

SUCCESS OF THE LEAGUE IS UP TO THE FANS

**Will the Many Hardships Endured by the Promoters
Be Acknowledged?**

AT THE TURNSTILE?

By Dave Wyatt

If as recent as two seasons ago a fan ventured to say that Bill Francis, Whitworth, Hill and Oscar Charleston would pass to other clubs without a vast protest on the part of owners and fans, he would have been recommended to the madhouse. Yet in this brief period the American Giants' greatest pitcher, one of their most wonderful infielders, and their most sensational outfielder have passed on to other fields of endeavor. Salvos of indignation may be fired at your uncle "Rube," but no doubt he justified his stand.

Foster has made more sacrifices for the good of the game than all the managers together, who at present constitute the personnel of owners and all those who may come. During the eleven or more years that he has headed a club the Chicago manager has been the chief benefactor to a few hundred players and promoters who have basked in the sunshine of baseball popularity at various times. He has been with player and owners alike, as well as the fans.

Congenial and Considerate

Foster broke up one of the greatest playing machines of all time that baseball has known upon a firm basis in Detroit. And sighting the necessity of organization, he decided to advance a few strides farther in the game of sacrifice. When the idea of a foundation for a Colored baseball league was conceived its sponsors at once hearkened to the popular demand for a circuit as evenly balanced in playing strength as was possible. It was seen that success could only be attained by the distribution of players

so that each club in the circuit could at least acquire one, two or three players of such established prestige that it would at once arouse the interest of the public through the various cities to a point where there could be no possible doubt of a complete evolution of antiquated ideas into a full realization of modern methods of baseball government.

Vicissitudes and Operation

Foster has been the rock against which many a wave of adversity has been dashed to nothingness. He has weathered the storm of fierce criticism; he has sailed smoothly over the

many obstacles that the combined power of his adversaries had placed in his path. For the season of 1920 he is facing his greatest triumph, a realization of a life's dream. But his hopes are not fully realized. True, all of his former foes are gleefully parading under his baseball banner. But what of the fans—will they harken unto the call of organization, and with the high cost of operation, as well as

the high cost of existence, will they keep the mechanism of the turnstile lubricating and shining?

The American Giants' park is operated upon a basis that makes it entirely different from any similar field in the country. The cost of operation will equal, if not surpass, many of the high class minor league plants. Reduction in baseball has reached such an advanced stage that many of the other leagues are cutting off the bleacher accommodations altogether, while those who retain a few seats in the sun sections are negotiating an increase in admission of former seasons.

Baseball paraphernalia, salaries and incidentals necessary to operation have about doubled in cost in the past few seasons. Travel and food, as well as sleeping accommodations, are extremely menacing to an owner's pocketbook. Therefore, it would appear that in those cities where conditions warrant it, and where as we learn that extensive and elaborate plans for the accommodation of the fans are in the making, if the new venture in baseball

is to be a success, 'increase' in the price of admission must be met by the public; for with the clubs playing to crowded stands on one day of the week and to practically empty seats the other days, the overhead expense of the league operation cannot be met with any amount of satisfaction to the owners. No doubt whatever exists over the fans' desire for good, fast, clean baseball, and if they are to operate with the men who are making such things possible, they will soon be in a position to allow the fact to be known by qualifying for such admission as the promoters deem just and fair and their acquiescence in that respect will go a long way in the forging of a strong link in the chain of cities that are to form the Negro National Baseball League.

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