding, Elgin or Hampden watch. Prizes aggregating in value from 75 cents to $25.

The shrill warwhoop of the painted redskin, mingled with the wild cowboy yell of the western plains, softened and toned by the sweet, musical tinkle of the Spanish mandolin and guitar, merry shouts of civilized laughter and jingling of spurs and accoutrements, will resound through the parlors and reception rooms of the Omaha Wheel club on New Year's eve. For the nonce the club house will be converted into a wigwam, and the braves of the Omaha tribe will wander at will about the tepee or sit in the council circle and take a whiff at the "chagwah" or peace pipe as it is passed around. The occasion will be the annual watch meeting and New Year club social. Invitations have been issued to the club members and some of their friends, which no doubt will be accepted with alacrity, as the Omaha Wheel club is noted for the success of its entertainments. The "Wild West Smoker," which occurs on New Year's eve, is something new in the way of a club entertainment, the invention of the fertile brains of the gentlemen composing the committee—Messrs. Perrigo, Kastman and Cox. Music will be made one of the main features of the evenings program. The invitations are quite "Injun" in make up and read, "Members Omaha Wheel Club Tribe—There will be concert and smoker at the tepee corner Seventeenth and Chicago streets, Saturday evening, December 21. We will be assisted by a few braves from other tribes. Jerked Beef and Pipe of Peace, chiefs Ahp-Er-Ri-Go, John-H-Ka-Stm-Aw and E-Dm-Co."

A Day in the Stubble.

NORFOLK, Neb., Dec. 24.—To the Sporting Editor of THE BEE: Never in the history of Nebraska has there been so great an abundance of quail as there are the present season. A great many fine bags have been made in the vicinity of Norfolk, but probably the greatest one that has been made in this section was one made by a party of Fremont sportsmen at Verdigre recently, when two days' shooting netted in the close neighborhood of 500 birds. It is, however, a matter of sincere regret that too many of our hunters and would-be sportsmen persist in slaughtering the noble Bob White by pot shooting, which is as truly unmanly as it is unsportsmanlike. No true sportsman will stoop so low as to slaughter a covey of quail, or even a single bird, while on the ground, or like some of our hunters and would-be sportsmen who own good dogs and excellent guns, sneak around for half an hour to get a shot at a bird sitting. This is wrong for two reasons, the first of which is the indiscriminate slaughter of the birds and the second that he thereby loses the sport of shooting and the pleasure of seeing his dog work. The latter is certainly half the pleasure of hunting. The man who loses sight of these two very material points dare not call himself other than a mere pot-hunter, and is deserving of the heartiest condemnation of all true sportsmen.

The quail in Nebraska are more abundant in the South Platte country, the farther south the better. On the Republican river and its tributaries they are most abundant, the reasons for which I attribute to the mild winters and less snow, rendering loss less great from cold and starvation during severe weather, and very probably to the fact that they are better protected by sportsmen and farmers from indiscriminate slaughter both in and out of season. Organized gun clubs have been of great benefit in this direction, and this thought offers a suggestion that might be adopted with excellent results by the sportsmen of North Nebraska. In this part of the state many parties from the outside have been in the habit of coming in and slaughtering game birds and shipping them unlawfully to other markets, both in and out of the state. The severest punishment possible should be meted out to these offenders, and if Nebraska's present game laws do not meet the requirements of the case, they should be made more stringent.

In the latter days of November I was invited by my friend, known to all the sportsmen in the state as the prince of good fellows, and whose mother name is Eugene Hamilton, proprietor of the Hampton house at Holdrege, Neb., to take a quail hunt. Gene has quite a record, but owing to the kind regard I have for his excellent wife I refrain from giving it at present. Suffice it to say, he is the author of that national game and pastime "high five." Also, he is a first class shot and the possessor of all the paraphernalia and appurtenances thereunto belonging for hunting, fishing and camping, from a six-room tent to a long handled frying pan. Among his possessions is one of Smith's latest improved guns and a fine pointer bitch known as "Nell." Nell is as fine a type of the English pointer as one would wish to see, and as for work—well, it has never been our lot to shoot over a better. The appointed day arrived, bright, bracing and a perfect autumn morning. We left the hotel at 6 o'clock in the morning with lunch packed and everything in readiness for a perfect day's sport. We drove about seven miles and reached the appointed spot just as the sun was peeping from behind the eastern horizon. The place was perfect, the bed of a little creek or rivulet, which had long been dry except here and there a pool which Providence had left that the quail might quench their thirst, and Nell might occasionally moisten her nostrils, the better to do her work. The latter was very necessary, as would be with an ordinary dog, though Nell could evidently have done excellent work without it, for the day was dry and promised to be hot. Later on we were favored with a friendly cloud overshadowing the sky and a gentle breeze arising from the west. The creek was lined with thick brush, with here a clump of plum trees and tufts of high grass, while the edges were fringed with cornfields and wheat stubble. After leaving the carriage we had not gone far until Nell began to scent game and started across a patch of stubble, where it was evident the birds had gone to feed. She had not gone far, however, when she came to a point, her tail straight out, her body like that of a statue, with one foot lifted from the ground. "Get them up!" said I, but not a muscle moved. "She doesn't do it that way," said Gene. "That part we will have to do ourselves." So on we go, Nell following closely at our heels, pointing at every step. On we go for at least 100 yards, when a covy of seventeen flushed, Nell lying close to the ground. Bang! bang! bang! bang! Four birds the result, the remaining thirteen seeking cover in the brush. "Get the dead birds," said Gene, and like a flash Nell was off, quickly returning with two dead birds, the first load, and bringing the other two singly. Back we went to the brush and in a remarkably short time had eight of the remaining thirteen dangling at our belts. On we went, but not far, until another covey was scented, but flushed wild, the dog not getting a point, neither did we get a shot, but "watch them down!" which you will recognize as a familiar phrase, was ejaculated in a chorus. We did, and the spot was a pocket, or small gulch with tall grass. "No birds should get away from us here," said Gene. "Well, I guess not," but they did. There were two out of the thirteen that got away, one being pretty badly shot, the other a clean miss by two loads. On we went, the dog doing elegant work and we doing pretty fair shooting until about 1 o'clock came and we returned to the wagon for lunch. When our ravenous appetites had been appeased we took an inventory of the game on hand, finding we had bagged eighty-seven of the gamest and best of all birds, the festive quail, and decided to defer further shooting until another day.

In conclusion let me say that I never enjoyed a day's good sport better or in more genial company, and I can sincerely advise all my sportsmen friends who would like an outing at Holdrege to cultivate the acquaintance of my good friend, Gene Hammond, not forgetting Nell. Gene is a true sportsman, a royal good fellow, and is possessed, in addition to his many excellent social qualities, of a thorough knowledge of all the best shooting grounds in that vicinity. With such a companion and under such circumstances a day spent with rod or gun cannot fail to be enjoyable. F. L. C.

A Batch of Winter Singles.

It would be a waste of time to essay anything new or edifying on the baseball situation. A few misguided writers are making a frantic effort to arouse a little interest in a waning sport, by a labored discussion of the rules of the game, the changes necessary and improvements advisable. But a very large army of the old day cranks refuse to enthuse worth a continental, and it is a patent fact that the best remedy for the present lapse would to give the game a long and health-reviving rest. In this connection my old and revered friend, Colonel Ed K. Rife of the Ohio State Journal staff, pertinently remarks: News in the base ball world is as dead as the proverbial door nail, and everybody connected with the various National league teams appears to be putting in their time considering the situation. Newspapers that have heretofore devoted daily space to the great national game, between seasons, are now giving it the go-by, whether as the result of a lack of interest, or whether the idea is the carrying out of a plan to let let the game severely alone during the winter months in the hope that such an arrangement might tend to the upbuilding of the sport in the spring. Certain it is that less space is devoted to base ball at this season of the year than at any time in the last ten years. What it means is only problematical. The newspapers have made base ball, and when they turn it down the magnates may as well hang up the violin, the flute, the yellow-bellied clarionet and all the other musical instruments, for the base ball soiree is over.

Just as I said all the time, Jack Crooks has refused the presidency of the Northern Pacific railroad, and will stick to the Browns next season for his board and beer money.

John T. Brush has just re-elected himself president of the Cincinnati club, and Stofe Moore has bought another block of stock in the same.

Scrappy Joyce of the Brooklyns is at Hot Springs, where he hopes, by judicious exercise, to get back to his old-time self again. The only danger is that Scrappy will confine his exercise principally to the elbow, when he knows very well that his knees are full of joints.

John M. Ward has notified the New York club that his check is ready for $300.—Sporting Life. That's nothing, just run over and tell the Gotham magnates to draw on me for the balance of that $33,000.

Questions and Answers.

WATERLOO, Neb., Dec. 20.—To the Sporting Editor of THE BEE: In a game of draw poker (no limit) A opens jack pot for 50 cents, B stays for 50, C stays also and raises it $1.50. A and B do not see the raise and want a show for their money, but C claims pot. Do A and B have to see his raise before they can draw cards. And who wins? By "see his raise" I mean put up the extra dollar he bets.—W.

Ans.—They do.

IDA GROVE, Ia., Dec. 7.—To the Sporting Editor of THE BEE: Can you inform me as to where I can obtain a book on fancy and figure skating?—Frank L. Cox.

Ans.—The New York Clipper will furnish you with what you want.

OMAHA, Neb., Dec. 23.—To the Sporting Editor of THE BEE: A and B play poker, A bets all his money, B sees his bet and raises him, A has no more money to call B. Does A get a show for his money.—P. J. G.

Ans.—Not if there is no limit on the game.

LINCOLN, Neb., Dec. 23.—To the Sporting Editor of THE BEE: Will you please publish in Sunday's BEE the names of the players of the champion base-ball teams for 1875 and 1876.—THIRD BASE.

Ans.—Boston, 1875, Spalding, White, McVey, Barnes, Shafer, Wright, Leonard, O'Rourke, Manning, Beals and Heifert. Chicago, 1876, Spalding, White, McVey, Barnes, Peters, Glenn, Hines, Addy and Beilaki.

NORTH PLATTE, Dec. 20.—To the Sporting Editor of THE BEE: Will you please inform me where I can get a copy of the New York Game association's rules?—T. R. W.

Ans.—Address N. Y. G. A., care American Field, 19 Park Place, New York.

COUNCIL BLUFFS, Dec. 23.—To the Sporting Editor of THE BEE: There are five shooters in a match, three moneys. Three tie for first, two for second. What becomes of third money?—Arthur W. M.

Ans.—Third is divided between first and second in the proportion of first and second moneys.

NORFOLK, Dec. 22.—To the Sporting Editor of THE BEE: Please state in Sunday's sporting columns the nationality of Joe Choynski and his birthplace. Also the number of times Jack Dempsey has been defeated, and the date of the Hall-Pritchard fight in England.—Boxer.

Ans.—Choynski was born in 'Frisco of Jewish parents. (2) Twice, by La Blanche and Fitzsimmons. (3) August 20.

There are letters at Bandle's for Joe Walsh, Harry Gatewood and C. E. Barker, ball players.

CHAT OF SINGER AND PLAYER

Mme. Patti's Kind Holiday Remembrance of Her Friends.

JAY GOULD'S PRESENT TO PAULINE HALL

Johnstone Bennett's Love of Novelties—An Innocent at Roulette—How Joseph Allen's Hair Turned White—Coming Attractions—Gossipy Notes.

Mme. Adelina Patti-Nicolini is known to the world at large as the queen of song, the greatest diva of the age, the peerless artiste where notes are as precious as pearls. To those few who have been admitted within the sacred circle of her friendship she is above all things a woman, the most charming and gracious of her sex. To those favored ones this wonderful artiste, to whom kings and princes pay delighted homage, shows a sincere, cordial, unaffected woman liness. For those honored with her regard Mme. Patti has a genuine, thoughtful kindliness that finds expression in simple, unostentatious methods which carry the fine flavor of her esteem without the taint of condescension.

Some of these friends have renewed reason for their admiration of this gracious woman, who has again shown her thoughtful esteem by sending them pretty little holiday remembrances in the form of photographs of Craig-y-nos castle and its environs. Those received by the editor of THE BEE are of the same view, but one is printed light and bears a Christmas greeting, while the other is in darker tones and has a New Year's inscription.

The view is taken from the hill at the rear of Craig-of-Nos, in the foreground is the famous castle and its clustering attachments. Beyond is a beautiful valley, the rugged Welsh hills closing in on it on either side, while down through its center, like a pretty ribbon in a field of green, wanders a little stream until it is lost in the misty distance. The views are exquisite bits of photographic art and make the daintiest of souvenirs.

Mme. Patti has given further proof of her thoughtful kindliest by sending the editor of THE BEE the programs of a number of her entertainments during the past year. None of these were professional engagements and the souvenirs have no odor of shop about them. With one exception they are the programs of performances at the beautiful theater in the diva's castle royal entertainments provided by the queen of song for the delectation of her guests. These souvenirs, therefore, represent the perfume of this gracious hostess' personality in private life with no suggestion of professionalism.

The earliest of these programs is a record of a concert on board the steamship City of New York, May 23, for the benefit of the the Seaman's Orphan institution at Liverpool; and Mme. Patti was down to sing "Home, Sweet Home."

On August 15 a special matinee was given at Patti's theater in Craig-y-Nos castle. The first part was a musical program, which was followed by a pantomimic drama entitled "Love or Duty." In the latter the diva took two parts.

A week later "Camille" was given, with Mme. Patti in the title roll and Mr. Richard Nicolini as Count de Varville, and there were violin and harp solos between the acts by two young ladies.

"A pantomimic description of dramatic interest in four episodes entitled 'Life at Hamilton Castle'" was produced on September 10, and the hostess enacted the parts of the two daughters of Lady Hamilton.

Beginning with September 17th there were eight entertainments on successive evenings, which are all recorded in one beautiful program. On Saturday night "A Sister's Jealousy" was played with Mme. Patti in the roles of Irene and Sybil, two sisters. Sunday evening there was a concert with the diva down for four number; while Signor Nicolini and Mr. Richard Nicolini contributed one each. On Monday evening following a short concert, came "Auberge des Audret;" on Tuesday, "Camille;" on Wednesday, "La Sonnambula;" on Thursday, "Whar's Your Ticket," an extravaganza; on Friday, "Love Under Difficulties," a comedy; on Saturday, "La Sonnambula" again. In each of the works named Mme. Patti took leading parts.

The latest of these programs is dated November 19th, when "Ninon, a Tale of the Chimney Corner," was presented, with the title role.

These programs give glimpses of the home life of the queen of song and of the munificence of her hospitality, and they make interesting souvenirs of one of the most famous women of the century.

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Several theatrical men were in a favorite resort of the profession the other day, discussing most everything but aqua pura. Jay Gould was mentioned, and that brought forth several stories.

"I suppose," said one of the party, "that some of you have noticed the magnificent diamond and sapphire ring worn by Pauline Hall. Well, boys, Jay went down into his jeans pretty deep to settle for that gewgaw. It must have cost a five century if it did a cent. Stately Pauline struck this windfall a few seasons ago in St. Louis. You know I was with the company at the time. That was Polly's (she always insisted on my calling her Polly) first season at starring, and, to tell the truth, she wouldn't have started out at all if I hadn't agreed to support her.

"What are you snickering at? You know, all of you, that I'm the king comedian of the United States—Milwaukee included—and but for my infernal modesty John Drew, Goodwin, Dixey, Joe Holland, and the rest of the outfit couldn't ride in the same elevator with me. Just you wait till some doctor discovers a bicloride injection to cure constitutional insufficiency of gall, and then—but no matter.

"How did it all happen? Oh, simply enough. We were playing at the Olympic theater the opera 'Erminie,' and business was good—for St. Louis. Soon after the curtain went up Wednesday night it was noised about behind that Jay Gould was boxed in front. I had never before clapped eyes on his millionaire misfits, so I peeked around until I spotted him in the lower right-corner box. There he was huddled up away back with three or four wealthy-looking individuals around him. How did I recognize him? Why! from the pictures I'd seen in the newspapers. To tell the truth, he was no grand sight for sore eyes, or healthy ones either, but, then, he was the only and original Jay Gould; and I guess most of us would have been glad enough to understudy his role at 100 per cent rake-off.

"The box party seemed to like all the opera first rate, but Pauline's lullaby in the second act captured little Gould. There was a triple encore and Polly fairly bubbled over. One of Gould's party was a big St. Louis railroad man, and also, I believe, part proprietor of the theater, thus when the 'Wizard' expressed a desire to be introduced to the star the intervening door was soon unbarred. The house and company managers did the honors, and there was considerable excitement behind, let me tell you. It isn't every night you can rub elbows with a hundred time over millionaire.

"Gould seemed quite at home behind and did not stare around like a novice; he even explained several details to another member of the party while waiting for Pauline's change of costume. Of course I did not hear what took place in the star's dressing room except by hearsay. The conversation was, however, quite a long one, and the curtain was held for nearly ten minutes until the catcalls and stamping from the gallery brought it up in a hurry. Mr. Gould was, I understand, exceedingly complimentary and unaffected. That winds up the little ball of yarn, I think.

"About the ring! By jingo! That's so! I'd forgotten the hub of the story. The following day, Thursday, Pauline received a very pretty note from Mr. Gould, in which he reiterated the compliments of the preceding night and asked her to accept from her admirer and friend the enclosed trifling token of regard. The trifling token was the ring; and as Pauline was in a very amiable frame of mind just then she condescended to accept it. Kind of her, wasn't it?"

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In the Milwaukee shop windows not long ago a novelty in scarf pins was exhibited, and Miss Johnstone Bennett, now at the Columbia in "Jane," was the first to secure one. The pin was a clever imitation of a half burned cigarette, very deceptive in appearance. Miss Bennett stuck the pin partly under the lapel of her mannish little coat and sprinkled cigar ashes about it, so that it looked very like a smouldering cigarette. It was her intention to fool several members of the company through the illusion. She left the Plankinton house and passed down the street toward the Davidson theater. Just as she was walking by the Schlitz hotel, having in the meantime forgotten her cigarette ornament, she was horrified to notice three young gentleman make a sudden rush for her, each eager, evidently, to reach her first. She thought the trio intoxicated, and was about to call upon the passers-by to protect her when the gentleman who reached her first said: "I beg a thousand pardons, madam, but some careless fellow has thrown a burning cigarette on your coat. Kindly allow me to remove it." Miss Bennett's face lit up with a merry smile as she realized the cause of the gentle courtesy. And the prize sprinter attempted to remove the noxious cigarette by brushing it with his handkerchief. The whole thing was done so quickly that jolly Jane did not have time to remonstrate. The gentleman then used his gloved hand in his efforts to remove the cigarette, and as the bystanders began to smile he said: "Why, it seems pinned on your coat." "Yes, sir," said Miss Bennett, "I bought it not ten minutes ago in the jewelry store." A hectic flush swept over the gentleman's face as he realized his attempt at gallantry had been in vain, and the whole crowd, which was composed mostly of well known theatrical people, laughed loud and long.

THE THEATERS.

"Natural Gas," with several new ingredients, is the Christmas attraction at Boyd's theater and will open with a matinee performance this (Sunday) afternoon. The engagement is for four days with matinee Monday afternoon also. What is novel in the composition is likewise exceedingly funny, more than maintaining the claims of this particular gas of nature to be considered as an unsurpassable laughing gas, while the flow from the merry meter retains most of its old comical characteristics. The elements evoking laughter have been strengthened with banter and hits at latest follies, the latter admisistered in the good natured manner that always characterizes the sallies of Donnelly and Girard. A talented company will second the efforts of the stars in getting more fun than ever before out of the naturally funny gas. Miss Amy Ames plays the Irish woman, and there are a number of clever vocalists and graceful dancers in the ranks of the support who will impart additional effects to the songs and dances in which Donnelly and Girard lead. Of Donnelly and Girard's farce comedy it may truly be said that it was constructed for laughing purposes only. These comedians constantly exerted themselves to improve the article. To make use of their own pertinent phrase, they have from time to time drawn upon a new meter.

Webster and Brady's stupendous spectacular production, "The Bottom of the Sea," fills the big stages with a series of unprecedented and unparalleled novelties. Out of the usual order of plays is this one, much of the action taking place on the floor of the ocean. Above and around the actors the strange monsters of the deep are seen moving through the mysterious depths, startled by, yet not afraid of these strange visitors. An ingenious plot unites the interests of the characters on the surface of the billows in a ship, with the perils of those at the bottom of the sea. Startling originality appeals strongly to the theater-goers and the play is a sensational novelty from the first scene to the last. One novel and instructive scene is produced with fidelity from the appliances actually used in the laying of an ocean telegraph cable. From a moving ship a rope of wire is run out and permitted to sink slowly to the ocean floor. A second is the handsomely appointed interior of the