

Converted To Baseball

Hater of the Game Taken In Hand by Cupid

By CLARISSA MACKIE

"Baseball!" cried Bertha Wyatt scornfully. "I hate the very name of the game."

"What's the matter with baseball?" demanded her brother Bob.

"Baseball again," said Bertha cryingly. "Just imagine giving an entire page to sports, something no one is interested in, and then cutting the fashion page to half its usual size."

"It's the best news and the best sport there is," declared her brother, rising from the hammock. "If you'd only come up to the field, Bertha, and see a game you'd change your mind."

"I don't want to change my mind," said his sister coldly.

Bob put on his cap and went whistling down the path to the gate, where he waited for the big stage which was to convey the Pomeroy nine to High Hill field. The nine from the hotel would probably come up in fast driving motorcars.

The stage stopped, and Bob was added to its yelling passengers. Then the cries died away with the creaking of the stage, and all was very quiet. It was very dull and lonely there now that Bob had gone. Most of Bertha's friends were baseball enthusiasts.

"Have you ever seen a game?" asked Stratton eagerly.

"No, and I never want to," said Bertha warmly. "While I exonerate you from carelessness, for I am afraid I am trespassing here, I've always been afraid of being struck by a stray ball, and now—" She hesitated, and he finished the sentence with a laugh behind his brown eyes.

"And now it has happened at last," he said solemnly.

She laughed in spite of the sickening pain that suddenly attacked her.

"Now it has happened," she repeated. Stratton stood aside, to allow her to pass by. He had a tall, well knit figure clad in a baseball suit of spotless white with crimson letters across the breast. Bertha's swift glance from under her long lashes took in the fine figure, the handsome bronzed face above it and the careless mop of chestnut hair tossed back from a nice forehead. What a delightful man he might be to know if he wasn't so devoted to that wretched baseball, she thought.

As she nodded a farewell and called the dog to heel she heard the voice of Jim calling from the field:

"Two o'clock, Hilary Stratton! Game called at 3, you know."

"Coming!" yelled Stratton, but when Bertha turned at the bend of the road and looked back he was still standing there watching her, and his hand went up to the place where his cap ought to have been.

When Bertha reached the main road she saw that, according to a white painted sign at the entrance of the private road, she had been trespassing on the property of S. H. Stratton, which, the sign said, was "strictly forbidden under penalty of the law."

"I've suffered the penalty," murmured Bertha as she realized her ruined neck and surveyed her ruined sunshade. "How I hate that silly game, and yet—he did look handsome in that uniform. I wonder if he's going to play this afternoon."

Just as she reached home her sister, Mrs. Brooke, whirled up to the gate in the day runabout that was the delight of her heart. Anna Brooke leaned from the car and called to her sister:

"Any use asking you to come to the ball game, Bertha?"

Bertha hesitated and Tom Brooke laughed good naturedly, quite misunderstanding the sudden confusion in the girl's face. "Never mind, Bertha; we knew you wouldn't come. We asked you out of politeness anyway. Too bad, though, you can't get up an interest in the national game. You'll be awfully lonesome through life if you don't!"

"Stop teasing the child, Tom," protested his wife. "If she doesn't want to go, never mind. Goodby, dearie."

"I do want to go," announced Bertha suddenly. "Perhaps I really ought to see a game before I decide—a good game, you know," she explained with flushed cheeks as they helped her into the rumble seat.

"This will be a good game, all right, with Hilary Stratton pitching for the hotel boys. I tell you, girls, Pomeroy'll get swatted today all right."

"Who is Hilary Stratton?" asked Bertha in a very small voice. And then her sister and brother-in-law proceeded to enlighten her.

She learned that Stratton was the son of an iron king who had recently bought a thousand acres of Pomeroy land and erected a fine house thereon. She also learned that Hilary, the only son, was a baseball enthusiast. He had pitched for his college nine, and his reputation was country wide. No, he was not a professional player. He was in business with his father, but he played occasionally now, and today he was to play for the hotel boys.

Bertha was very silent, but not unhappy. She had learned a great deal about baseball that afternoon, and she was destined to learn more about that game and another game of which she knew not the first rudiments.

It was a great afternoon. It was a glorious contest, but the most astonishing thing was that when the hotel boys batted the Pomeroy out of the game and Bertha Wyatt tried to sympathize with her brother she failed to feel anything but pride in the deep chested Stratton, who afterward came up to talk to Tom Brooke and was introduced to his little sister-in-law.

"A deadly foe to the national game," said Tom jocosely. "Nevertheless I detected her shamelessly rooting for your side, Mr. Stratton."

Hilary Stratton scarcely concealed his surprise at sight of Bertha Wyatt, but he asked after her injury and begged to replace the broken sunshade with another one. But Bertha shook her sunny head.

"It would make me feel lots better," he urged. "A red and white parasol"—Those were his colors, and Bertha tried to look unconscious of the fact as she gently refused it.

If Stratton was surprised to see the fair hater of baseball there, her brother Bob was "clean flabbergasted," as he expressed it.

"What in thunder came over you?" he demanded suspiciously. He turned to the others and added triumphantly: "I talked to her like a Dutch uncle about it, and I believe I've converted her. I wish your first game hadn't witnessed our licking!"

Before the summer was ended Bertha Wyatt became the greatest baseball "fan" in Pomeroy. She could discourse in the language of the diamond in a manner that compelled her brother Bob's outspoken admiration, but after awhile Bob ceased to flatter himself that he had been the one to convert his pretty sister. It was plain to every one that Hilary Stratton was heels over head in love with Bertha and that they were both learning the little game in which Cupid is the umpire and love always wins.

MATTY TELLS ONE ON UMPIRE EMSLIE.

Veteran National League Umpire Bob Emslie is very sensitive about the lack of hair on top of his dome, and Christy Mathewson tells an amusing story in connection with it. Emslie was umpiring in New York one day, and the Giants were playing St. Louis. A wild pitch hit Emslie over the heart, and he wilted down, unconscious. The players gathered around him, and Bresnahan, who was catching for St. Louis at the time, started to help Bob.

Suddenly the old umpire came to and started to fight off his first aid to the injured corps. No one could understand his attitude as he struggled to his feet and strolled away by himself, staggering a little and apparently dizzy. At last he came back and gamely finished the business of the day.

"I never knew why he fought with the men who were trying to help him until several weeks later, when we were playing in Pittsburgh," says Mathewson. "As I came out from under the stand Emslie happened to be making an entrance."

"Say, Matty," he asked me, "that time in New York did my wig come off? Did Bresnahan take my wig off?"

"No, Bob," I replied. "He was only trying to help you."

"I thought maybe he took it off while I was out and showed me up before the crowd," he apologized.

"Listen, Bob," I said. "I don't believe there is a player in either league who would do that now, and if any youngster tried it he would probably be licked."

"I'm glad to hear you say that, Matty," answered the old man as he poked up his wind pad and prepared to go to work. And he called more bad ones on me that day than he ever had in his life before, but I never mentioned that wig."

PICKS UP ANOTHER WALSH.

Frank Chance Enthusiastic Over Young Pitcher Larry Cheney.

The Chicago National league fans believe Manager Chance has discovered a second Ed Walsh in Spittballer Larry Cheney, who has shown up well this season. Among those who are loud in singing his praises is Johnny Evers.

"This Cheney is a smart pitcher," he said. "Unless I miss my guess the Cubs are going to have an Ed Walsh in him. That's what we need—a Walsh. Give us one like the mighty southsider and we'll romp home with the pennant and the world's title."

"Cheney, though not quite as large as Walsh, has the same effective spitball and the same dazzling speed. His control is not quite as good as Walsh's, but that will come with experience. I think their deliveries are almost identical. They pitch with the same motion, wet, or fall to wet the ball in the same deceptive way and are almost in the same position when the ball leaves their hands for the plate. Cheney's splitter has as big a jump as Walsh's, and the batters miss is just as far when Larry has it going right. Watch Cheney."

AD WOLGAST WEALTHY.

Lightweight Champion Worth \$137,000. Looking For Matches.

Ad Wolgast, the lightweight pugilist champion, is deploring the fact that, even though he has \$137,000 in cash and securities, he has not made more in the two years he has held the championship.

"It will be different from now on," said Wolgast. "If I whip Rivers July 4 I am going to do some redhot campaigning. I'll box McFarland, Wells, Brown, Mehegan and Mandot before next Christmas. These fights should bring me big money, and you bet I will save the coin. No more throwing away dollars for me."

"Rivers is a good boy, but I'll lick him, sure. I know all about his style. He is a fast and hard puncher, but none too speedy on his feet."

"After the Rivers fight I'll take on the bunch as fast as they come at me. I'll never retire so long as I hold the title, but will keep on fighting until I get a kick that lands me on the floor. I don't believe in a champion retiring."

FORTUNE FOR FIRST SACKER.

Montreal Team Wants \$10,000 For Youngster Gandil.

Manager Griffith of the Washington Americans has given up all hope of landing Gandil, the star first baseman of the Montreal team. Scout Kahoe, who looked the youngster over this spring, believes him to be one of the best ball players in the league, but because of the efforts that other clubs are making to secure him his price has soared so high that there is hardly a chance for Washington to compete for his release.

The Chicago National league club will most likely land Gandil, and it will be at a figure near to \$10,000 and several players, but it is doubtful if this deal will be made before the fall. Montreal is anxious to retain Gandil as long as possible.

Catcher Lapp In Good Form. Lapp of the Athletics will be hard to beat for catching honors this year. He is throwing like a shot.

FIRE SALE! OF VALUABLE HARDWARE AT ERK BROS.

The following articles, which is a partial list of goods for sale, are in good condition and have been reduced about one-half of the original price:

First column original, second sale price:

Nails	50c to \$1.50 per keg
Paint	\$2.10 at \$1.25 per gal.
Hinges	6c per lb. at 3c per lb.
Locks	30—15 cts. each
Wash Basins	10—05 cts. each
Axes	15—06 cts. each
Milk Pans	35—07 cts. each
Galvanized Pails	15—75 cts. each
Sweeping Compound	25c. pkg.—15c.
Nickel Tea and Coffee Pots	\$1.25—65c each
Hammers and Hatchets	60—35 each
Leather half soles	20—10 per pr.
Belting at greatly reduced prices.	
Doors	\$2.10—50c each
Heating Stoves	\$20.00—\$10.00 each
Meat Choppers	\$2.00—1.25 each
Wood Measures	35c—10c each
Metal Polish	50c—30c can
Files	15c—07 each
Screws	original price
Pocket Knives	60c—25c each
Razors	\$2.50—\$1.00 each
Padlocks	40c—15c each
Bathroom Fixtures at greatly reduced prices.	
Rope	12 1-2—Se lb.
Poultry Supplies at greatly reduced prices.	
Bolts, at greatly reduced prices.	
Furniture Polish	35c—15c bottle
Varnish Stains at greatly reduced prices.	
Shot Guns at greatly reduced prices.	
Hunting Coats	\$2.25—1.25 each
Shot Gun Shells	60c—40c box
Carving Sets	\$3.50—\$1.50 set
Saw Clamps	\$1.00—60c each
Saw Sets	75c—50
Mrs. Pott's Sad Irons	\$1.15—85c
Asbestos Irons	\$1.75—\$1.25
Kalsomine Brushes	\$1.00—40c
Ax and All Kinds Hdls. at greatly reduced prices.	
Barn Door Hangers	75c—40c
Stove Clay	35c to 25c per pkg.
Stove Clay	25c to 15c. per pkg.
Stove Clay	15c to 08c per pkg.
Fishing Tackle at greatly reduced prices.	
Steel Traps	35c—20c
Bread Mixers	\$2.00—\$1.25
Stewart Clipping Machines, original price \$7.50; sale price	\$5.50

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Menner & Co's Stores



"BY JOVE!" EXCLAIMED A DISMAYED VOICE, "DID THAT BALL HIT YOU?"

asts and might have been found wending their way toward High Hill that lovely summer afternoon.

After awhile Bertha laid aside the embroidery she had attempted and decided to go for a walk. She started down the road leading to the bay, and just before reaching it turned aside and walked under the tall oaks.

The trees grew thinner, and there was the glimpse of an open field beyond on which several forms were moving about. Bertha looked once and retreated, but she was too late to escape the stinging blow of the flying ball. It struck her sunshade and, breaking through the thin silken texture, stunned her for an instant with its impact against her neck.

With a little cry she sank in a heap on the ground and leaned her head against a brown tree trunk.

She did not hear eager footsteps approaching in search of the missing ball, which now lay at her feet beside the ruined sunshade.

"By Jove!" exclaimed a dismayed voice. "Did that ball hit you? I hope you are not hurt."

Bertha looked up with startled eyes and lips from which pain had driven all the color. She still felt a little dazed from the severe blow which she had received from the ball, and so she did not answer at once.

"I am afraid you are badly hurt," he persisted anxiously. "If you feel like telling me just where?"

"It struck me right here," said Bertha with an effort. "It made me dizzy for a moment, but I shall be all right again. Down, Ponto!" for the big dog was licking the softly rounded neck with his pink tongue.

"I'm very sorry," the stranger was beginning when a manly voice came from the ball ground beyond and cut his words short.

"Say, Stratton, if you can't find that ball, Dicky has another one here."

"All right, Jim; I'll be there in a moment. I've got the ball. Keep cool." And then to Bertha he resumed: "Shall I send you home? I can have a car up from the garage in three minutes."

"No, thank you. I feel quite recovered now," assured Bertha as she arose to her feet and picked up her parasol.

"Did the ball do that?" asked Stratton, pointing to the ragged hole in the silk covering.

"Yes, but you needn't feel bad about it—it's an old one," laughed Bertha, calling Ponto from his chase of a bright eyed squirrel. "The incident has only confirmed my bad opinion of baseball," she added.

The young man's face lengthened. "You don't care for the game?" he asked.

"Why, it's the greatest game ever!"

"So my brother Bob thinks, but I don't think I should be interested in it at all."