

Fanning by the Fireside

BY BRADLEY ALLEY.

THIS is the finest time of the year for the baseball managers. They dearly love to trade. From now until the opening of the season they can propose swaps with their rival managers, and they can talk of the fine prospects of their team for the coming season and everybody will listen to them.

Sport writers are eager to record the wise words that fall from their lips. The manager and reporter are very chummy, and past difficulties are laid aside. Later, when some of the teams fall to the cellar, the reporters will cease to quote the wise sayings of the managers, and will put forth opinions of their own. The manager will not then be so exceedingly chummy.

Some of these opinions will wound the feelings of the manager, and as a result a coolness will spring up between the erst-while Damon and Pythias which will continue until about the middle of the winter, when they will shake hands and join forces again for the welfare of the club. Truly, baseball is a great game.

Pitching in a pinch. That is the time that a pitcher shows what he is made of, whether he has a yellow streak, or if he is game to the core. How often have the fans seen a pitcher come up to the plate with two out and the bases empty, and line out a beautiful single, and the next time he gets to the plate have two men on and two out, with the opposing team having a one run lead, he misses the very first three balls served.

The reason is this, the first time he was there, was nothing at stake and the opposing pitcher was loafing. On his second trip to the plate, things are different. The other team has the lead of one lone run and with two men on the bases a hit would surely score one run and probably two.

Then is the time that the pitcher will have to serve his best, or show his "yellow." The batter having made a single on his former trip to the plate with as much ease as Cobb, Speaker, Lajoie or Wagner, is full of confidence, and stands close to the plate expecting a curve ball, the pitcher will send one of his fastest balls just across the inside corner, and though the batter will dodge, "The Ump," calls strike one.

After this pitched ball came so close to him, the batter draws

away from the plate, and the next two will be curve balls that he will miss by at least a foot, and the pitcher will be out of a deep hole.

Pitchers who are successful in a pinch, are the ones who don't have to put all their "stuff" on the ball at all stages of the game. They are the fellows who can get along with the ordinary "stuff" and have something in reserve.

When the pinch presents itself they are the ones who can put just a bit more curve on the ball and who can increase their speed by several notches.

Press agency given James Thorpe has given him a valuable and remunerative job with the New York Giants. Thorpe has accepted the position. He acted unwisely. He must realize that the position came to him as a result of his shams. He has never shown enough as a baseball player to warrant his being signed by a major league club. Had he done so the managers of the majors would have been barking at his heels these last two years.

John McGraw is a person of foxiness. He realizes that if he advertises "Jim Thorpe will play today" more money will come to the privy purse of the Giant club than would arrive at the same destination with the advertisement, "Mathewson vs Brown."

Now McGraw's policy of money grabbing is not questioned. Baseball is a business like banking, and cotton, and bartending, and preaching. But the fact that Thorpe, after his honorable confession and the return of his trophies should yield to the call of the gill will make him, not a hero of amateur athletics, but will reflect on the Indian race. It would have been well if the great Indian had decided to retire on the competency that a none too generous government grants the members of the race, robbed of the patrimony that was always theirs.