TEBEAU'S TEAM STRONG AT BAT.

McGraw's Ability With the Stick Will Make a Great Difference.

BROOKLYN HAS THE PITCHERS.

Hanlon's Team Looks Best in Twirlers—Cy Young Thinks Well of Tommy Dowd—A Question of Backstops.

Special Correspondence.

Hot Springs, Ark., March 17.—Impressions are droll things, and the faculties of judgment are, at best, tricky. Snarish compliments of human intelligence, or John McGraw is a much better player than even he, best advertised of baseball players, is held by his warmest admirers.

Manager Tebeau has the entire St. Louis team of 1900 beneath his wing, for the saucy, perky bantam of Baltimore, Robinson, to be sure, is lacking, but Robinson can be very easily dispensed with. Indeed, he will never be missed. McGraw alone is missing. Had we him we would feel that we had a championship team.

McGraw is hardly the holder Lave Cross is, maybe not as good. But he is such a mortal terror at the bat, such a warrior in the game, such a pusher of his fellows. Hitting, as Cross does, strictly for base hits, he is not more than a .300 man. Batting as McGraw does, he is a .400 sticker. His eye, just as good as Burkett's for balls and strikes, his ability to bat off and foul away good balls, makes him worth any two ordinary .300 hitters at the bat. On the bases he is a fiend.

With McGraw leading off, Donovan following him, Heidrick next, then Burkett, Donlin and Keister, Tebeau will have a fearful quintet of fast left-handers, who can hit to beat the band. McGraw is the best man in the game to get to first base. He gets there oftener than any of them. He can steal; how well Jack O'Connor or Criger can tell you. Donovan excels in the rare art of hitting with a runner; that is, placing the ball according to the movements of the shortstop and second baseman. If he finds the second baseman is going to take the throw to catch the runner, he will try to hit to right field, and the baseman, having gone to take the throw, leaves that side of the diamond open. Vice versa for the short fielder. Donovan can run the bags himself, so when his hit puts McGraw on third, as it usually will, he will have small trouble going to second or working the double steal with McGraw, the latter going home.

Heidrick is quite as good as the best of them running the sacks, so, with Donovan on second, Emmet on first and Burkett at the bat, there should be something doing. Donlin can hit them hard and far, and he should come up with the bases full. Then Wallace will be hitting better than he did last year by many points. He will be there with the ash. Keister can hit .320.

For first base Tebeau has really four men, Cross, McGann, Donlin and Delahanty. There is nothing to it but Donlin if he can play the bag, for he can outhit the others. Is left-handed and faster than any of them. McGann is a seasoned first baseman, but has not hit well lately. Delahanty is a promising young man and may make them all get out of his way. Cross seems to lead the bunch for the position, for as we can play the infield better than Donlin and can hit better than McGann and presumably better than Delahanty, though the latter is a crack kid, and may show superior speed.

It is whispered that there is a deal on to get a good pitcher for Cross and a couple of other good men. Cincinnati, Chicago and New York, not to mention his old town of Philadelphia, could use Lave with great advantage. If McGraw takes third in St. Louis and Cross wants to go, New York may get him in a trade, but he is almost too good a man to let go. His equal for utility purposes would be hard to find. He even excels Joe Quinn, for he can catch and Joe cannot.

With Donlin on first, should he make it, the team will have an unpeeling array of left side swatters, fellows who would work an infield and battery to death. Every little tap in the diamond would have to be hustled, a pitcher who could not field bunts would be driven out of the business in a minute, catchers' arms would be thrown off trying to catch them stealing, and outfielders would be given a long chase.

This little man Keister is something of an enigma. Last spring the scribes teemed with tales of his bad fielding. For months McGraw held Johnnie O'Brien at second and Maroon, another very poor hitter, at short, and kept Keister on the bench. Then Maroon got sick and Keister got a chance to play. He was awful in the field at first and at best never was a very good ground-er grabber, but he hit well right along. Strogon recovered and Keister took O'Brien's place at second, where he did better than at short. Later on Maroon was traded for Demont, and, though the Frenchman was rated a good shortstop, McGraw put him at second and moved Keister back again to the off-side of the bag, where he finished the season creditably.

Keister is a very strong little chap, a miniature Sandow, hits hard. He can hardly be rated as a brilliant or sensational player, but he can't bit, hit hard and often.

Speaking of batting, that part of the game seems to be more assertive than ever. McGraw's batting power makes him almost desirable to St. Louis. It looks as if work with bat and brain, using the latter in combination with feet on the sacks, is the winning combination. Fielding and pitching come after. With McGraw on third and Donlin on first, Tebeau's team will outbat any in the League. Pittsburg and Philadelphia have been alluded to as sluggers, but on average basis St. Louis leads them all, as the following tables will show:

ST. LOUIS.

	Av.		Av.
Burkett	.440	Donovan	.355
McGraw	.420	Wallace	.340
Heidrick	.340	Young	.329
Keister	.330	O'Connor	.326
Nodin	.324		
Team average			.350

PHILADELPHIA.

	Av.		Av.
Delehanty	.416	Slagle	.355
Lajoie	.354	Cross	.349
Flick	.340	Platt	.329
Thomas	.330	McFarland	.329
Lowder	.325		
Team average			.336

PITTSBURG.

	Av.		Av.
Williams	.366	Ely	.333
Beaumont	.359	Dillon	.322
Wagner	.338	Waddell	.321
Clarke	.340	Zimmer	.300
Ritchey	.340		
Team average			.339

Figuring on that basis Tebeau's crowd has a very decided batting advantage. Indeed, it is practically a class above the others in a hitting way. To be sure, averages don't go for anything, but for the sake of comparison. The above figures are taken as close as memory can get them from last year's averages. They will be found pretty close to correct. The best pitcher and batting catcher of each team is chosen to represent the batteries. Tebeau has five fast left-handers against Pittsburg's two and Philadelphia's three. The slowest south-side hitter of the St. Louis bunch is quite as fast as the fastest of the other two. Thomas, Clarke and Beaumont are very fast men going down to first base.

Neither Donlin nor Keister is a crack fielder as yet, and there the others have a shade. Indeed, outside of Wallace, Criger and O'Connor, not any of Tebeau's crowd can boast of being a star fielder, though Burkett, Heidrick, McGraw and Donovan are good.

Allowing five pitchers to each team Brooklyn looks very strong. Chicago is also stout when you count Garvin as a first-classer, which he is, bar his slow motion. Pittsburg has some good men, notably Waddell, who is expected to be the twirler of the year, but who may not fulfill expectations. We all know what Cy Young, Cuppy and Sudhoff will do, and Powell had his bad year last season. Thomas was away up in Western League circles, shone alongside of Waddell. Harper, McBride and Knepper are also men of promise entitled to the same ranking chance as Waddell. These lists will show the relative strength of the twirlers of the strong clubs:

St. Louis—Young, Cuppy, Powell, Sudhoff, Jones.

Pittsburg—Waddell, Tannehill, Leever, Phillippi, Chesbro.

Brooklyn—Harbor, McJamey, Dunn, Nops, McJames.

Chicago—Griffith, Callahan, Garvin, Taylor, Fraser.

Boston—Nichols, Willis, Dineen, Bailey, Lewis.

Brooklyn seems to have the pitching talent of the League, while Chicago and Boston have a good bunch of good men. St. Louis hardly ranks up with these three in this line, but Tebeau is up and up with Pittsburg. If Powell, who is rated the best natural pitcher in the game, has a good year, things should be easy for Jones and Hill. But in Brooklyn's five there is not one who is not in all respects a finished article, and a splendid pitching force. Outside of Waddell and a lot of promising, Pittsburg has nothing startling in the twirling line. Nichols and Willis are of the very third water. Chicago has three great pitchers, backed by two good ones. Garvin has the speed and curves, but he is a very slow man in the box and a bad fielder. Griffith and Callahan are called his equals. In outfielders, St. Louis has them all beaten a block. The worst of Tebeau's three, Wallace, Robinson and Criger, is better than the best of any other club, bar Peitz in Cincinnati. His kid receivers, Bresnahan and Sheckard, can go to other clubs to-morrow and work regularly.

Are all this surpassed Tebeau is a lot below Brooklyn and Chicago in pitching and holding, a lot higher in outfielding and base-running. Not only is St. Louis well equipped with base-runners, she has more outrunners of all the best qualities of base-running in the market. The best men in single base thieves belong to the St. Louis club, for Tebeau knows players will have only second-chance opposition in their efforts to steal home.

Last, but not least, in that inestimable baseball quality, brains, St. Louis stands well up. Watkins, Cronin and Tebeau are noted Walkerstonians of the diamond, famed for baseball wit and wisdom. Lelivelt was for been a good catcher and manager. Wallace, also, has not shown Robinson's kind of brains. Heidrick and Burkett know the game. Young, Cuppy and Sudhoff are of no mean positions. Donlin and Keister think such as clubs in which brains abound.

Taking the best team of the St. Louis club next year there will be five Irishmen, one German, a Scotchman and an American. Donlin, Keister, Burkett, McGraw, Dunn, Donovan and O'Connor are Irish, Heidrick and Keister, Germans, Wallace, Sudhoff and Young, British. The Irish are strongly represented on Tebeau's club. Philadelphia has but one on her first team, Pittsburg and Pittsburg but one, Lelivelt, Boston has three, Dowd, Duffy and Collins. Brooklyn has three strong with them, as Kelley, Keeler, Shockey, Daly, Moriarty and Hughes bears testimony, not to mention Farrell, McGinnity and Dunn.

Speaking of nationalities, to be sure the boys are all American, and nothing else, for many people have wondered at the droll way in which a Scotch or a Pennsylvania Dutch suffix found the other Irish and German of Emmett in front of it. The great young player's mother was a Miss Emmett, and his full name is James Emmett Heidrick. So the speedy fellow is half German, half Irish, and much of a credit to both races.

The St. Louis players are wondering what is to become of such fine players as Joe Quinn, Dick Cheney, Tommy Dowd, Dick Harley, Bucky Holmes, Walter Cruthers, Tom McCreery, Dick Padden, Andy Anderson, Jimmy Hughey, Dummy Hoy, Harry Steinfeldt, Charley Irwin and a host of others, who seem lost in the shuffle of the big League cards. They cannot believe that such a man as Quinn will drop out of the League, and marvel at a finished if not strictly first-class man like Dowd or a promising fellow like Harley being sold down to the minors of some other business. Six months ago Dick Cooley was captain of the Philadelphia club and in receipt of $400 per month salary, now he can scarcely to want this great hitter, fast runner and good fielder for an outfielder. Walter Brodie hit over .300 last year and his fielding was improbable, yet he seems to be counted out. Holmes also hit well, but he, too, is on the toboggan.

There will be a famine in catchers, if not this year, very shortly. Thus it is likely that Tebeau will hang in to Buckley and Sheckard no matter what happens. Few clubs have good catchers and the good ones, bar Criger, are mostly aged. This is true of Farrell, Zimmer and Robinson, Merritt, Farrell, Peitz, Zimmer and Schreiber. Boston has no first call man now, as has Pittsburg, Chicago or New York. Philadelphia has two fair young men in McFarland and Dooheen, while Chicago has a promising pair in Kahoe and Chance. Merritt and Farrell are liable to quit any time. As it is, New York, Brooklyn, Pittsburg and Brooklyn all need catchers right now. While there is an amount of good in and outfielders, even pitchers, going out of the League during this reconstruction period, but a single catcher of ability has been allowed to slide.

Unless Donlin should play first base it may be that the strongest on outfielders, Harry Blake, will be disposed of by the St. Louis Club. Tebeau will hardly carry more than one extra outfielder, and Donlin's hitting power gives him the call over the mighty Blake. Blake is unquestionably the best of bright outfielders ever seen on Welch, Jimmy Ryan, Mike Griffin, Dicky Johnson or Bill Lange. He has all their abilities of latter days beaten miles and miles. If he could but hit like he is a great man, for many the triple and home run he cuts off to make up for the hits he does not make.

Knepper and Thomas complain of fits of the flesh. Knepper has a sore arm, a muscle strain back of the elbow, which means nothing of consequence, while Thomas has a bad ankle, sprained while getting away from the plate at Memphis. The big fellow walks hard just at the same. Knepper is a most enthusiastic trainer. He does extra work in the morning. He is up at 6 a. m. and goes across the mountains for his morning walk. Climbing a hill a mile long and thrown up in front of you at an angle of 45 degrees is a fine training. Knepper takes almost the twins of this every morning before breakfast, then has his morning meal, takes two hours' baseball practice, dinner, another three hours of practice, and a bath in the evening he takes a long walk, and winds up with bed at 10 p. m. Lave Cross is another head for mountain climbing. He is never satisfied unless he has a lot of kids about him, and on his way up the cliffs.

"I have read that Tommy Dowd was bound for a minor league," remarked Cy Young yesterday. "I cannot credit it. Dowd was my batter. He hit for official and border than any one I've seen in the business. No matter what I had, no matter who I threw him, no matter what other pitcher was doing to the Dowd was always there with a single for me. If I gave the other team ten hits Dowd had six of them, if not three, he had all of them. Other days I had him in the hole and started to work him, but he would reach after one and get it away safely. If there asked me I would say he was about the best hitter in the League, and he was, as far as I was concerned, at least. It is funny to think of such a good man being in a minor."

Cincinnati and New York are regarded as the plums clubs of the League. The Reds are shy a second and third baseman and are not overwhelmingly strong anywhere. Crawford is but a kid, does not know the game, though is promising man and good slicker. Barrett is likely regarded in a very department. Smith and Shinch are well thought of. The latter is rated higher everywhere than in Cincinnati. The worth of the new pitchers, Scott and Newton, is admitted, and it is generally felt that the Reds will have a better pitching staff than they had last year, when it looked like a world beater. To be sure they have got to have Hahn to give it weight.

New York is shy two outfielders, one infielder and a captain, while Seymour is the only dangerous pitcher in the bunch, and he fell off a lot last year. Ewing appears to be making a mistake in playing Mercer at third and the move is looked upon as spoiling a good pitcher to make a bad third baseman. Van Haltren is the only member of the outfield at all near League form and he is no baby in years. J. B. S.

WILL NOT COME WEST.

McGraw and Robinson Figuring on a Baltimore City League.

REPUBLIC SPECIAL.

Baltimore, Md., March 18.—McGraw is now busily engaged endeavoring a scheme to organize a city league to be composed of nine or eight clubs of semi-professionals, which, under the coaching of himself and Robinson, he thinks would be a much better attraction in Baltimore than an Eastern League team. Mr. James B. Kernan, the wealthy proprietor of trolley lines and the suburban resorts, has become interested in the scheme and will build a ball park at his Arlington or Shell road. Mr. August J. Pennington, president of Electric Park, will also take an interest in the project. He has an immense grandstand at his place, and can at small expense put it in shape. Both of these men have means and enterprise.

McGraw, Kernan and J. W. King, who is also interested in the scheme, had a long conference last night, the result of which was a determination to go ahead. The league is to be upon the plan of the Chicago City League, which has been a success.

McGraw said to-night: "I think the scheme will prove a success. At any rate I am willing to try it for a season. Neither Robbie nor I will go to St. Louis. This is positively no idle talk, I mean it. I would rather stay in Baltimore at a smaller salary than go to St. Louis. We could not attend to our business interests if we went there and we are not broke. I am sure I could organize a league and with a little coaching develop some good ball players out of local talent. The Baltimore rooters want local baseball and I am sure they would support it."

Manager Hanlon said to-night that he believed Mac and Robbie would in the end go to St. Louis, and he thought that Robison's team won't then be the most dangerous the Brooklyns would have to meet. Hanlon has received a number of offers for players from Eastern League players. He received a telegram from Connie Mack to-day saying the breach between the two leagues was being bridged over.

TO TRAIN AT SELMA.

Chicago Baseball Team Will Start Wednesday for Alabama.

West Baden, Ind., March 18.—The Chicago Baseball club will leave West Baden Wednesday for Selma, Ala. The original intention of stopping at Memphis has been abandoned, but Manager Selbie expects to play games there April 1 and 2 on its return from Alabama, and then go to Louisville.

BASEBALL NOTES.

Dillard's Great Arm—Engineer's Opinion of Barry Steinfeldt.

Pat Dillard, the promising young player whom Tebeau has on trial, has a wonderful arm. Even this early in the season he is throwing from across the diamond as far as a peg. The engineer of the Chicago team has the following: "Jack Crooks believes Steinfeldt will be an infielder. He has a stronger throwing arm than Harry Somerfield, and he is the fellow for the place because of the fact that Lohr, who was drafted by the St. Louis club, is a big, Dillard-like fellow, and he hit harder than Steinfeldt, although little is thought of his batting powers."

After a decade of only jumping and exercising the player Harry Wolter, Lew Ellingsworth and Bunny Wolter are still best men of the new infield material on the Detroits. Wolter is a fielder, but he has shown a number for fair. He is a good hitter, and Ellingsworth is a fielder, but he is a good hitter, and Ellingsworth is a fielder, but he is a good hitter, and Ellingsworth is a fielder, but he