

President Lynch as an Umpire

A Brilliant Play by Herman Long

MANAGER FRED TENNEY of the Boston Rustlers tells an anecdote that gives an instance of the remarkably quick thinking on the ball field of the late Herman (Count) Long, and also the methods of President Thomas J. Lynch of the National League when he was plain Tom Lynch, the umpire.

"The old Boston team was playing the Giants at the Polo Grounds," says Tenney, "several years ago. When the Giants went in for their ninth inning we had a lead of one run, with two out and no runs in. They had a man on third and another on first. Jouett Meekin was the runner at my corner, and George Van Haltren, a left-hand batter and a very fast man, was at bat.

"Herman, knowing Van's habit of hitting toward right, stayed up close to second. It was well he did, for Van Haltren hit a fast grounder perhaps six or seven feet the other side of second, and Herman was after it at the crack of the bat. He made one of those marvelous left-handed scoops on the run for which he was noted. I was

expecting the throw to first and so was Tom Lynch, who was the umpire on the bases.

"Long, however, the moment he clutched the ball, saw with chain lightning baseball sense that Van Haltren would beat his throw, and to my amazement he made a headlong dive and scramble for second base to force Meekin. It was a cinch that he got his man, but fearing that Lynch had missed the play, in my excitement, I grabbed his arm, exclaiming, 'Gee, he got him.'

" 'Let go o' my arm,' growled Lynch, shaking me off.

"For a moment I thought I had queered the play and the score would be tied. To my great relief Lynch in another second waved his arm.

" 'The man is out!' he shouted.

"The game was over and as we walked off the field I apologized to Lynch for taking hold of him. 'That's all right,' was his reply. 'You were excited; I merely didn't like to have the crowd see you do it.' "

