

ing Mathewson Steve recently had the following to say: "At first Matty makes you think he is the easiest pitcher in the world to hit, and the next moment he makes you think you are foolish for so thinking. The first time I faced Matty I hit safely. Upon reaching the bench I was a bit puffed over my success, even though I had been thrown out a mile stealing. The next time up I crashed one into the fence for a double. When I got back to the bench I asked the fellows if they were sure it was Matty who was pitching. The third time up I singled. Upon reaching first I told the boys I wished I could hit against Matty every day: that I would be leading the league. Right here let me say that nobody was on the bases when I made each of these three hits. The last two times I faced Matty in that game the sacks were filled and a hit meant the game—and a new hero in St. Louis. I didn't even make a foul. Do you wonder that I regard Mr. Christopher as some pitcher?" Then with a smile the National League comedian concluded his remarks with, "Any pitcher who can strike Steve Evans out twice in succession in a pinch is bound to be a great pitcher."

The size-up of Mathewson by Steve Evans is mighty close to the correct one. He allows the batter to have the edge when advantage means little more than bettering his batting average; but with the game in the balance he tries to hold the advantage himself, and his wonderful record of games won would make it appear that he has had a little the best of the batters. He is always doing the unexpected. Just when you fancy his shoots are easy, he serves you the most dazzling assortment of speed and curves imaginable.

RUBE ELLIS, of the St. Louis Cardinals, is another National leaguer who has a wholesome respect for Matty's ability as a pitcher. Naturally all minor league players are interested in what is taking place in the major leagues; for every ambitious athlete aspires to "hit the big show" sooner or later. Pitchers in the bushes are particularly interested in the leading hitters of the majors, and the other players are always interested in the crack twirlers.

For this reason it was only to be expected that Rube Ellis should face Mathewson with much concern the

first time that eminent slab artist was announced to work against the Cardinals. Ellis had a regular outing that afternoon. He made five hits in five times up, and was considerably peeved because he just missed facing Matty the sixth time. The first time up Ellis, who is a left-hand hitter, connected with one on the outside corner and sent the ball to left field. Matty had never seen Ellis before. The next time he came up he slipped him a slow one, which Ellis hit late and pulled down the right field line at a speed of a mile a minute. Succeeding offerings were treated in a similar manner that afternoon.

"So that is the great Mathewson!" was the way Ellis put it that evening in the clubhouse, according to the St. Louis players. "Well, if they are all like him I ought to come close to leading the league."

Recruit Ellis's ability to make five hits off his delivery naturally got a lot of consideration from Mathewson. The great pitcher figured out the performance of Mr. Ellis as follows:

"I noticed that Ellis used a long bat, that he held it

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WHY HUB TOOK THE COUNT

Drawings by F. Vaux Wilson

BY SEWELL FORD

PINCKNEY'D been stickin' around the studio for a couple of hours or more that day, goin' through all the stunts, from a handball session with Swifty Joe to fifteen minutes of mitt exercise with me; then he'd had his shower and rabdown, comin' out as fresh as a butcher boy on a frosty mornin'; and now he stands there teeterin' back and forth against a chair in the front office, smokin' his first cigarette of the day calm and placid, when all of a sudden he pulls out his watch and gazes at it anxiously.

"By Jove, you know!" says he. "One-thirty! And there was something I was to do this morning."

"Didn't overlook eatin' breakfast, did you?" says I.

"Breakfast?" says he, starin' vague. "Now did I—yes, yes! Of course I did! I remember my man taking away the tray."

"Think of that!" says I. "Wonderful thing, such a memory. Don't strain it too hard, though."

"But there was something else," says he, "something important."

"Orderin' a new monogram on your cigarettes, was it?" I suggests.

"No, no," says he. "I never change that, you know."

"Ow!" says I. "Social error on my part. Excuse. Now let's see—last time it was pickin' out dinner favors that you forgot."

"But I did that yesterday," says he.

"And then once," I goes on, "it was gettin' a new kind of scented talcum that you—"

"Talcum!" breaks in Pinckney excited. "Oh, I say! That's it! Hub!"

"Come out of it," says I. "What hub?"

"Why, Hub Talcott," says he. "By Jove! And I was to meet him at the club about noon!"

"What's an hour or so at the club?" says I. "Maybe he ain't missed you yet."

"But that isn't the worst," groans Pinckney. "The train for Whisperin' Pines Inn goes at two-fifteen."

"Ah, don't get me all nerved up this way," says I. "What if it does?"

"Why," says Pinckney, "I've promised Mrs. Ridley Talcott that I'd take Hub down there today, you see."

"Well, you got nearly an hour to make it in a taxi, ain't you?" says I.

"But if I do, how can I be Westy Vernon's best man at five this afternoon, or dine with the Twombly-Cranes at eight, and be at the Ritz by ten to manage those costume dances for the Saint John's Guild?"

"Yes, that's some problem you've batted up to yourself, Pinckney," says I, "and somewhere along the line, I expect, you've got to put on a sub."

"By Jove, Shorty!" says he, grabbin' me grateful by the hand. "Excellent! I appoint you!"

"Wha-a-at!" says I. "How'd I look holdin' the sponge at a swell weddin', or pullin' off fancy dances?"

"No, no!" says he. "You take Hub Talcott to Whisperin' Pines. I'll have him come right around. Here, let me take that desk 'phone. Hello! Hello!"

"Hey, not so sudden there!" I sings out. "What the blazes do I want to go—"

But he's busy on the club wire by that time, and in side of two minutes he's got it all fixed.

"See here," says I when he fin'ly hangs up, "what's this all about, anyway? Why can't your friend go by himself?"

"Nerves," says Pinckney. "Haven't you heard? He's been in bad shape for weeks; but since that affair at the Ogden Bruces, when he stepped on Mrs. Boomer Day's train and then backed into the goldfish pool—well, you can imagine. Awfully nice chap, though, and they'll fix him up at Whisperin' Pines. Rather! But he won't go down by himself—such a sensitive, diffident fellow. Dreads meeting strangers. Then there's his arm—neuritis. So I promised his aunt I'd see him safe there and stay a day or so until he got settled. But now I simply can't, and—and you'll do it so much better."

"Oh, will I?" says I.

"But you'll like Hub, the old clown," he goes on.



It Wa'n't Any Case of Love at First Sight.

"He's so jolly when you get to know him. Oh, you'll be just crazy about him! He'll take to you right away too. See if he doesn't. Has the weirdest tastes—absolutely!"

"Huh!" says I. "I'm beginnin' to get chesty over this. Sure he ain't my long-lost twin, or something?"

CCOURSE I'd heard more or less about this young Talcott gent, who'd suddenly appeared, after old Ridley Talcott had cashed in, as the new head of the house. A nephew, they said, that had been dug up by Aunty from somewhere out West, and the scheme was for him to step in and carry on the family name.

You'd hardly think a lucky break like that would end in a set of jumpy nerves, would you? Why, here he is, landed in a corner house on Fifth-ave., all complete from a pair of English butlers to a private art gallery; the Talcott box in the gold horseshoe to sit in every Wednesday night; the Talcott coat of arms in the bottom of his soap plate; and Madam Ridley Talcott herself, as imposin' an old dame as there is on Mrs. Astor's visitin' list, to open all the front doors worth gettin' inside of. And yet, with all that back of him, he goes and collects a case of high-school-girlly nerves, and I'm asked to tow him to a joint like Whisperin' Pines Inn!

"What is it," says I, "one of them graft sanitariums where they operate for fatty degeneration of the pocket-book?"

"It's Dr. Hugo Spitzer's Restorium," says Pinckney. "Very exclusive, you know. Only the best people go

there. I'll wire ahead that you're coming, and don't leave Hub until he seems contented. I'll put in a bill to Mrs. Talcott for your time, say five an hour—will that do?"

"Countin' day and night?" says I.

"Oh, certainly," says Pinckney. "It starts now. Besides, you're bound to be crazy about Hub."

"At five an hour I could be nutty about most anyone," says I.

IMUST say, though, that it wa'n't any case of love at first sight; for when Mr. Talcott shows up all I can see in him is a tall, loose-jointed, sag-shouldered young gent, with a long, serious face, high cheekbones, a heavy chin, and an odd droop to his mouth corners. You wouldn't guess from the healthy color in his cheeks that he's an invalid; but he carries one wrist limp in a black silk sling and drifts in sort of hesitatin' and bashful. There wa'n't anything specially humorous about the way Pinckney does the honors; but Hub grins sort of foolish and then cuts loose in a high-pitched, raspin' voice, to say how he's glad to know me, and that he hopes he ain't causin' me much trouble, and so on, until Pinckney steps in and soothes him down.

"There, there, old chap!" says he. "It's only Professor McCabe, you know. He's going down with you, and I'm sure you'll both be crazy about each other."

"Ah, say, Pinckney," I breaks in, "don't work that overtime. And if we're goin' to catch the two-fifteen we ain't got much margin to waste on you."

So I gives Swifty a few hints about what to 'phone out to Sadie, and how to handle a few specials of mine, grabs my emergency kit bag, and off we go. We had a two-hour ride into South Jersey, and if Hubby, old scout, developed any sudden likin' for me durin' that time he conceals it well. Mostly he sits sort of slumped down in his parlor chair fingerin' a bunch of opened letters, now and then glancin' timid at the other passengers, and shrinkin' back panicky when the conductor calls for his ticket, which I was holdin'.

Once he remarks to me jerky and loud that it's quite a long trip, and when we're halfway there he asks me excited if I'm sure we're on the right train. Say, I expect they can't help it, but some of these nervous collapsers take it out in queer ways, don't they? Honest, that's as chatty as we got the whole trip. On the drive from the station he observes that he don't like such a flat, sandy country, and he believes bein' there'll make him worse.

"Ah, pump your chest full of this pine air and forget the scenery," says I. "They'll buck you up at the restorium. See, that must be the roof of it, off there."

IT'S some elaborate shack too,—half cement, half shingle, with the beams showin' through, old English style, and the tall trees left growin' close to the walls. Whisperin' Pines was a good name for it, in more ways than one, as we discovers later. They shows us into 38 and 39 on the second floor,—cunnin' little cells openin' onto individual sleepin' porches, each with a white iron cot. A maid in a nurse's uniform tells us that supper'll be ready in ten minutes; so we washes up hasty and gets down just as they unbutton the dinin' room doors, so there wa'n't any time for Hub to get fidgety.

Say, did you ever see sixty or seventy-five prostraters all in a bunch? Believe me, it was some mixed collection,—from young girls of twenty that had filled too many dance orders, to heavyweight old dowagers that had emptied too many dinner plates! There was a few young men, a few more middle-aged gents, and a lot of gray-haired old sports; but all of 'em with a husky bank account back of their complaints.

It's a big, bare room, full of round tables that would seat about ten with plenty of elbow room for fork play, and me and Hub are planted casual at one of 'em, without bein' introduced or anything. Seems they wa'n't strong for sociability at Whisperin' Pines; for there wa'n't the usual boardin' house chatter bein' passed across the tables. I see folks noddin' to each