

SPORTING



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DEVOTED TO

BASE BALL, TRAP SHOOTING AND GENERAL SPORTS

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ELECTRIC LIGHT BALL

The Interesting Details of a Very Successful Experiment in Playing Base Ball at Night

BY FRANCIS C. RICHTER.

IN the last issue of "Sporting Life" appeared a necessarily short telegraphic account of the first attempt to play night base ball with the Cahill electric lights under proper conditions and with perfected equipment, on the night of August 27. Though quite short, the telegraphic statement of an important fact was direct, unequivocal and quite convincing. We supplement this incomplete account with a detailed story of the event by the Chicago "Record-Herald" of August 28, from which will be gleaned the fact that the Cahill system, with a proper test, has proven all that the inventor has so long and earnestly claimed for it, and for which he has labored assiduously in the face of enormous difficulties and seemingly insurmountable obstacles. The story follows:

THE FIRST REAL TEST.

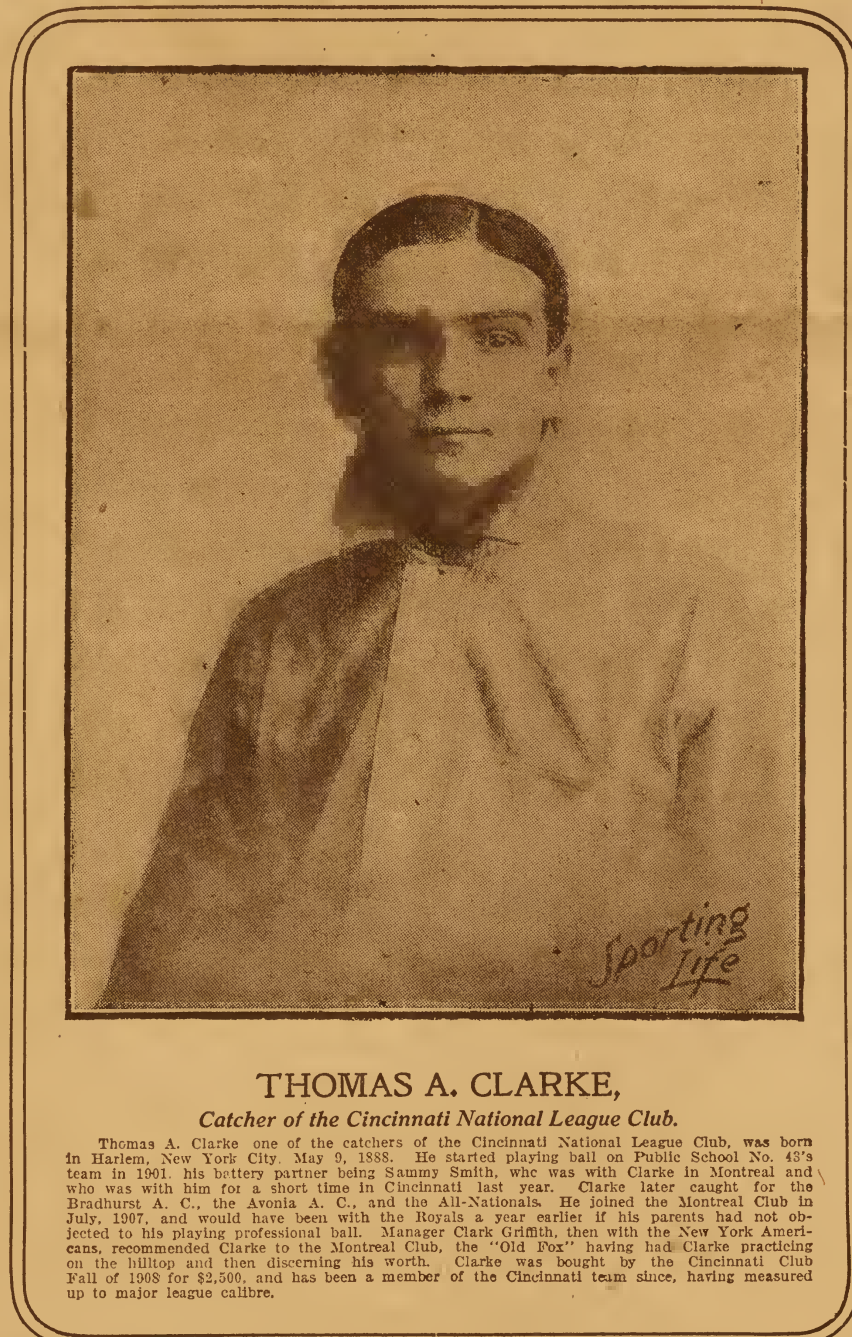
"Night base ball, played in Chicago last night for the first time, proved a great success. Over 2,000 'fans' gathered at the new White Sox park and watched the Logan Square and the Rogers Park teams go through nine innings of excellent ball under the glare of twenty 137,000 candle-power arc lights that made the diamond as bright as midday. As the first game proved such a success it is expected arrangements will be made to have regular games, which announcement will be greeted with delight by the many thousands of day workers who are now able to see the ball games only on odd Sundays. The park has been fitted for night games in case the first event proved a success.

A REAL GAME.

"Logan Square defeated the Rogers Park team by a score of 3 to 0. Up to the eighth inning the score stood 1 to 0. Heavy hitting at the end of the game brought the other two tallies in. Few errors were made, no more than in a regular game, and the score proved that night ball is possible. Ten of the big arc lamps are placed on the ground and the other ten on the top of the big grand stand. The ground lights are fixed to throw the light upward and the top lamps vice versa. By this method 'fly balls' and 'grounders' or 'liners' are equally discernible and can be seen as plain at midnight as during any part of the day.

THE CAHILL LIGHTS

are placed four back of first base, the same number back of third, two in left field, two in center and the same number in right field. All of the lamps are screened by a strip of black cloth, which keeps the glare out of the eyes of the players. The screening also throws a shadow across the diamond, between the outfield and where the infield stops. The lamp is known as the Cahill flaming arc. One of the difficulties experienced last night was in the small amount of voltage. Under the present condition but 50 per cent. of the required amount of 'juice' was obtainable. For this reason two or three times during the evening the field was in semi-darkness. The defect



THOMAS A. CLARKE,

Catcher of the Cincinnati National League Club.

Thomas A. Clarke one of the catchers of the Cincinnati National League Club, was born in Harlem, New York City, May 9, 1888. He started playing ball on Public School No. 43's team in 1901, his better partner being Sammy Smith, who was with Clarke in Montreal and who was with him for a short time in Cincinnati last year. Clarke later caught for the Bradhurst A. C., the Avonia A. C., and the All-Nationals. He joined the Montreal Club in July, 1907, and would have been with the Royals a year earlier if his parents had not objected to his playing professional ball. Manager Clark Griffith, then with the New York Americans, recommended Clarke to the Montreal Club, the "Old Fox" having had Clarke practicing on the hilltop and then discerning his worth. Clarke was bought by the Cincinnati Club Fall of 1908 for \$2,500, and has been a member of the Cincinnati team since, having measured up to major league calibre.

will be remedied before the next game is played.

GOOD BALL PLAYED.

"Sensational catches were made, one-handed 'pick-ups' were the rule, and the catcher had a 'whip' that was as efficient at night as during a day game. In the beginning the different pitchers' speed caused a few passed balls, but as the game went on the backstop grew more accustomed to the light and no further errors were made. All the requisites of a regular day game were there: 'Get your

hot buttered popcorn,' 'soda-pop' and the 'fine cigars' man were there. The fans appeared pleased with the innovation and but for the darkness in the areaway it might have been taken for a day game. Hanson and Slight were the battery for the Logan Square team, while Alquist and McDonough handled the sphere for the Rogers Park nine. Base ball at night has been tried in Cincinnati and Los Angeles, but not with the success that attended the first game in Chicago, according to George F. Cahill, the electrical contractor,

Which Will Have Far-Reaching, and Possibly Revolutionary, Effect on the National Game

who fitted up the parks in the other cities for night games."

SOME TEMPORARY HANDICAPS.

Since the publication of the above account we have received some inside details regarding this remarkable experiment which make it absolutely certain that, with the elimination of certain handicaps almost unavoidable in a first experiment, the absolute practicability of night base ball is assured. Our reliable informant writes: "In the first place, 12 of the 20 men who operated the lamps had never run one before. Inventor Cahill had them out for a little practice in the afternoon, but he had absolutely no chance to select the good from the bad, and they were men who never handled lamps of any kind before. Their handling of the lamps, therefore, was very poor and the light obtained much inferior to what should have been produced. All this was due to inability of the union to furnish us men enough in time. Also the voltage was very low, so that even skillful men could not have obtained nearly as much light as the lamps produce on proper voltage. Further, the players had never been out for

A MOMENT'S PRACTICE

under the altered light conditions. Notwithstanding all this, the practice before the game was splendid, every kind of difficult play being executed with ease and certainty. In fact, Mr. Comiskey said the day after the game that the work of the center fielder in practice was as brilliant as anything he had ever seen in all his life. The play in the first of the game was equally fine. Then a fuse went out and with it just half of the 20 lamps. From that time fully three-quarters of the game was played with only ten lamps. This, of course, was a great disappointment to Mr. Cahill, but was no fault of his system—back of his system on the main supply line. Of the game, I think it may be said, the pitchers

TOOK IT RATHER EASY.

They had played a regular game that afternoon and were also billed for the next afternoon; the batting was free and the fielding was really fine—some of it of the most brilliant order. You can see that, with comparatively easy pitching, the fielding must have been good to keep the score down to 3 to 0. Just why the pitchers took it easy I do not know, for they certainly had light enough. The "sky" was abundantly lighted and the way those balls floated in the light was something beautiful. The ball was plainly visible from every part of the great grand stand at all times—in fact, the wise Mr. Comiskey viewed the game from the very furthest box in the grand stand."

Made His Last Hit.

Charleston, S. C., August 13.—The gloom of sadness was cast over Hampton Park last Saturday afternoon, when Rott, of the Navy, was seen to cross home, turn and fall. He was heard to say, "Oh, my heart!" and poor Rott breathed his last. Rott was a bugler from the Navy. His home was in Louisville, Ky., where he will be buried.