

EDITORIALY

The Umpire



HE umpire has been, and is now, though his road is not the rocky one it was a short time since, the butt of endless abuse and insult. He is, we might say, a man without a friend. Everyone has a hard word for him, and no one speaks him well. Some years ago, he was often the victim of assault, and suffered bumps and bruises because, in the opinion of some excited and partial spectator or spectators, he had rendered a wrong decision. We are glad to say that this state of affairs no longer exists, at least where league ball is played. The indicator man is nowadays protected by strict rules and regulations, and the man who infringes on these rules incurs a heavy penalty.

This is as it should be. To have baseball, we must have umpires, just as we must have hard-working, underpaid laborers to have financial prosperity. Every walk in life, every business and every pleasure must have, as an essential element, some members to whose lot falls what is unpleasant and disagreeable. But these workers deserve respect and admiration, as much as do those to whom the enjoyment and the pleasure come. Gradually, in baseball, we are beginning to realize the difficulties of the umpire and to honor him for the part he plays in our great national sport. But there are still, if we may use a popular expression, "knockers," and it is against these that we wish to go on record.

The days of umpire baiting have left us, and the time seems to be drawing near when the man who renders the decisions, and whose work is as important as that of any of the players, will be given the credit that his labors merit. You who scoff and jibe, remember that it is but human to err, and that, though the umpire may now and then make a mistake, he is, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, in the right—a faithful performer of a difficult and onerous task.

The reformation among the players has been made. They now, except in rare instances, do their work, and question not at all the honesty of the man who judges them. When the spectators at our games learn to follow the same course, and to cease to try to worry the arbitrator by their jeers and their insults, then will another step have been taken in the establishing of baseball as the greatest and the cleanest of all popular sports.