

# The Magnate From a Player's Viewpoint

A Good Word for Ban Johnson and Charles Ebbetts by Two Well Known Players

We have had frequent opportunities to learn what the magnates think of the players. Some of them have not been backward about expressing their views in the press. They have invariably given an obvious account of their appreciations or lack of appreciations of a player's work, in the treatment they have given that player when contract-signing time came around. But the players for certain obvious reasons have never been as forward in expressing their views of the magnates. The following pages are devoted to a few scattered sketches in which a number of prominent players state in their own language their own opinions of various magnates and officials high up in the baseball world.

NAP RUCKER

I HAVE often heard players kick among themselves about the salary they received. These remarks might be very well if they were confined to their own teammates but some players don't hesitate to speak about their troubles to other people. For this reason a lot of false opinions and mistaken notions find their way into the press. I think this is all wrong. The baseball player who is working for a club ought to have the interests of his employer at heart. It certainly doesn't do him any good or anyone else any good to make a lot of complaints about his troubles. This isn't designed to criticize anyone in particular by any means, but merely a statement of my own ideas of what a player should do.

A player naturally wants to get as much money as he can for himself and he cannot help contrasting his salary with that of a player of about equal ability and all-around value on some other club. Ordinarily, if other things were equal a player of certain ability ought to expect that he could draw as much salary as any other player of equal ability. But, as a matter of fact, other things are not often equal. A player who is on a losing club cannot expect to draw the salary that he would draw if

he were on a pennant winner. Baseball is a business after all and an owner who has a club on his hands which does not pay very well cannot be expected to compete with the owner of a club which is a pennant winner. Mr. Ebbetts, the owner of the Brooklyn Club, I have noticed has sometimes been criticized in the press for his alleged poor salaries. As a matter of fact, I know Mr. Ebbetts very well and I do not think he deserves such criticisms. He is merely a magnate who does not have a winning club and he naturally cannot compete with a club like the Giants or the Cubs who have won several pennants in recent years and are big money makers.

IRA THOMAS

THE Baseball player naturally does not often become acquainted with the leading magnates of his own league, and is perhaps hardly in a position to give a clear opinion of these magnates. The players among themselves oftentimes talk over the different magnates. Sometimes naturally enough such conversations are not very complimentary, but I believe, for all that, the average player well recognizes and appreciates the work the magnates have done, however, much he may differ with them sometimes on the matter of his

own individual salary. Ban Johnson is a man who is often talked of by the players as well as by the fans. Naturally not everyone will agree about a man's work, no matter who is being discussed and that applies to Ban Johnson as well as to anyone else. My own opinion of the president of the American League is certainly friendly. I consider that Ban Johnson has done more for the player than any other man in organized baseball. The player nowadays who thinks he is treated unjustly and fancies that some measure of his troubles are due to Mr. Johnson should remember the salaries which were paid by the old National League a dozen or fifteen years ago and then compare them with those of the present time. He will find if he is fair that Ban Johnson and the American League for which he was in large

measure responsible has brought about a condition in baseball which is far more favorable to the player than any known in the old days. I believe that Ban Johnson has been in a large measure responsible for the higher salary the player now enjoys and for the fact that he is on the whole far better treated. That is not saying that the player hasn't still a good many things to wish for, and these things will no doubt come in time; but it is at least a sincere effort to give a man who is prominent in the executive department of the national game his just due. Whatever individual cases may differ, I consider that Ban Johnson on the whole has been the ball player's friend and that his work and his influence have been most beneficial to the man who handles the bat and runs the bases.



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