

baseball and the wonderful astuteness of the great players, and it is somewhat of a relief to present the other side of the case and show how the "best laid plans of mice and men gang aft a-glee."

Baseball players and managers are not at all thin skinned on tricks that border on the unsportsmanlike in a game, and it is considered proper form to pull any kind of scheme that you can get away with.

Spoiling of a Fine Trick

DOWN at Baltimore many years ago, when the Orioles were defeating all comers, some new and unexpected trick was tried nearly every day. The Baltimore club was made up of a lot of quick wits, and it was on account of their ability to think and act simultaneously that so many pennants were won. On that team were McGraw, Keeler, Jennings, Kelley, and Robinson. They did many wonderful things, and in baseball to-day the Orioles are regarded as the greatest team of players the game has ever known. There was one man on that team, however, who was a constant thorn in the side of the men who thought and acted quickly. His name was Walter Brodie. He was an excellent fielder, a crack hitter, and a fast base runner; but at times he did not think in harmony with the others.

One afternoon Baltimore was playing with Boston, her most bitter rival. The score was tied, and the game had gone into extra innings. It was also growing dark.

Boston got a man on first base, and as the next batter was noted for his heavy hitting the Baltimore outfield was alarmed for fear of losing the game. Keeler, who was playing right field, went over to Brodie in center and suggested that they try the "planted ball" trick. Keeler explained that he would place an extra baseball in the grass between him and Brodie and that in case the batter hit one through that territory he would make a feint at stopping the real ball. If he failed, he was to dive for it and roll over in the grass. In doing so he would come up with the planted ball and let the other one go. He could then throw the planted ball in and head off the runner. He figured that in the growing darkness the Boston team and the spectators would lose sight of the real ball.

This was all carefully explained to Brodie, and he assented to the scheme.

As luck would have it, the batter did hit a long drive right through the territory that Keeler had figured on. He made a dive for it; but could not reach it. But he came up with the planted ball and hurled it to third base in time to head off the runner. Just as the umpire was about to call the Boston runner out he looked around and—Brodie was chasing the real ball all the way to the clubhouse! The runner was then allowed to score and Boston had won the game.

Brodie had forgotten his orders and the bonehead had seized him just in time to lose the game.

A Case of Double Bonehead

THE fact that a ball player is attacked with a spell of bonehead occasionally does not necessarily mean that such a condition is chronic. Some of the most intellectual men in the game make breaks of that kind, and that is what makes it so hard to understand. Disgust will often bring on an attack of bonehead. In fact, some of the star bonehead plays of baseball have been the result of players becoming disgusted with themselves at failures in a pinch. An incident of this kind is told on Dan O'Leary, one of the most famous players the game has ever produced.

O'Leary was proud of his ability as a hitter, and he gloried in the opportunity to come to bat with men on bases. He was playing on the Manchester, New Hampshire, team at one time, and, as usual, it was a hard fought contest. (Bonehead plays are never pulled when a game is one sided.) Lowell was the opposing team and was one run in the lead. In the ninth inning Manchester got three men on bases, with two out. Dan O'Leary was at bat, and it was the opportunity he had looked forward to for a long time. A long single would score two runs and win the game. One run would tie it. Dan set himself for his swing and missed the first two strikes. The next ball pitched was an out curve, and O'Leary saw it coming. He made a vicious swing at the ball; but missed it by fully a foot.

"Three strikes!" yelled the umpire, and O'Leary looked around, to discover that the ball had struck the catcher on the side of his glove and had bounded away toward the grandstand. While the catcher was chasing the ball two of the Manchester runners dashed across the plate, and apparently Manchester had won on the error. By a last desperate effort the catcher grabbed the ball and was preparing to throw it to first base to stop O'Leary if possible; but imagine his surprise when he found O'Leary standing at his side with his bat still in his hand! He had made no attempt to go to first.

"Touch me! Touch me!" shrieked O'Leary to the catcher in utter disgust. "Struck out with the bases full—and a batter like me! Touch me! I'm out!"

Of course the catcher touched him, and he was de-

clared out. The runs did not count, and Manchester had lost the game—all because O'Leary was so disgusted at striking out that he would make no effort to run to first.

It was fully ten minutes before O'Leary realized that his action had prevented the runs from counting. Then the force of his bonehead play dawned upon him. After the crowd had left the park the groundkeeper was pre-



"Why, You Couldn't Catch the Smallpox!" Jeered Brodie.

paring to lock the gates, when he looked over to the bleachers and spied some one sitting there. He walked over, and to his amazement found O'Leary.

"Come on, Mr. O'Leary," he said. "I have to close up."

"Go ahead and close up!" snapped O'Leary. "Tell the other fellows I'll be here for practice in the morning."

Arundell's Sprinting Bug

WHILE ninety per cent. of the bonehead plays cannot be explained, there are times when the attack can be brought on by an irritant. This irritant is usually a player on the opposing team. A majority of ball players have a "bug," as the players call it, on a certain subject. Some of the pitchers have an idea that they could be great outfielders, and occasionally there is an infielder who thinks he ought to be a great pitcher. Then, there are others who think they are very fast sprinters. Tug Arundell, the old catcher, was one of those who had a bug on sprinting. He had an idea that he could beat anybody running; when, as a matter of fact, he was quite slow. The players knew of Arundell's weakness, and they worked on it.

During a game in Chicago, Arundell was catching and the opposing team had three runners on bases. Before going any further, let me say that John McGraw, manager of the Giants, is responsible for this story. Anyway, there were three runners on bases, and Brodie, the next batter, struck out. Arundell dropped the last strike, and it was necessary for him either to touch the runner or to throw the ball to first base. He ran out to touch the runner; but the man eluded him and started for first. This was a slap at Arundell's sprinting ability, and he decided to show Brodie that he could catch him. He thereupon started on a sprint after Brodie with the ball in his hand.

"Why, you couldn't catch the smallpox!" jeered Brodie as he dashed toward first. That made Arundell furious and he kept up his pursuit, wholly unconscious of what was going on at the other bases. Brodie finally reached first safely and turned toward second, with Arundell in hot pursuit and in a great rage. Brodie kept tantalizing him, and they sped on round the bases. The other players were yelling for Arundell to throw the ball; but he paid no attention to them, so bent was he on catching Brodie. He

finally ran all the way round the bases and chased in four runs!

"That," says McGraw, "is the first time on record that four men ever scored on a strike-out while the catcher had the ball in his hands."

Merkle Not a Real Bonehead

THAT the loss of the National League pennant two years ago was due to a bonehead play by Fred Merkle is too well known to permit of discussion here. That, however, I never regarded as a real bonehead play, because Merkle did the same thing that all other players had been doing for the last twenty years. It is true that he failed to touch second; but the reason he acted as he did was because he thought the game over and the crowd had rushed on the field. Still, his failure to touch that bag cost New York a pennant and deprived each player of two thousand dollars in prize money.

Sherwood Magee, star hitter of the Philadelphia National League club, lost his team a game last season by deliberately walking off third and allowing himself to be touched out by Jack Meyers, who was catching for New York. He never could fully explain his action, and the only way he got out of it at all was to say that he thought the side was out.

On four successive occasions Sammy Strang was caught napping off first base by Pitcher Liefeld of Pittsburgh, and he had no excuse to offer except that "Liefeld had me mesmerized."

"I believe that fellow is a hypnotist," said Strang, and he was very serious in his assertion. "I was standing ten feet off the bag and was looking at him every time he threw to catch me. I knew he was going to throw; but I couldn't move to save my life. If that isn't hypnotism, I don't know what it is."

"No hypnotism about it," observed McGraw, who is a very matter of fact young man. "It was a plain case of bonehead, that's all."

Boneheads Off the Diamond

THE bonehead question among ball players is one they never tire of discussing. If they catch one of their team mates doing a bonehead trick, they use it as a bludgeon over his head for many months to come. They see so much of it in baseball that they are always looking for it in other walks of life.

Several years ago the Giants had a week of laughing over a bonehead play that Cecil Ferguson, the pitcher, pulled in a hotel in Cincinnati. Ferguson knew that Dummy Taylor, the deaf-mute pitcher, was playing cards and he wanted to have some fun out of him. He thereupon paid a bellboy a dollar and told him to page Taylor all over the hotel so that he would hear his name and leave the game. After the boy had been working faithfully for a half-hour calling "Mr. Taylor, Mr. Taylor!" it suddenly occurred to Ferguson that Taylor was deaf and dumb. And he was out a dollar!

Ball players pull many of these bonehead plays off the diamond, and when they do every other man on the club becomes an advertising medium for the promulgation of the fact.

"I pulled a star bonehead this morning," remarked Fred Merkle as he came into the hotel down at Marlin, Texas, one day last spring. "I was passing the little lake over there, and I saw a fellow sitting on the bank fishing. He had been there for two hours to my certain knowledge and had not had a single nibble. I walked over to him and after watching his line for a minute casually asked, 'What are you doing, fishing?'"

"He looked at me for a moment in disgust and replied, 'No. I'm trying to drown this worm.'"

SUICIDE OF ANIMALS

THE supposed suicide of animals raises a subtle problem, and to deny it is to fly in the face of deep rooted popular belief. It is just as much a natural history myth, however, as the hoary headed belief in the adder swallowing its young in time of peril, the toad living in a stone nodule for thousands of years, or the germinating powers of mummy wheat. The most ancient myth of the popular collection has reference to the habit of scorpions digging their stings into their bodies when unable to escape from fire.

Experiments have proved the fallacy of the scorpion's suicide, notably those made years ago by Dr. Lankester

of the British Museum and Professor Bourne. Scorpions were confined in an extremely hot place, from which escape was impossible, and their frantic gymnastics were carefully studied with serene and philosophic complacency. As in the case of the tortured rattlesnake biting its own body, the action of the scorpion in an apparent attempt to end its sufferings by stinging itself was purely muscular, and Dr. Lankester himself compared the action to the biting of their own hands or arms by unhealthy children in a paroxysm of anger.

That animals bring about their own deaths by violent and abnormal actions is certain; but if all the contributory causes could be ascertained it would probably be found that they did so under pressure of some torturing pain producing hysterical madness.



O'Leary Was Perched There All Night.