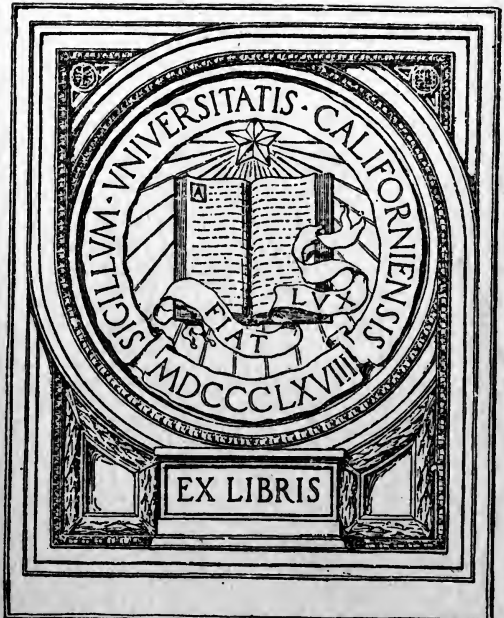
Foresters and the Horsham Park Eleven. From the accompanying description we learn that the Foresters made 109 runs in their first innings, and 136 in their second, while their fielding and bowling were so exceedingly good that their opponents were put out for sixty runs in their first and sixteen in their second innings. The bats used were small wooden instruments, like a battledore or racket, only with rather shorter handles, while the ball was a full-sized tennis. Balls had to be bowled underhand and full pitch.

A large gathering of the neighbouring gentry assembled to witness the match, which excited the greatest interest. "The two elevens were dressed in picturesque uniforms of light blue and pink, and the beautiful grounds adjoining the house were gaily decorated with flags. The whole formed a most striking scene." With such allurements the great chances are that not a few recreant cricketers may find the parent more enjoyable than the child, may desert cricket, and, like Richard in Shadwell's "Woman Captain," resolve that for the future they "will play at stool-ball with the maids."

Certain correspondents of *Notes and Queries*, some time ago were disposed to hold that the obsolete game of stob-ball was another variety of the principle of cricket. Very little is known about this old game, but from the glimpses we do get of it in old authors it seems to have been akin to golf rather than to cricket. There are two allusions to it in the Berkeley MSS. (1618), published by Mr. T. D. Fosbrooke in 1821, one in which the writer only records that the "Earl of Leicester, with an extraordinary number of attendants, and multitudes of country people that resorted to him, came to Wotton, and thence to Michaelwood Lodge, casting downe part of the pales which, like a little parke, then enclosed that lodge, and thence went to Wotton Hill, where hee played a match at stoball;" while, in the other, the writer most tantalisingly refrains from describing the game, on the plea that it is so well known. "The large and levell playnes of Slimbridge, Warth, and others,

in the vale of this hundred," he writes, "and downes or hilly playnes of Stinchcombe, Westridge, Tickraydinge, and others in the hilly or Coteswold part, doe witnes the inbred delight that both gentry, yeomanry, rascallity, boyes and children doe take in a game called stoball, the play whereat each child of twelve yeares old can (I suppose) as well describe as myselfe: and not a sonne of mine but at seven was furnished with his double stoball staves and a gamester thereat." Aubrey, however, in his "Natural History of Wiltshire," gives us a sufficiently minute account of the pastime to show that cricket owes no part of its play to stob-ball. "This game is peculiar to North Wilts, North Gloucestershire, and a little part of Somerset, near Bath," says he. "They strike a ball stuffed very hard with quills and covered with soale leather as big as a bullet (elsewhere he says this ball is of about four inches in diameter), with a staffe commonly made of withy, about three and a halfe feet long. Colemdowne is the place so famous and so frequented for stob-ball playing. The turfe is very fine and the rock freestone is within an inch and half of the surface, which gives the ball so quick a rebound. . . . I doe not heare that this game is used anywhere in England, but in this part of Wiltshire and Gloucestershire adjoining." There appears to be no vestige of this old game left in those counties now. Stob-ball in Tothill Fields is one of the games of England enumerated by Locke in 1679.

In a curious book published in 1706, "The Scotch Rogue: The Life and Actions of Donald Macdonald, a Highland Scot," the vagabond hero tells us he was fond of "cat and dog," an old form of cricket once very popular in certain parts of Scotland. "I was but a sorry proficient in learning," he writes, "being readier at cat and dog . . . wrestling, and foot-ball, and such other sports as we use in our country, than at my book." Dr. Jamieson says that this game was chiefly played in Angus and Lothian, and that at the very least three players are required, who are furnished with clubs. They cut out two holes,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PASTIMES

AND

PLAYERS

BY

ROBERT MACGREGOR, F.S.A. Scot.

London

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

1881

Inscribed

TO THE

REV. ALEXANDER MACGREGOR, M.A.

OF INVERNESS.

CONTENTS.

NOTE.

The groundwork of these sketches of the earlier history of some British pastimes was a set of magazine articles published in "Belgravia" and other periodicals. These papers, in their present form, have been carefully revised, partly rewritten, and have had much new matter added to them.

PASTIMES AND PLAYERS.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY FORMS OF CRICKET.

THOUGH the earliest mention of our national English game by its modern name of "cricket" occurs no further back than the reign of Elizabeth, it is quite clear that Britons batted and bowled away merrily long before the days of the Virgin Queen, though they called their pastime by other names.

The name, of course, is of minor importance, if the principle of the games can be proved to be the same, as nothing is more common than to find a pastime with many different names, according to the place where it is played. Thus, "rounders" is still the same good old English game, though Edinburgh street boys call it "dully," and our American cousins have elevated it into their national game under the name of "base-ball." So with our game: and the only question is whether the identity of cricket with "club-ball," "stool-ball," and the other names we shall notice below, can be proved as clearly as that of, say, rounders with base-ball, or hockey with shinty and hurling. This question may easily be answered in the affirmative.

Before entering, then, on the history of our great game under its present name, let us glance at some of these old pastimes, and see if we can find in them the rude beginnings from which the scientific game of to-day has been built up.

According to Strutt, club-ball was the earliest name for the game. It was popular enough in the reign of Edward III. to be included under its Latin name of *Pila bacculorea* in his proclamation against football, handball, and other pastimes specified, which unduly occupied the attention of the people, to the great detriment of their military exercises, and especially of archery. Strutt, however, has not noticed a paragraph in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1788, where Sylvanus Urban draws attention to perhaps the earliest allusion to the game under a name curiously like "cricket." "In the wardrobe account of the 28th year of King Edward I., A.D. 1300 (page 126), published in 1787 by the Society of Antiquaries, among the entries of money paid to one Mr. John Leek, his chaplain, for the use of that King's son, Prince Edward, in playing at different games, is the following:—'Domino Johanni de Leek, capellano Domini Edwardi fil' Regis, pro den' per ipsum liberat' eidem Domino suo ad ludendum ad CREAG' et alios ludos per vices, per manus proprias 100 Sh.'" Glossaries, the writer says, have been searched in vain for any other pastime, except cricket, to which the name "creag" can apply; and it is allowable for us to say that, even in these early times, our game was played by some of the highest personages in the kingdom, and that, too, under a name from which its modern appellation is most probably derived.

No written description of the mode of play in club-ball or creag exists, but we can get a clear enough idea of it from engravings in two old manuscripts. The earliest of these representations of the pastime is in a genealogical roll of the Kings of England down to Henry III.—"Chronique d'Angleterre depuis Ethelberd jusqu'à Henri III."—in the royal library. It is a delineation of two male figures playing a game with a bat and ball. The batsman holds the ball in one hand, while in the other he has his bat held perpendicularly, as if about to strike the ball: the other player is drawn with both arms extended, as if eagerly anxious and watchful for a catch.

The bat is straight and broadest at the point, from which it gradually tapers to the handle. It is quite probable that the holding of the ball by the batsman was only a conventional way of showing its existence adopted by the artist, if he found it desirable to omit, or difficult to introduce, the bowler (who, as we shall see, appears in the other MS.); indeed, in another drawing in this same chronicle, the artist has only delineated a batsman and a female fielder, and has left out the ball as well as the bowler. Very similar illustrations of boys playing games with bat and ball are to be found in the MS. Book of Decretals, made about this time for Rayer's Priory of St. Bartholomew, close to the great playground of the Londoners of that period; on which, no doubt, the friar who illuminated the gay volume witnessed all the merry sports he has thus depicted for the benefit of future ages.

A much more complete representation of a club-ball match in the latter days of the Plantagenets is given in a drawing in the "Romance of the good King Alexander," a manuscript in the Bodleian Library, dated 1344. Here we have a batsman, a bowler, and four fielders, who are all monks, which proves that the game was one held in favour by Mother Church as well as by the Court.

Strutt, indeed, has taken the bowler and some of the fielders to be women, but it is more likely that they are monks with their cowls up. However this may be, in the drawing we have a capital delineation of a single-wicket game, the bowler poising the ball with outstretched arm, as if in the act of bowling it to the batsman, who holds his long and slightly-curved bat raised vertically in the air, ready for a hit; while behind the bowler are the fielders, with their hands raised, waiting to catch or stop the ball when hit by the batsman, and all looking very eager for a "chance." This seems quite satisfactory proof that the principle of this old game was, at least, closely akin to that of cricket; and though no stumps appear in either of these drawings, this is rather an additional

proof of the practical identity of the games than otherwise, for it is quite clearly proved that wickets are a very recent addition to cricket, and that, as we shall see, in the infancy of the game the batsman stood before a circular hole in the turf, and was put out, as in "rounders," by being caught, or by the ball being put into this hole. A century and a half ago this hole was still in use, though it had on each side a stump only one foot high, with a long cross-bar of two feet in length laid on the top of them — what Mr. Frederick Gale calls a "skeleton hurdle of about two feet wide and one foot high."

An old game, called "handyn and handoute," is supposed to have been another form of what was destined to develop into the scientific cricket of modern times; but the only authority for this conjecture appears to be contained in this extract from Daines Barrington's "Observations on the more Ancient Statutes," when commenting on King Edward IV.'s law against unlawful games, in 1477: — "The disciplined soldiers were not only guilty of pilfering on their return, but also of the vice of gaming. The third chapter therefore forbids playing at cloish, ragle, half-bowle, queke-borde, handyn and handoute. Whosoever shall permit these games to be played in their house or yard is punishable with three years' imprisonment: those who play at any of the said games are to be fined £10, or lie in jail two years. This is the most severe law ever made in any country against gaming; and some of those forbidden seem to have been manly exercises, particularly the 'handyn and handoute,' which I should suppose to be a kind of cricket, as the term 'hands' is still (1766) retained in that game." This is meagre evidence enough to connect this prohibited pastime with cricket, but nothing more seems to be known about it.

Strutt makes no attempt to describe this game, but merely notes that it was spoken of as a new game, and forbidden by King Edward's severe statute.

Even though we have to give up the case of handyn and

handoute for lack of evidence, we find ample amends when we turn to the next of our progenitors of cricket, the merry old game of stool-ball, in which lads and lasses used to join on their village greens in the "good olden time," and which still exists in some of the southern counties as a special game for women.

Its season seems to have been very much that of cricket nowadays, though perhaps it was more especially a game for spring and early summer: thus, in Poor Robin's Almanac for 1677, in the observations on April, we find against Easter Monday and Tuesday a note that

> Young men and maids,
> Now very brisk,
> At barley-break and
> Stool-ball frisk;

while in the same almanac for 1740 we are told that when the merry month of May has come,

> Much time is wasted now away
> At pigeon-holes and nine-pin play;
> Whilst hob-nailed Dick and simpering Frances
> Trip it away in country dances;
> At stool-ball and at barley-break,
> Wherewith they harmless pastime make.

It was a common thing for the lads and lasses to play at stool-ball during the Easter holidays for tansy cakes, a prize which Selden, in his "Table Talk," conceives to have originated from the Jewish custom of eating bitter herbs at the time of the Passover. Among the many writers of the last two centuries who allude to stool-ball, several notice this custom, as Herrick does in these lines from his "Hesperides":

> At stool-ball, Lucia, let us play,
> For sugar-cakes and wine;
> Or for a tansie let us pay,
> The losse be thine or mine.

If thou, my deere, a winner be
At trundling of the ball,
The wager thou shalt have, and me,
And my misfortunes all.

This custom, however, does not appear to have been confined to Easter-tide, or, at any rate, this pleasant little fillip to flagging interest was soon extended to summer games, for in Tom D'Urfey's play of "The Comical History of Don Quixote," acted at Dorset Gardens in 1694, occur these lines:

Down in a vale, on a summer's day,
All the lads and lasses met to be merry;
A match for kisses at stool-ball to play,
And for cakes and ale, and cider and perry.
Chorus. Come all, great, small, short, tall, away to stool-ball.

Though the frequent allusions to stool-ball in the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries testify to its great popularity among the lower orders, we might have been at a loss to know how it was played if it were not that it still is played in Sussex, and that local tradition seems to have preserved the old rules of the game. Dr. Johnson, indeed, tells us, in his dictionary, that it was a game where balls were driven from stool to stool, but he contents himself with this meagre definition, and does not go any deeper into the mysteries of stool-ball. Strutt never saw the game played, though he tells us that he was informed "that a pastime called stool-ball is practised to this day in the northern parts of England, which consists in simply setting a stool upon the ground, and one of the players takes his place before it, while his antagonist, standing at a distance, tosses a ball with the intention of striking the stool; and this it is the business of the former to prevent by beating it away with the hand, reckoning one to the game for every stroke of the ball; if, on the contrary, it should be missed by the hand, and touch the stool, the players change places." Strutt's stool-ball, however, is rather "rounders" than cricket, for he goes on to say that sometimes

a certain number of stools are set up in a circular form, and at a distance from each other, and that at each stroke of the ball the players stationed at the stools must run in succession from stool to stool, being put out if hit by the ball or caught out.

The real stool-ball, however, was and is a double-wicket game, in which the players used a kind of bat, and defended wickets, which, perhaps, originally were stools, but afterwards became two boards about a foot square, fixed on short poles from three to four feet high, according to the age of the players, and about thirteen yards from each other. Balls were bowled, runs scored, and catches made, just as in cricket. The players usually numbered from eight to eleven on each side, and the fields were placed as nearly as possible as they are in cricket. From the height of the wicket-boards, balls had necessarily to be bowled full pitch, and the striker was out if the board was hit or the ball caught.

This cheerful and exciting game appears to have been played chiefly in Sussex, and there only by the female sex. In the Sussex villages, some years ago, it was to girls what cricket is to boys. "Women's cricket," says a writer in *Notes and Queries*, "was played in almost every village of the county." It was a favourite game at fairs; at school feasts the clergymen's families and the gentry joined the girls in the game. Matches, too, were played by the ladies of one parish against those of another. The advent of croquet, however, seems to have lessened the interest taken in it then, but it is now being revived in Sussex, the initiative being taken by a ladies' club, composed of members of the principal county families near Horsham. As it is a lively and exciting game, it is surprising that it has not been taken up in other places; if it were, it would very probably run lawn-tennis hard for the pride of place once occupied by the deposed croquet.

In the *Graphic* for October 12, 1878, there is a spirited illustration of a match at stool-ball played at Horsham Park that autumn, between two county clubs of young ladies—the

Foresters and the Horsham Park Eleven. From the accompanying description we learn that the Foresters made 109 runs in their first innings, and 136 in their second, while their fielding and bowling were so exceedingly good that their opponents were put out for sixty runs in their first and sixteen in their second innings. The bats used were small wooden instruments, like a battledore or racket, only with rather shorter handles, while the ball was a full-sized tennis. Balls had to be bowled underhand and full pitch.

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each about a foot in diameter, and seven inches in depth, and twenty-six feet apart. One man guards each hole with his club. These clubs are called dogs. A piece of wood about four inches long and one inch in diameter, called a cat, is pitched by a third person from one hole towards the player at the other, who has to prevent the cat from getting into the hole. If it pitches into the hole the batsman is out, and the bowler who threw the cat takes his turn with the club. If the cat be struck, the club-bearers change places, and each change of place counts one to the score of the two who hold the clubs, who are viewed as partners.

This is manifestly a rude foreshadowing of the cricket of to-day, and if we substitute a ball for the more easily obtained piece of wood, "cat and dog" would be most probably identical with the game played by the cricketers of the end of the seventeenth century.

From all this, then, we have sufficient proof that, though cricket is hardly mentioned by its modern name before the Revolution, yet that it existed long before then under other names.

CHAPTER II.

CRICKETANA.

In our last chapter we noticed some of the earlier forms of the game that has been developed, within comparatively recent years, into the scientific cricket of to-day. Let us now glance at the annals of the game from the time we first find it alluded to under its modern name.

The earliest mention of the name carries us back to the middle of the sixteenth century. In Russell's "History of Guildford," we have an account of some legal proceedings, in 1593, in respect to "a garden withhelde from the towne." It appears that, a few years before Elizabeth began to reign, one John Parvish, an innkeeper, rented a piece of waste land in the parish of Holy Trinity, in Guildford, which he soon afterwards enclosed. He and his successors were allowed to remain in undisturbed possession of this field till 1593, when the matter was made the subject of a legal investigation, which resulted in an order that the ground should be disenclosed and laid waste again. This piece of ground is the first cricket-field known in history, as we learn from the evidence at the trial of "John Derrick, gent., one of the Queen's Majesties Coroners of the county of Sussex, aged 59." Mr. Derrick said he knew the field "for fifty years or more. It lay waste, and was used and occupyd by the inhabitants of Guldeforde to saw timber in, and for sawpits, and for makinge of frames of timber for the said inhabitants." But there was a merry corner of the little common, we may be sure as far away as possible from the timber stacks and sawpits, and there the Guildford

schoolboys had their cricket-ground. Mr. Derrick says: "When he was a scholler in the free school of Guldeforde he and severall of his fellowes did runne and play there at *crickett* and other plaies; and also that the same was used for the baytinge of beares in the said towne, until the said John Parvish did inclose the said parcell of land."

This, of course, proves that "cricket" as a name for one game was in use at this period; but it is quite clear that for a very long time after this neither name nor pastime was very popular in England. While there are many allusions to football, tennis, bowls, and other sports in Shakespeare and his brother dramatists, they are all silent about the national game of the future. Mr. Pycroft cites in support of this the Rev. John Mitford and Mr. Payne Collier, who say that they have never met with any mention of cricket in any dramatist earlier than 1685. No notice is taken of it in the lists of English games given us by King James I., by Burton in the "Anatomy of Melancholy," or by Locke; and Mr. Pycroft is mistaken when he says that the game is mentioned by Stow in his "Survey of London" in 1591. It is possible Stow may have meant to include cricket in his statement that "the ball is now used by noblemen and gentlemen in tennis courts and by people of the meaner sorts in the open fields and streets," but the name "cricket" does not occur in the work till Strype published his edition of the "Survey" in 1720.

In the latter part of the seventeenth century, however, we begin to come upon casual allusions to the game, but still very little to show that it had any hold upon the popular taste at all equal to that exercised by many other games. It did not come back with the King at the Restoration, because it was then too plebeian a game ever to have gone away with him, though, curiously enough, it was during the sport-abhorring rule of the Commonwealth that it gained its earliest footing in the public schools. To Winchester the credit appears to be due of bringing this about; indeed, it has been urged that

cricket was a Wykehamist game even in the days of Queen Bess; for Christopher Johnson, afterwards head-master of Winchester, wrote a Latin poem while a schoolboy there in Elizabeth's reign, describing college life there, from which we learn that the boys played at quoits, foot-ball, and a game that *may* have been cricket, thus alluded to:—"Sæpe repercusso pila te juvat icta bacillo." However this may be, cricket was established at Winchester in 1650, for Lisle Bowles, writing of Bishop Ken, says: "On the fifth or sixth day [Ken was admitted on January 13, 1650] our junior is found for the first time attempting to wield a cricket bat."

Mr. Pycroft quotes a passage from the diary of the Rev. Henry Teonge, chaplain of H.M.S. *Assistance* in the years 1675–1679, which shows that cricket was one of the games played by the English residents at Antioch at that time. "This morning early (May 16, 1676), as is the custom all the summer long, at least forty of the English, with his worship the consul, rode out of the city about four miles to a fine valley by a river side to recreate themselves. There a princely tent was pitched, and we had several pastimes and sports, as duck-hunting, fishing, shooting, handball, and *cricket*, and then a noble dinner brought thither, with great plenty of all sorts of wines, punch, and lemonade, and at six o'clock we returned all home in good order, but soundly tired and weary."

We have stated above Mr. Payne Collier's belief that no mention of cricket is made by any dramatist before 1685. In that year was published a play by Edward Phillips (a nephew of Milton), called "Mysteries of Love and Eloquence," in which one of the characters asks: "Will you not, when you have me, throw stocks at my head and say, 'Would my eyes had been beaten out of my head with a *cricket ball* the day before I saw thee'?"

As the next century advances, we find cricket emerge by degrees from the obscurity in which it has hitherto been too closely veiled. Even in the early years of the century the

frequent references to the game in prose and poetry bear witness to its growing popularity. Besides D'Urfey's Welshman Shenkin, who 'was the prettiest fellow

At football and at cricket,'

we find Swift writing that John Bull, for all his new-born serious air, "could not help discovering some remains of his nature when he happened to meet with a foot-ball or a match at cricket." Pope makes "senators at cricket urge the ball." Later on, Duncombe tells of

An ill-timed cricket match there did
At Bishopsbourne befal,

while we get a good idea of the damage suffered by cricket for a long time on account of the speculative propensities of its sporting votaries from Soame Jenyng's lines—

England, when once of peace and wealth possessed,
Began to think frugality a jest;
So grew polite: hence all her well-bred heirs
Gamesters and jockeys turned, and cricket players.

It was largely owing to bookmakers making the game more or less a means of swindling that, until the century was nearly half over, cricket was not deemed a game for gentlemen to play at, while improvements in farming, enclosure of common lands, and the clipping of many a village green, greatly retarded its spread among the country lads, whose forefathers had mainly helped to keep the old game alive. Then, all at once, it was discovered that "poor Hodge was very ignorant, reckless, vicious at times, and that church-ales and statute hirings did him actual injury; and then the gentry and clergy set heartily to work for his reformation." In their new-born zeal they overdid their crusade against the old sports, and at one time "it seemed as if England would be a sad country for the poor. Every sport was out of favour. No more trials of strength and speed; no more feats of dexterity and daring,

smiled on and encouraged by the little great ones of the parish; that was all past, and all the mirth was hole-and-corner mirth, low, blackguard, and barbarous."

It was the dark hour before the dawn. When things looked blackest, "cricket," says the writer we have quoted above, "suddenly came, like the good fairy in a pantomime, to save the nation from a slough of sottish despondency. Quite abruptly, knights, nobles, and gentlemen doffed their embroidered coats, flung aside their absurd three-cornered hats, and fell to batting and bowling as if for life and death. The game was taken up on all sides. It was one equally adapted for poor and rich; better still, it was one in which rich and poor could share. All over the land the old game, never very popular before, came into vogue and reigned supreme."

This commingling of all ranks in the cricket-field was, however, at the time looked upon with great apprehension. Sylvanus Urban quotes, in 1743, from the *British Champion* of Sept. 8 of that year, an article in which the writer seems to be as much disgusted at "lords and gentlemen, clergymen and lawyers, associating themselves with butchers and cobblers in pursuit of their diversions," as he is at the crying evils of matches being played for large stakes, and being farmed by innkeepers, who largely advertised their adventures, and were strongly suspected of all sorts of tricks to make their betting safe. The old Artillery Ground at Finsbury, the first Metropolitan cricket-ground on record, was the earliest scene of this kind of match, though it is not much more than half a century since Lord's had its bookmakers betting as openly and professionally on the game as in the ring at Epsom.

In 1748 the Court of King's Bench had before it a question of bets at cricket, when the point was whether it was a game within the meaning of the Act 9 of Anne, chapter 19. The Court held "that cricket was a game, and a very manly game too; not bad in itself, but only in the ill-use made of it by

betting more than ten pounds on it; but that was bad, and against the law."

We have seen above that cricket was played at Winchester at least as early as the Commonwealth. Eton seems to be the next school that took it up. In 1688 one of the extras in an Eton school-bill was "a ram and bat, 9*d.*" Walpole found it there when he entered Eton in 1728, though precocious Horry thought very little of it. "I can't say I am sorry I was never quite a schoolboy," he writes; "an expedition against bargemen or a match at cricket may be very pretty things to recollect, but, thank my stars, I can remember things that are very near as pretty."

When Frederick, Prince of Wales, died suddenly in 1751, many causes were given of his death; one of them, that stated by Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, makes it an accident at cricket. "Frederick, Prince of Wales, son of George II., expired suddenly in 1751, at Leicester House, in the arms of Desnoyers, the celebrated dancing-master. His end was caused by an internal abscess that had long been forming, in consequence of a blow which he received in the side from a cricket-ball, while he was engaged in playing at that game on the lawn at Cliefden House, in Buckinghamshire, where he then principally resided. Death did not take place, however, till several months after the accident, when a collection of matter burst, and instantly suffocated him."

We may see how the game was played about this time from the picture, of date 1743, in the possession of the Surrey County Club. The wicket was a "skeleton hurdle," one foot high and two feet wide, consisting of two stumps only, with a third laid across. The bat was curved at the end, and made for free hitting rather than defence. The bowling was all along the ground, and the great art was to bowl under the bat. All play was forward of the wicket, as it is now in single wicket games of less than five players a side. With these exceptions, the game was very much the same as it is to-day.

In the infancy of cricket there were no stumps at all; instead of wickets, the early players cut in the turf two circular holes, and the batsmen were put out in running, not, as now, by putting down a wicket, but by the ball being popped into this hole (whence "popping crease," says Mr. Pycroft) before the point of the bat was grounded in it. It is most probable that originally the single stump was placed at the hole to point it out to bowlers and fielders, very much as the "flags" used for this purpose at the holes in golf. In process of time, the frequent disputes as to whether bat or ball reached this hole first, as well as injuries received in the unseemly tussles, would naturally suggest that the beacon-stump should be made more useful, and that the runner should be out if this were displaced as well as by holeing the ball. It is uncertain when the second stump was added, but it was a very obvious step from a single stump to one on each side of the old block-hole. In 1700 we find Mr. Gale's "skeleton hurdle," only a foot high, though two feet wide. There was no middle stump till, in a match of the Hambledon Club, in 1775, it was observed that at a critical part of the game the ball went three times between the stumps without knocking off the bail; then a third stump was added, and by degrees inches were added to the dimensions of the wicket, till, in 1817, it attained to the size at which it has ever since remained.

In 1797 the Earl of Winchester, a good cricketer and great supporter of the game, attempted to introduce a fourth stump, that "the game might be thus rendered shorter by easier bowling out"; but nothing came of this except on one memorable occasion, when, in July, 1837, Mr. Ward proposed, as a method of equalising the Gentlemen and Players, that the former should defend wickets of twenty-seven by eight inches; the latter four stumps thirty-six by twelve. This was called the "Barn-door Match," or "Ward's Folly," and, notwithstanding the great odds against them, the Players won in a single innings by ten runs.

Undoubtedly the greatest and most pregnant innovation in

cricket was the introduction of round-arm bowling. The credit for its invention appears to be due to Tom Walker, a professional of the old Hambledon Club; but his "throwing" was pronounced unfair, and was suppressed and forgotten, till, about a quarter of a century afterwards, it was again introduced by Mr. John Willes, a Kentish amateur, who, it was said, learned the delivery from his sister, who used to throw the ball at him in practice. Mr. Willes's bowling figured in one or two great matches, notably in one on July 20, 1807, Thirteen of All England against Twenty-three of Kent, for a thousand guineas, on Penenden Heath. Kent won by 162 runs, and Willes's bowling greatly helped to bring this about.

As with Tom Walker, so with Mr. Willes. He and his bowling "were frequently barred in making a match," says Mr. Pycroft, "and he played sometimes amid much uproar and confusion. Still, he would persevere, till the ring closed in on the players, the stumps were lawlessly pulled up, and all came to a standstill."

It was not till Mr. Knight, of Alton, espoused the cause of round-arm bowling, in 1825, that it became a permanent institution, after much controversy though, and no little ridicule of the "throwing" style.

Hampshire was clearly the first county to study cricket as a science. The first cricket club in England was the famous Hambledon, which played on Broadhalfpenny and Windmill Downs, near Hambledon. This club appears to have been founded about the beginning of last century; the heyday of its prosperity was in the latter part of the century, when it had on its books most of the principal players of the kingdom, and could play and beat All England. It practically broke up in 1791, though it was kept up in name till 1825.

In London the earliest cricket fields were the Artillery Ground at Finsbury, and the White Conduit Fields. A club was formed of the players on this latter field, and from among its members in 1787 was established the Marylebone Club,

which, at an early period, seems to have set itself to discuss and formulate the laws of the game.

Among the ground bowlers of the White Conduit Club was Thomas Lord, a Scotsman, who had left Scotland on account of his Jacobite predilections. Lord, being promised support by the new M.C.C., took a piece of ground where Dorset Square now stands, and so set up the first "Lord's." When this site was needed for building purposes, Lord carried his turf to a field at South Bank, near the Regent's Park, where he remained until the cutting of the canal caused him once more to roll up his old turf and remove it to the "Lord's" of the present day. Club and ground rapidly rose into the front rank, and in those days of slow travelling, when players could not extend their circuit as they can nowadays, a lion's share of the patronage and practice of cricket was given to Lord's.

Before the immense impetus given to cricket by the railways, matches were necessarily confined very much to contests between neighbouring counties or clubs. The Hambledon Club had a caravan to take their Eleven about, and when Farnham played on Broadhalfpenny, old Beldham told the author of the "Cricket Field" that they used to ride the twenty-seven miles both ways the same day, early and late. A journey to London was the utmost expedition attempted by the players of Hants, Surrey, or Kent; and though Walpole, writing in June, 1749, says, "I could tell you of Lord Montford's making cricket matches, and fetching up persons by express from different parts of England to play on Richmond Green," this must have been a most exceptional case, and the custom of drawing members of an eleven from different parts of the kingdom, or the existence of such a peripatetic body as I Zingari, only became practicable when railways gave speedy means of communication.

The All England Eleven originated in a match played between an eleven of England, under Clarke, and twenty of Sheffield, in 1846. So much interest was excited by the match

that Clarke resolved to play with the same eleven against sides all over the country. "It will make good for cricket, and for your trade too," said he to Mr. Dark; who adds, "And sure enough, the increase of my bat and ball trade bears witness to Clarke's long-sighted speculation." The Zingari had the start of the professionals by a year, for the meeting in the Blenheim Hotel that formed the club took place in July, 1845.

The public school matches began towards the end of the last century. Eton and Westminster were the first opponents, but Westminster soon ceased to play, and Harrow took its place. Lord Byron played in the Eton-Harrow match of 1805. A correspondent of the *Daily News* recently gave in that journal the following interesting notes on this match:—"The most interesting fact about the match is Lord Byron's share in it. Now, here is a question for a new Byron Society: If Lord Byron was as hopelessly lame as Mr. Trelawny declares, where did he stand in the field? Did he 'jerk in' from short leg? Did he keep wickets? Had he anyone to run for him? Byron cannot have been a bad bat, as times went, for Harrow sent him in sixth wicket down. He followed, by a curious accident, A. Shakspeare. Byron scored (c. b. Barnard) 7 and (b. Carter) 2. We do not know that any biographer has pointed out that Byron was at least a change bowler. Shakspeare took most of the wickets, but the poet bowled Kaye clean, and some of the men who were caught may have been taken off his bowling. Could he have done this if Mr. Trelawny's account of his lameness is correct?"

The earliest Gentlemen against Players match was in 1798, when the Players gave T. Walker, Beldham, and Hammond, but even then won. The amateurs did not again enter the lists till 1821, when they were again defeated; but next year they won, though in 1823 the Players gave them such a beating that the match was abandoned for some years, and only occasionally played again with odds till, in 1841, it became regularly established as an annual event.

After this sketch of the progress of cricket from the rough pastime of Elizabethan schoolboys up to the scientific national game of to-day, it may be interesting to note some of the curiosities of the game.

Though the fair sex have got in stool-ball a species of cricket for themselves, they have frequently figured with bat and ball on the legitimate cricket-field. Southey notes a match between the Matrons and the Maids of Bury, in which the older ladies were victorious. In 1811 a female Eleven of Surrey lost a match for 500 guineas a side to eleven women of Hants, and since then several similar matches have been played.

Much more curious are these two matches, in each of which a dog took a prominent part. Lord William Lennox, in his "Celebrities I have Known," tells us that Lord Charles Kerr backed his servant James Bridger and his water spaniel "Drake" to play a match against Mr. J. Cock and Mr. Weatherell for fifty guineas a side. This novel contest came off at Holt Pond Cricketing Ground, near Farnham. "Drake's post was to field out, and as he always caught the ball at its first bound he proved himself a most excellent fieldsman. Bridger went in first and scored fifty runs. Mr. Cock made six before he was caught by Bridger. Mr. Weatherell then took his place at the wicket, and hit his first ball smartly for a run, but 'Drake' was up so much faster than he expected, stopped the ball so well, and delivered it so quickly to Bridger, that Mr. Weatherell's stumps went down without a run. Mr. Cock then gave up the match." Mr. Pycroft records a similar match on Hartfield Common, near Rickmansworth, on May 21, 1827, "between two gentlemen of Middlesex and Mr. Francis Trumper, a farmer at Harefield, who was to have the help of his dog. In the first innings of the two gentlemen they got three runs, and Mr. Trumper got three for himself and two for his dog. In their second innings the two gentlemen again got three runs, and Mr. Trumper

then going in and getting two runs, beat the two gentlemen by two wickets. Betting at starting, five to one against Mr. Trumper and his dog. The dog always stood near his master when he was bowling, and ran after the ball when struck, and returned with it in his mouth so quickly that the two gentlemen had great difficulty to run even from a long hit. The dog was a thorough-bred sheep dog."

Lord William Lennox tells of a curious match he witnessed early in the century between the one-armed and the one-legged pensioners of Greenwich Hospital. As with most matches then, it was for a heavy stake—a thousand guineas; "it took place at Montpelier Gardens, Walworth, and created much diversion, and several lost or broke their wooden walls." The one-armed players won; but on a more recent occasion, when a similar match was played at Kennington Oval, after some excellent play on both sides, the one-legged men won. They were more handy than their opponents in picking up the ball.

"The glorious uncertainty of cricket" has become proverbial: the finest teams have been dismissed many a time for less than a run apiece, but there seems to be only one instance on record of a good eleven being all out without a single run being scored. This was in a match in 1855 between Earl Winterton's Club and the Second Royal Surrey Militia, in which the military eleven did not break their "duck's egg," though they had some good bats among them who, in the next innings, scored a hundred. What made it more extraordinary was, that Challen, one of Lord Winterton's bowlers, was a fast bowler.

Fuller Pilch once bowled out eight of his antagonists for nothing, and the other three only made four runs between them. This was in a match, the Paltiswick Club against Bury, in 1824, and it is probably the second smallest score on record, though it is not nearly so wonderful as the score in one of the famous B. matches in 1810. On this occasion,

Mr. E. H. Budd was absent, and J. Wells was given to supply his place. Lord Frederick Beauclerk, Beldham, Bennett, the Bentleys, and the rest of the famous B.'s only made *two* runs between them, and the given man making four at one hit and then being put out, the eleven that had made 137 in their first innings thus only ran up six in their second.

Elevens made up of men bearing the same initial or the same name are common enough. A correspondent of *Notes and Queries* records among the novel matches of 1877 one played at Shalford, Surrey, between eleven Heaths and eleven Mitchells, which the Mitchells won. The victors had already vanquished eleven Miles and eleven Muggeridges, and the Surrey newspaper he quotes says they were about to challenge an eleven named Lucas.

The late Lord Lyttelton, with his two brothers and eight sons, played a famous match at Hagley against King Edward's School, Bromsgrove, in August, 1867, and won by ten wickets. Lord Lyttelton, in a humorous set of verses, proceeds to celebrate the victory, and—

> Sing the song of Hagley cricket,
> When the peer and all his clan
> Grasped the bat to guard the wicket
> As no other household can,

and so on, as the curious reader may find in the ninth volume of the fifth series of *Notes and Queries.*

On May 6, 1794, a match was played at Linsted Park between the Gentlemen of the Hill against the Gentlemen of the Dale, for a guinea a man, when all the players were on horseback. Sir Horace Mann got up a similar match, on ponies, at Harrietsham, in 1800.

In 1849 a game was played on the ice on Christchurch Meadow at Oxford; and during the long frost of the most severe winter of 1878–9, on several occasions immense crowds were attracted to witness similar matches, as at Grantchester

Meadows, in December, 1878; between the elevens of R. Carpenter and Mr. Riggs, at Shipley, in January; at Bushey, and elsewhere.

With the doings in India of the famous Parsee eleven and in New Zealand of the Maori players before us, it might appear that there is an end to the oft-repeated assertion that cricket is a game that can be appreciated only by the Anglo-Saxon; but this is perhaps only the proverbial exception, and we may still go on telling stories about the "benighted foreigner," like the anecdote Cuthbert Bede somewhere relates of Ibrahim Pasha's visit to Lord's during his visit to England. Among the efforts made to amuse the Pasha, he was taken to see a cricket-match at Lord's. After staring wearily for two hours at the strenuous exertions of picked players, he at length, in despair, sent a message to the captains of the elevens that he did not wish to hurry them, but that when they were tired of running about he would be much obliged to them if they would begin their game.

This same story has been told of the Duchesse de Berri, but that does not matter; the anecdote is but the Briton's belief that cricket flourishes only on beef and beer.

CHAPTER III.

THE ROYAL GAME OF GOLF.

There never was a game like the old Scottish game,
That's played 'twixt the hole and the tee;
You may roam the world o'er, but the game at your door
Is the very best game you will see.

For ages golf has been pre-eminently the national game of Scotland. As its history emerges from the mists of antiquity we find foot-ball and it linked together as representative games, in fulminations against "unprofitabill sportis," unduly distracting the attention of the people from more serious affairs. But our game far exceeds this old rival in interest; and if it were not for the popularity of curling in its season, no rival pastime could pretend to vie with golf in Scotland.

The mode of playing golf is so well known in these days, even to the ill-starred beings who dwell where Nature has not made "links," that it need only be said that the playing fields are extensive downs—*Scotice*, "links"—generally near the sea, with the surface diversified and made interesting to the skilful players by patches of gorse, sand-holes, "bunkers," and other "hazards." Victory lies with the player who, avoiding or skilfully overcoming these "hazards," drives his ball into a series of small, carefully-cut, round holes, in the fewest strokes. The clubs used are several in number; some designed to drive the small gutta-percha ball a long distance, others to extricate balls from "hazards" unfortunately fallen into, and others for the cautious and skilful short strokes that send a near-lying ball into the wished-for hole.

To those unfortunates who have only read of the pastime,

it may appear hard to believe in the reality of the enthusiasm shown by its votaries; but whenever they are privileged to come under its influence, even as spectators, they will find it is one of the most fascinating of pursuits. How can a man describe in fitting language the subtle spell that brings him out in all weathers and seasons, and makes him find perfect pleasure in "grinding round a barren stretch of ground, impelling a gutta-percha ball before him, striving to land it in a succession of small holes in fewer strokes than his companion and opponent," as the game has been described by one of the "Peter Bell" class of men, to whom the primrose by the river's brim is a yellow primrose and nothing more.

No space need be wasted on unprofitable speculations as to the origin of golf. All that is clear in this vexed subject is that though Scotland is the chosen home of the game, she is not its birthplace. It is, however, of little moment whether the game came in with the Scandinavians who settled on the east coast of Scotland, or whether it was brought northward, over the border, as a variety of the English "bandy-ball"; or even if we have to go back to the Campus Martius, and look for the parent of golf in the feather ball of the Roman *paganica:* or further back still, with those enthusiastic golfers who are quite prepared to hold that the old Greeks beguiled their weary wait by many a keen game on the "links of Troy." Games of ball seem to have existed in all ages, and it is therefore probable that golf is a development of some older game, or perhaps a "selection of the fittest" from several previously existing ball-games. It is sufficient for our purpose that early in the fifteenth century it was at least as popular with all classes in Scotland as it is to-day.

So all-engrossing was the game then that it became a cause of danger to the State; so much so that the Scottish king, James II., found himself constrained to pass a penal Act ordaining that the "fut ball and golf be utterly cryt doune, and nocht usyt," as their popularity seriously interfered with the

archery practice necessary to make the Scots fit to meet "our auld enemies of England." This Act of 1457 is the first of a series, extending to the time of James IV., who, thirteen years before he fell at Flodden, made the last of these attempts to put down golf and make archery popular by Act of Parliament. This monarch, however, was one of the first to break his own law; an example followed by that king of good fellows, James V., who dearly loved a day on the green.

When gunpowder made archery a thing of the past, the conflict between love of country and love of golf ceased, and the game went on prospering under the smiles of royal favour, surviving proclamations of various town-councils directed against sacrilegious golfers, whose sin was held to be, not so much that they played on Sunday, as on that part of the day called "the tyme of the sermonnes." This matter was set at rest by the decree of James VI., of Scotland, who, in 1618, sent from his new kingdom of England an order that after divine service "our good people be not discouraged from any harmless recreation," but prohibiting "the said recreations to any that are not present in the church, at the service of God, before their going to the said recreations"; or as Charles I., when subsequently ratifying this order, puts it, "having first done their dutie to God."

James VI. and I. was a good friend of golf, both in his old kingdom and in his new, into which he probably introduced it some time before he founded the Royal Blackheath Club, in 1608. In England, Strutt tells us, "it should seem that golf was a fashionable game among the nobility at the commencement of the seventeenth century, and it was one of the exercises with which Prince Henry, eldest son of James I., occasionally amused himself, as we learn from the following anecdote recorded by a person who was present (Harl. MS., 6391): 'At another time playing at goff, a play not unlike to pale maille, whilst his schoolmaster stood talking with another, and marked not his highness warning him to stand farther off, the prince,

thinking he had gone aside, lifted up his goff club to strike the ball; mean tyme, one standing by said to him, "Beware that you hit not Master Newton"; wherewith he, drawing back his hand, said, "Had I done so, I had but paid my debts."'"

A cherished event in the anecdotic history of the game is that Charles I. was playing on Leith Links when a courier arrived with tidings of Sir Phelim O'Neal's rising in Ireland, in 1641. No doubt Dr. Dryasdusts shake their heads at this, but golfers believe it, and Sir John Gilbert has immortalised the incident—so, what more could one want?

When the Duke of York came to live at Holyrood, in 1679, he studied to make himself popular with all classes. He joined heartily in all the pastimes of the time, and when his daughter, afterwards Queen Anne, joined him in 1681, Holyrood was gay with balls and plays, much to the horror of the more rigid Presbyterians. Mr. William Tytler, who had conversed with many who remembered the Duke's visit, tells us that "the Duke was frequently seen in a party at golf on the links of Leith, with some of the nobility and gentry. I remember in my youth to have often conversed with an old man, named Andrew Dickson, a golf club maker, who said that when a boy he used to carry the Duke's golf clubs, and to run before him and announce where the balls fell."

"In the Canongate of Edinburgh, nearly opposite to Queensberry House," says Dr. Robert Chambers, in his "Traditions of Edinburgh," "is a narrow, old-fashioned mansion of peculiar form, having a coat-armorial conspicuously placed at the top, and a plain slab over the doorway containing the following inscriptions:—

Cum victor ludo Scotis qui proprius esset,
Ter tres victores post redimitus avos,
Patersonus, humo tunc educebat in altum,
Hanc quae victores tot tulit una domum.
'I hate no person.'

It appears that this quatrain was the production of Dr.

Pitcairn, while the sentence below is an anagram upon the name of John Patersone. The stanza expresses that, when Patersone had been crowned victor in a game peculiar to Scotland, in which his ancestors had also often been victorious, he then built this mansion, which one conquest raised him above all his predecessors. We must resort to tradition for an explanation of this obscure hint."

The story tradition tells is that, during the Duke's visit, "he had on one occasion a discussion with two English noblemen as to the native country of golf; His Royal Highness asserting that it was peculiar to Scotland, while they as pertinaciously insisted that it was an English game as well. The two English nobles proposed, good-humouredly, to prove its English character by taking up the Duke in a match, to be played on Leith Links. James, glad of an opportunity to make popularity in Scotland, in however small a way, accepted the challenge, and sought for the best partner he could find. By an association not at this day surprising to those who practise the game, the heir-presumptive of the British throne played in concert with a poor shoemaker named John Patersone, the worthy descendant of a long line of illustrious golfers. If the two Southerns were, as might be expected, inexperienced in the game, they had no chance against a pair one member of which was a good player. So the Duke got the best of the practical argument, and Patersone's merits were rewarded by a gift of the sum played for. The story goes on to say that John was thus enabled to build a somewhat stylish house for himself in the Canongate; on the top of which, being a Scotsman, and having, of course, a pedigree, he clapped the Patersone arms —three pelicans vulned; on a chief three mullets; crest, a dexter hand grasping a golf club; together with the motto, dear to all golfers, *Far and Sure.*

"It must be admitted there is some uncertainty about this tale. The house, the inscriptions, and arms only indicate that Patersone built the house after being a victor at golf, and that

Pitcairn had a hand in decorating it. One might even see, in the fact of the epigram, as if a gentleman wit were indulging in a jest at the expense of some simple plebeian, who held all notoriety honourable. It might have been expected that, if Patersone had been enriched by a match in which he was connected with the Duke of York, a Jacobite like Pitcairn would have made distinct allusion to the circumstance. The tradition, nevertheless, seems too curious to be entirely overlooked, and the reader may therefore take it at its worth."

With the Stuarts went out for a time royal countenance of the game, till William IV. became patron of the Royal and Ancient Club of St. Andrews, and presented to it for annual competition that coveted golfing trophy, the gold medal.

But though there came kings who knew not golf, the game lost none of its old popularity. Still, as before, pre-eminently the game of the people, we find it associated with many a notable scene and character in the history of Scotland. So fond of the game was the great Montrose that hardly had the minstrels ceased to serenade the boy-husband and his bride, "Sweet Mistress Magdalene Carnegie," when we find him hard at work with clubs and ball. That fifty years later it continued to be the favourite amusement of the aristocracy of the Scottish capital, we can gather from the curious books of expenditure of Sir John Foulis, of Ravelstoun, who seems to have spent most of his leisure time "losing at golfe" on Musselburgh and Leith Links, with Hamilton and Rothes, and others of the highest quality of the time. We read of Balmerino's brother, Alexander Elphinston, and Captain Porteous, playing in 1724 "a solemn match at golf" for twenty guineas on Leith Links. Eight years afterwards, on the very ground where he had won this match, Elphinston shot his man dead in a duel, while the other player in the match was the victim of the famous "Porteous Mob." On these Leith Links might there very often be seen Lord President Duncan Forbes, of Culloden, who

was so keen a golfer that, when the links were covered with snow, he played on the sands by the sea-shore.

Golf has had many enthusiastic votaries, but perhaps never one so devoted, heart and soul, to the game as "the Cock o' the Green," Alexander McKellar, the hero of one of "Kay's Portraits." He played every day and all day long on Bruntsfield Links; even when night fell he could not tear himself away, but played the "short holes" by candlelight. Yet, with all his excessive practice, he was by no means a dexterous player. As McKellar could not play on Sundays, he acted on that day as doorkeeper to a church in Edinburgh. One day Mr. Douglas Gourlay, a well-known club and ball-maker, on entering the church, jocularly placed a golf ball in "the plate" instead of his usual donation; as he anticipated, this prize was at once secured by McKellar, "who was not more astonished than gratified by the novelty of the deposit."

Perhaps the most remarkable match at golf ever played was the one Mr. Wheeler gives, in his "Sportascrapiana," in the words of that veteran sportsman, Captain Horatio Ross. The match, Captain Ross says, was got up at the race ordinary at Montrose, by Mr. Cruickshank, of Langley Park, and Lord Kennedy—both very good players. "They got up a match of three holes, for £500 each hole, and agreed to play it then and there. It was about ten or half-past ten p.m., and quite dark. No lights were allowed, except one lantern placed on the hole, and another carried by the attendants of the player, in order that they might ascertain to whom the ball struck belonged. We all moved down to the golf-course to see this curious match. Boys were placed along the course, who were quite accustomed to the game, to listen to the flight of the balls, and to run to the spot where a ball struck and rested on the ground. I do not remember which of the players won the odd hole; the match was won, I know, by only one hole. But the most remarkable part of the match was that they made out their holes with much about the same number of strokes

as they usually did when playing in daylight. I think, on an average, that they took about five or six strokes in daylight, and in the dark six or seven. They were, however, in the constant habit of playing over the Montrose course."

The old Acts of the Scots Parliament referred to above cry down golf and enjoin the practice of archery, that the Scots might be better able to fight the English bowmen with their own weapons. The penalties for default, and the time of practice, were not such as would recommend themselves to Sir Wilfrid Lawson and the opponents of the Sunday Society in Scotland. Every man who did not attend had to pay twopence, which was spent in liquor for those present; while the day and the hour were Sunday afternoon, after service! Of course, at that period Sunday after mass was the great time for all sports and pastimes; but neither the liquor nor the penalty seems to have made golf unpopular, nor sent men from the links to the bowmarks by the parish kirks. The Scot of those days did not take kindly to the bow, and no Acts of Parliament could make him; in spite of them he played golf and football, and trusted to his spear and sword to pull him through in his contests with the bowmen across the border. Archery and golf were brought into antagonism in another way on Luffness Links on October 15, 1874. The *Scotsman* of next day records this novel match. The Rev. Mr. Tait, chaplain to the Royal Company of Archers (Queen's Scotch Bodyguard), played a match with a bow and arrow against the club and ball of the veteran golfer "Old Tom" Morris, over the Luffness course. When the round of eighteen holes was ended, it was found that the bow had beaten the club completely, Mr. Tait having done the round in seventy-six "shots," while Old Tom required eighty-two "strokes" to finish; by holes the bow won by five.

The dexterity and nicety of some players are well illustrated by that feat of a St. Andrew's golfer, who struck off three balls from one hole to another—about 500 yards—with such pre-

cision that, giving a uniform number of strokes to each ball, the three would so cluster round the second hole that he could touch them all with his club. The Rev. Mr. Carlyle, of Inveresk, tells us, in his Autobiography, how he astonished Garrick and some others at Windsor by the nicety of his play in driving a ball from a good distance through a narrow gateway into the Thames. The late "Young Tom" Morris could, it is said, drive a ball off a watch, as a "tee," without doing any harm to the watch.

Let us now glance at some feats, not in the game, but achieved by golfers with club and ball.

Just about a century ago—to be exact, in 1775—an English gentleman, Captain Topham, devoted six months of his life to getting up material for a book on the manners and customs of the Scotch. Naturally, his accuracy is not equal to his boldness; indeed, in several instances some "pawky chiel" seems to have hoaxed the indefatigable Captain—notably his authority for the statement that Edinburgh people play golf "on the summit of these hills," Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Crag. But Captain Topham's statement is not half so funny as worthy Hugo Arnot's serious refutation of it. "This observation," says the historian of Edinburgh, "is still more unfortunate than the general train of his remarks. Were a person to play a ball from the top of Arthur's Seat he would probably have to walk upwards of half a mile before he would touch it again, and we will venture to say that the whole art of man would not play the ball back again." This "venture" of Arnot's seems to have commended itself to the golfers of his day, but, in 1815, two daring members of the Edinburgh Burgess Golf Club thought they could do it. Mr. Brown, one of these, backed himself to drive a ball from *inside* the Golf House on Bruntsfield Links over Arthur's Seat in forty-five strokes (the distance is nearly two miles). He accomplished his task in forty-four strokes, and thus won his wager; but a brother member, who attempted the same feat, failed to do it in

less than forty-six strokes. Arthur's Seat is upwards of 800 feet high.

In 1798 a wager was laid that there were no two members of the above-named club who could drive a ball over the spire of St. Giles's Cathedral in Edinburgh. The society took the bet; Mr. Sceales, of Leith, and Mr. Smellie, a printer of Edinburgh, were chosen to do battle for their club. In case of need they could use six balls each. The necessary elevation was got by a barrel stave, suitably fixed in the south-east corner of the Parliament Square. The balls were struck off in the early morning; both soared considerably higher than the weathercock on the dome, and were found nearly opposite the Advocate's Close; the height, including the base distance, is 168 feet. A suitable erection for the judges was placed up beside the weathercock, and they at once decided that the club had won the wager.

Thirty years later, two similar matches were made to drive a ball over the Melville Monument, in St. Andrew's Square, Edinburgh. In both cases the club and ball won; in the one case Mr. Donald Maclean, Writer to the Signet, accomplishing the feat; in the other Mr. Skipsey, a clerk in the Exchequer, Edinburgh. This is a smaller undertaking than the St. Giles's feat, as the pillar here is only 136 feet high, and the statue 14 feet, in all 150 against 168 feet.

This Mr. Skipsey was a noted "driver." On one occasion he drove a ball upwards and forwards 200 yards before it touched the ground. Tradition tells of a feat in driving greater even than this, that of Mr. Messieux, who, on St. Andrew's Links, drove one of the old feather balls 308 yards before it stopped. Another hero of the olden time was William St. Clair, of Roslyn, whose feats of strength, and skill at golf and archery, Scott and his schoolfellows of the High School of Edinburgh used to crowd to witness.

On one occasion, at the Antipodes, skill at golf was of great service. The rains had so swollen an Australian river that the

mails could not venture across. By no means could a rope be got across to pull the letters over. Guns, slings, arrows were tried, but all failed, much to the disappointment of the crowd waiting for the news from home that lay in the bags on the other side. At last a Scot, a keen and earnest golfer in the old days at home, volunteered to try what he could do with the clubs and ball he had carried with him to his new home. A long string was attached to the ball, which was carefully "tee'd"; then, with a long, steady "swipe" of his supple driver, the Scot sent the ball curving into the air, till it landed on the opposite bank, and re-established the broken communication.

It is almost superfluous to say that in our own day the noble and ancient pastime is still the game of the Scots of all classes and in all parts of the world. One little fact, that incontestably proves the eminent respectability of the game in Scottish eyes, is that "the minister" can be a golfer without the least fear of the straightest-laced of presbyteries. Students of national characteristics say that when the canny Scot abroad "prospects" for a new settlement, while he naturally rivets one eye on the main chance, with the other he reckons up the capabilities of the ground for his favourite game; therefore it is that golf has taken firm root and flourishes in many a distant colony. Across the border the game is so acclimatised that formidable rivals to our native players are now trained on well-known English greens. That it may go on and prosper is, of course, the wish of every true lover of the invigorating pastime.

The fascinations of golf have enlisted in the ranks of its votaries men of all classes, many of them famous on other fields, who have made their reminiscences of their beloved pursuit mediums for many a bright word-picture in prose and verse. Until recent years no attempt had been made to gather together what has been so said and sung in praise of the pastime, but Mr. Robert Clark, of Edinburgh, has made

ample amends for this neglect in his sumptuous and now scarce volume, "Golf: A Royal and Ancient Game" (Edinburgh: R. & R. Clark).

This author has gone for his information to the most various sources—old Acts of the Scots Parliament, proclamations by kings, burgh records, minutes of the more prominent golf clubs, books, and magazines; and by judicious editing of this medley, has shown the many-sidedness of the game in a way that none but a devotee could. In this volume every golfing reader will find material for the fullest knowledge of all that is interesting about his favourite sport.

Mr. Clark gives us some historical notes of the more prominent of the many golfing clubs that now flourish in different parts of Scotland, and extracts from their minute-books the leading events of their career. Now and then we come across eccentricities, such as those of Mr. Brown and Mr. Smellie, noted above; as a rule, however, these clubs pursue the even tenor of their way, the members finding their best happiness in playing the pure and simple game.

While the Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers is generally held to be the oldest Scotch club, so great has been the development of its sister club at St. Andrews, and so great are the attractions of golfing on the famous links of the venerable city, that the "Royal and Ancient" takes precedence over all, and is indisputably *the* club of the kingdom.

In St. Andrews golf is not a mere pastime, but a business and a passion. It is the one recreation of the inhabitants, from the Principal of the University to the youngest urchin; it has even invaded the domain of lawn tennis and croquet, and has taken captive the ladies, who now take so keen an interest in the game, that on more links than those of St. Andrews their green is a charming feature of the place. In short, in St. Andrews, "no living thing that does not play golf, or talk golf, or think golf, or at least thoroughly knock

under to golf, can live." It was, however, on Musselburgh Links—greatest golfing rival of St. Andrews—that women first took to the club and ball, as we see from this extract from the minutes of the Musselburgh Golf Club: "December 14th, 1810.—The club resolved to present by subscription a handsome new creel (fish basket) and shawl to the best female golfer who plays on the annual occasion, on January 1st next, old style; to be intimated to the fish ladies by William Robertson, the officer of the club. Two of the best Barcelona silk handkerchiefs to be added to the above premium of the creel." These "fish ladies" were those of Fisherrow, near Musselburgh, of whom the Rev. Dr. Carlyle, of Inveresk, gives so amusing a sketch in the old "Statistical Account"—"they frequently play at golf," he writes in 1795.

The chief prize of the "Royal and Ancient"—the gold challenge medal played for every autumn, presented in 1837 by King William IV.—is the "Blue Ribbon of Golf." To win it is the dream of every member of the club. Other clubs, such as North Berwick, Musselburgh, Montrose, Perth, Prestwick, Edinburgh Burgess, &c., have each its own time-honoured challenge trophy, that of the Royal Musselburgh being laden with more than a century of medals, each commemorating a winner's name.

So much for the history of the game; let us now glance at its literature. In the interesting collection of prose papers Mr. Clark has gathered from various quarters, we can study the peculiar features of the game and the effect it has, for the time, on the tempers of its votaries. As we have seen, at St. Andrews the ardent golfer has little time for thought or conversation unconnected with the game. For the time being, the be-all and end-all of his life lies within the pothook-shaped course he has to traverse; and not a little of his happiness or his misery for the day depends on the nature of the match he succeeds in getting.

The *true* golfer at work is essentially a man of silence

chattering during the crises of the game is as abhorrent to him as conversation during whist; one thing only is as obnoxious as the human voice to him then—that is, any movement of the human body near him.

This over-sensitiveness to external influences may explain the seeming ungallantry of the "Colonel" in "H. J. M.'s" amusing account of "The Golfer at Home," which appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* a few years ago. After a charming little picture of the "Colonel" resenting, though he does not openly object to, Browne being accompanied over the course by "his women," as he ungallantly terms Mrs. Browne and her sister, he says to his partner: "The links is not the place for women; they talk incessantly, they never stand still, and if they do, the wind won't allow their dresses to stand still." However, as they settle down to their game, the "Colonel's" good temper returns, under the healthy influence of an invigorating "round," and gives "H.J.M." an opportunity of pointing out how all ill-humours of body and mind give way before the equable and bracing exercise of a round or two of the links of St. Rule.

That the reader may see the amount of walking exercise taken in a round of St. Andrews Links, it may be interesting to note that the exact distance, as the crow flies, is three miles eleven hundred and fifty-four yards; so that the golfer who takes his daily three rounds walks *at least* eleven miles. It is no wonder, then, that in addition to its own attractions, golf is esteemed as a capital preparation for the moors or the stubbles, hardening as it does the muscles both of arms and legs.

Pages might be filled with genial gossip about St. Andrews and St. Andrews players—amateur and professional—so interesting to frequenters of the links of "Great Golfington," but unfortunately too local for very general favour. Three names, however, demand mention in any notice of golf. Green to every golfer are the memories of the great champion

of the professionals, Allan Robertson, who was "never beaten in a match"; of the brilliant but short-lived career of poor "Young Tom Morris," the champion player of his day—son of a worthy sire who still survives; of Mr. Sutherland, an old gentleman who made golf the chief business of his life, whose interest in his fellow-men, not as men but as golfers, is well shown in this anecdote. His antagonist was about to strike off for the finishing hole at St. Andrews, when a boy appeared on the bridge over the burn. Old Sutherland shouted out: "Stop, stop! Don't play upon *him;* he's a fine young golfer!"

It is in verse, however, that the votary of golf finds the field most congenial to his subject.

Perhaps the earliest mention of golf in verse is to be found in a scrap that occurs in a very rare book called "Westminster Drollery" (London, 1671), where Thomas Shadwell sings of this and other games:—

> Thus all our life long we are frolick and gay,
> And instead of Court revels we merrily play
> At trap, at rules, and at barley break run,
> At golf, and at foot-ball, and when we have done
> These innocent sports we'll laugh and lie down;
> And to each pretty lass
> We will give a green gown.

In 1743 appeared a heroi-comic poem in three cantos, called "The Goff," written by Thomas Mathison, minister of Brechin, which commemorates the Edinburgh players of his day. In it occurs two lines on President Forbes, of Culloden, that one finds occasionally quoted. Mathison calls the Lord President the

> Patron of the just,
> The dread of villains, and the good man's trust.

Many of the excellent song writers of our grandfathers' day wrote merry ditties on the game, but no long set of verses was published until there appeared, in 1842, a clever collection of poems, entitled "Golfiana," by George Fullerton Carnegie, of

Pittarrow, which delighted the golfers of that day by the humorous way in which it hit off the playing characteristics of the men he introduced into it. He begins by throwing down the gauntlet to those students of Scottish history who sigh over the musty memories and deplore the decayed glories of the city of their patron saint:—

St. Andrews! they say that thy glories are gone,
That thy streets are deserted, thy castles o'erthrown:
If thy glories *be* gone, they are only, methinks,
As it were by enchantment transferred to thy links.
Though thy streets be not now, as of yore, full of prelates,
Of abbots and monks, and of hot-headed zealots,
Let none judge us rashly, or blame us as scoffers,
When we say that instead there are links full of golfers,
With more of good heart and good feeling among them
Than the abbots, the monks, and the zealots who sung them!

Then in various short poems Carnegie sings the praises of the game, for which he claims, as an early scene, fields more celebrated even than those of St. Andrews.

I heard it whispered once
That he who could not play was held a dunce
On old Olympus, when it teemed with gods.

Golf poems of recent date are legion, and there are many capital songs in honour of the game; amongst others a parody of Lord Houghton's well-known song, "Strangers yet," from which it will be seen that something more is necessary to make a good golfer than a set of clubs and an anxious "cady" to carry them:—

DUFFERS YET!—BY TWO "LONG SPOONS."

After years of play together,
After fair and stormy weather,
After rounds of every green
From Westward Ho! to Aberdeen;
Why did e'er we buy a set
If we must be duffers yet!
Duffers yet! Duffers yet!

After singles, foursomes—all,
Fractured club and cloven ball;
After grief in sand and whin,
Foozled drives and "putts" not in—
Ev'n our cadies scarce regret
When we part as duffers yet,
Duffers yet! Duffers yet!

After days of frugal fare,
Still we spend our force in air;
After nips to give us nerve,
Not the less our drivers swerve;
Friends may back and foes may bet,
And ourselves be duffers yet,
Duffers yet! Duffers yet!

Must it ever then be thus?
Failure most mysterious!
Shall we never fairly stand
Eye on ball as club in hand?
Are the bounds eternal set
To retain us duffers yet?
Duffers yet! Duffers yet!

CHAPTER IV.

TENNIS.

"ALTHOUGH the life of Alexander III.," says Mr. Fraser Tytler, in his "Lives of Scottish Worthies," "cannot be estimated as the boundary between the authentic and the fabulous in Scottish history, yet it may be truly said that with the reign of this able prince the history of the country, when compared with the eras which precede it, assumes a more interesting and attractive form to the general reader."

For our special purpose in this chapter it is a convenient starting-point, as during this king's reign (1249-85) tradition says the Scots borrowed from their good friends, the French, that famous old game, which, under various names—paume, cach, tennis—was for so long such a favourite pastime in this country.

To France the world is indebted for tennis; but when the pastime began to spread abroad from the country of its origin into other lands, is very uncertain. In Britain, at any rate, we can find no traces of it before the days of King Alexander.

The mother of the Scottish king was Marie de Couci, daughter of that flower of chivalry, Enguerand of Picardy. It is supposed that the *jeu de paume* was introduced into Scotland by the knights who came over from France in the train of the queen; but however this may be, whether they brought it over with them, or merely raised an existing game of "fives" up to the scientific level of their own pastime, it is affirmed that tennis was a favourite game of king and courtiers during the too short reign of good King Alexander.

When the unfortunate stumble over the cliffs of Kinghorn threw the peaceful and prosperous Scotland of Alexander into all the turmoils of the disputed succession and its consequences, tennis, like other games in the North, would naturally give place to sterner realities. The oldest scrap of Scottish song now extant is a fragment of a thirteenth century ballad, preserved in Wynton's "Chronicle." It is an elegy on King Alexander's unfortunate death, and laments the sad changes to Scotland that flowed from it. Away, mourns the old poet, are peace and prosperity, mirth and merry pastimes; nought is left but woe and dire trouble and perplexity:—

Quhen Alysandyr our kyng was dede,
That Scotland led in luive and lee, [peace]
Away wes sons [abundance] of ale and brede,
Of wyne and wax, of gamyn and glee.

Our gold was changyd into lede:
Cryst, born into virgynte,
Succour Scotland, and remede,
That stad is in perplexyte.

That tennis might still be played in Scotland, however, is probable enough, when we remember the intimate connection between that country and France, whither so many of the young Scottish nobles went for their training in knightly accomplishments; but we find no definite mention of the game till we come to the days of the first James of Scotland.

It was in France, as we have said, that what its devotees call "the king of games" originated, but the groundwork of this elaborate pastime is to be found, of course, in the simple old hand-ball play that figured so conspicuously in the every-day life of the classical world. It is of little use to speculate in which of the varieties of ball play mentioned in ancient writers is to be found the progenitor of this pastime, as so much light remains to be thrown on the exact method of play in many of the old games, but the principle of tennis in its simplest form is discernible clearly enough in pila, as

well as in the pastime played with the follis, or large inflated ball that in later times players struck with a kind of glove or hand-guard, between which and the racket the step was short and manifest.

Hand-play, or palm-play (*pila palmaria*, *jeu de paume*), are older names of the game, given to it when the propulsive force was applied by the hand alone. "Tennis," as well as "fives," Strutt is inclined to think, was derived from the numbers who engaged in the game; but it is more probable that the derivation of tennis is "tenez," cognate to the Scotch names of the game, "cach" or "caitche," while a favourite explanation of the name of "fives" is that which refers it to the hand of five fingers with which the ball was struck.

Allusions to tennis in the old romances of chivalry are frequent, but what may be called the earliest reference to it in English literature is Chaucer's metaphor in "Troylus and Cryseyde":—

> But canstow playen racket to and fro,
> Nettle in, dokke out, now this, now that, Pandare.

At any rate, a game very like tennis, in which a racket was used to drive a ball to and fro, must have been sufficiently well known, about 1380, to make the metaphor the poet puts in Troylus's mouth intelligible to his readers. Further proof of the existence of the game about this time we find in the second of the restrictive Acts against games passed in this century, when in 1389 the Act of Richard II. includes this amusement among the unlawful games that labourers, artizans, and others were forbidden to engage in.

The name "tennis" first occurs in Gower's "Balade," about 1400. If we could believe the by no means very credible story told by the old annalists, one of the most interesting historical events in connection with our game happened when Henry V. was meditating his unjustifiable war against France. The story is familiar enough, of Henry's demand and the Dauphin's answer, indicating that implements of peace better suited the

English king than weapons of war. As Wynkin de Worde puts it, as a reply to the English king's message, the Dauphin, "somewhat in scorne and despyte, sent to him a tonne full of tenes balls." "The Dolphyn," says Hall in his "Chronicle," "thynkyng Kyng Henry to be given still to suche plaies and lyght folies as he exercised and used before the tyme that he was exalted to the croune, sent to hym a tunne of tennis balles to plaie with, as who saied that he had better skill of tennis than of warre." On the foundation of this incident, as told by Holingshed, Shakespeare has constructed his fine scene of the French ambassadors' audience in "Henry V." When the first ambassador gives the Dauphin's message and insulting gift, the English king speaks thus:—

> We are glad the Dauphin is so pleasant with us:
> His present and your pains we thank you for.
> When we have match'd our rackets to these balls,
> We will, in France, by God's grace, play a set
> Shall strike his father's crown into the hazard.
> Tell him, he hath made a match with such a wrangler
> That all the courts of France will be disturbed
> With chaces.

While Henry was receiving the French ambassadors and their "ton of treasure," there was another king in England whose love for tennis may be said to have cost him his life. This was the Scottish king, James I., whom Henry had most unwarrantably seized in 1405, during a time of truce, while the boy was on his way to be educated in France. Henry, however, spared no pains in giving the young king an education worthy of his rank. The future author of the "King's Quhair" did credit to his tutor, Sir John de Pelham, the Constable of Pevensey, not only in music and the other elegant accomplishments of the time, but his fine tall figure and muscular frame made the captive prince foremost in all knightly exercises and the various games that were then such important parts of a young esquire's education.

After eighteen years' captivity James returned to Scotland, and for four short years we find him giving his whole mind to the improvement of his country. At Yuletide of 1436–7 the Court kept the festival at Perth, in the Blackfriars Monastery, and here, on a February night, after the royal party had broken up, and as James, dressed in a dressing-gown, lingered before the fire of the reception room, chatting with the queen and her ladies, ominous sounds were heard without. The great bolt of the door was found to be away, but a lady—a Douglas—thrust her arm through the staples and held the door till the conspirators snapped this frail defence. Her noble devotion, however, gave James time to tear up a plank of the flooring and drop into a small vault below the apartment, whence it was thought escape would be easy. "As fate would have it," says Dr. Hill Burton, "there had been an opening to it by which he might have escaped, but this had, a few days earlier, been closed by his own order, because the balls by which he played at tennis were apt to fall into it." Then the conspirators leapt into the vault, and as the prosaic Adamson, the seventeenth century historian of Perth, tells us:—

> King James the First, of everlasting name,
> Killed by that mischant traitor, Robert Grahame,
> Intending of his crown for to have rob'd him,
> With twenty-eight wounds in the breast he stab'd him.

When we reach the reigns of the fourth and fifth James of Scotland, we find from that invaluable mine of historical wealth, the Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, many evidences of the kings' fondness for this game, and the considerable sums they lost at it with their courtiers, lay and clerical. After several entries of sums paid for balls and for stakes to the king at Stirling, we find this item under date June 7th, 1496:—"To Wat of Lesly that he wan at the cach frae the king, £23 8*s*." Next year, on September 23, he is again losing at tennis in Stirling, this time "with Peter Crechtoune and Patrick Hammiltoune, three unicorns," that is £2 13*s*.;

and, not to multiply extracts, on other occasions he is entered in the Treasurer's books as having "tynt" £54 to Andrew Forman, the Prothonotary, and £18 to the Laird of Caprintoune. About the time James IV. was thus devoting himself to our game, Henry VII., as the register of his expenditure shows, was also a tennis player. "Item, for the king's loss at tennis, twelve pence: for the loss of balls, three pence." From this last clause Strutt infers "that the game was played abroad, for the loss of balls would hardly have happened in a tennis court." Though courts appear to have frequently been open at a much later period than this—for instance, the one the young Duke of York (James II.) is depicted as standing in, in a contemporary print, is open—Strutt's inference hardly follows, for "loss" may very easily mean the destruction of the covering of the balls, which wears out rapidly.

When Philip, Archduke of Austria, became King of Castile, he sailed from the Netherlands in 1506 to take possession of his new kingdom. Stress of weather compelled him to seek shelter in Falmouth, and Henry, hearing of his arrival, sent the Earl of Arundel and a gallant train to bring him to Windsor. Here for many days he was splendidly entertained. During the festivities, the account of an eye witness tells us, the two kings one day looked on while the Marquis of Dorset, Lord Howard, and two other gentlemen played tennis. Then the King of Castile joined in the game, playing with Dorset; "but," says the chronicler, "the Kyng of Castille played with the rackett, and gave the Lord Marques XV.," Dorset evidently playing with the hand only. This is interesting as showing that the use of the racket had not superseded the older form of the hand game as late as 1506 in England.

The fifth Scottish James's love for amusements of all kinds was so excessive that every moment he could get was devoted to sport or pastime of some kind. From the Treasurer's accounts we can see the large sums that were lavished on all sorts of amusements; but perhaps Dunbar's "Remonstrance"

best shows James's reckless prodigality, and most admirably portrays the state of affairs that ruined the king's health and impoverished his exchequer. Here are the lines in which the poet alludes to the excessive devotion to tennis shown by the people, following the king's example:—

> Sa many rackettis, sa many ketche-pillaris,*
> Sic ballis, sic nackettis,† and sic tutivillaris,‡
> Within this land was nevir hard nor sene.

In the poems of Sir David Lyndesay—the "Lord Lion King at Arms" of "Marmion"—we are told that the young prince, whose tutor Lyndesay was, "raiffled at the rakkat," that is, played tennis; while elsewhere in the Lion's verses we see that not only did king and courtiers frequent the "cach-pule" (tennis-court), but that the ecclesiastics of the time were devotees of the game, as their successors nowadays, even in Presbyterian Scotland, are of golf and curling. Lyndesay gives us this picture of a friar, who was, it may be supposed, by no means singular in his age:—

> Thoch I preich nocht, I can play at the caiche;
> I wat thair is nocht ane amang you all
> Mair ferilie can play at the fute ball.

We might infer from Shakespeare's classing, in "King Henry VIII.," tennis with other "remnants of fool and feather" which the English courtiers got in France, that our game had then newly been imported into England; but though the dramatist makes the conditions of the proclamation run that these courtiers must renounce

> The faith they have in tennis and tall stockings,
> Short blister'd breeches, and those types of travel,
> . . . . . .
> Or pack to their old playfellows,

these travelled nobles might easily have learned the game with-

* Players at tennis. † Lads who marked at tennis; Fr. *naquette.*
‡ Worthless, frivolous things.

out ever crossing the Channel. A correspondent of *Notes and Queries* has been able, from the records of the Ironmongers' Company, to trace the existence of tennis in England from the tenth year of Edward IV. down to the twenty-sixth of Henry VIII. The following are a few examples of these entries:—

Tem. Edward IV. Resseyued of Robert Tooke for teneis ballis iii*d.*
,, Richard III. William Bruyth for a grosse of balles xvi*d.*
,, Henry VIII. Item. Rs. of Maystier Bentley of the tennys play for a year, 11*s.*

The writer thinks these balls were made of iron. He speaks of a tombstone erected to a lad who had been killed at tennis by one of these strange balls; but if the tomb is that one in Elford Church, in Staffordshire, in which the effigy holds a ball against his forehead, while the inscription runs, "Ubi dolor, ibi digitus," it is quite consistent with the idea that in their sale of tennis balls the ironmongers may have acted merely as agents for some workers in material more suitable for a racket ball. A blow from a well-stuffed ball might easily have proved fatal, though its material was far lighter than impossible iron. "The tennis ball is hard and inelastic," says the *Edinburgh Review*, "being composed of shreds of rag and cloth bound solidly together with string, two inches and a half in diameter, and weighing about two ounces and a half. It is a solid thing to stop, especially at a volley, and a strong racket is required to arrest and repel its vehement momentum. When fairly hit, with the full swing of a heavy racket tightly strung, it is a really formidable projectile. It was a tradition of the Haymarket court that a duke had been killed there." The usual materials of which balls were made in early times were "good wool," closely packed feathers, as in golf balls, or worsted thread. Shakespeare adds to these substances hair; for he says of Benedick, "the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis balls." Nash, too, in 1591, writes: "They may sell

their haire by the pound to stuff tennis balles;" but it is supposed that these lighter materials were used only for balls when tennis was played on grass.

Henry VIII. was much attached to this game. Strutt quotes from Hall's life of the king that his "propensity being perceived by certayne craftie persons about him, they brought in Frenchmen and Lombards to make wagers with hym, and so he lost muche money; but when he perceyved theyr crafte, he escheued the company and let them go." He did not give up the game, however, for, according to the same biographer, a dozen years afterwards he is playing at tennis, with the Emperor Maximilian for his partner, against the Prince of Orange and the Marquis of Brandenborow; "the Earl of Devonshire stopped on the Prince's side, and the Lord Edmond on the other side; and they departed even hands on both sides, after eleven games fully played." "Eleven" here is supposed to be a mistake for "ten" or "twelve," as, of course, it is impossible for two sides to be "even hands" in an odd number of games.

Though we find the bluff king adding to Whitehall "divers fair tennis courts"—one on the site now occupied by the Privy Council Office—for the enjoyment of his beloved game, yet there was passed in the thirty-third year of his reign the most stringent Act against the keeping "for gain or living" of any tennis court, or the enjoyment of this and several other "unlawful games" at any time but Christmas, by artificers, apprentices, mariners, serving-men, and many others—an Act that was only repealed in 1863.

In Scotland tennis never recovered from the shock that all games in the North got at the Reformation. We find traces of it down to the end of the eighteenth century, but its existence was weak when compared to the lusty life it enjoyed in the days of the "Commons' King" and his predecessors. In Mary's Court, too, before the fierce zealots swept it away, it was much played. We can get an idea of the extent to which

gambling at cards and dice was carried then from a statement of David Home of Godscroft, in a sketch he has left of his brother, Sir George Home of Wedderburn. While at Court in his youth, George, being stinted of money by a stepmother, had to avoid cards and dice, and restrict himself to tennis, says the historian of the house of Douglas.

Mary's son does not appear to have been a tennis player himself, but in the rules he drew out and addressed to Henry, the Prince of Wales, he recommends it in these words: "The exercises that I would have you to use, although but moderately, not making a craft of them, are, running, leaping, playing at the caitch, or tennise, archerie, palle-malle, and such-like other fair and pleasant field games."

Prince Henry seems to have been very fond of tennis, though it appears to have had as disturbing an effect on his temper as it had on that of Gascone de Foix in Froissart's story. He once got so angry at tennis with his father's infamous favourite, Carr, Earl of Somerset, that he struck him with his racket. On another occasion he and the young Earl of Essex, afterwards the famous Parliamentary General, were playing, when a dispute arose. Prince Henry, in his anger, called Essex the "son of a traitor," alluding to the execution of his father, Elizabeth's favourite. The young earl struck the prince so hard a blow as to draw blood, but the king, when he heard all the circumstances, declined to punish the high-spirited lad. Prince Henry's fatal illness is said to have been brought on by playing tennis one evening without his coat.

During the Commonwealth the exiled Court played the game abroad. In September, 1658, it is said Sir Stephen Fox found King Charles at tennis in Hochstraten when he arrived with the important tidings of Cromwell's death.

At the Restoration Charles reintroduced the game into England, and probably the next few years were the palmy days of tennis in England. Courts were set up in a great many places;

king and courtiers, as we see from Pepys and others, and all in the land that Henry's Act would permit, plied the racket, till the state of matters was very much what we have seen Dunbar satirising in the Scotland of the pleasure-loving James V.

In December, 1663, we find the gossipping Secretary to the Admiralty, "walking through Whitehall, I heard the king was gone to play at tennis. So I down to the new tennis court, and saw him and Sir Arthur Slingsby play against my Lord of Suffolk and my Lord Chesterfield. The king beat three and lost two sets, they all, and he particularly, playing well, I thought." Though Mr. Pepys is ready to give all praise where praise is due, the sycophancy of his brother courtiers is sometimes too much for him, as when he writes on 4th January, 1664: "Thence to the tennis court, and there saw the king play at tennis, and others: but to see how the king's play was extolled without any excuse at all, was a loathsome sight, though sometimes, indeed, he did play very well, and deserved to be commended, but such open flattery is beastly."

Ossory, Arran, Prince Rupert, and many others, are specially praised for their tennis play at this time. Pepys records a great match he witnessed between Prince Rupert and Cooke, the Master of the king's tennis court, against Baptist May and Chichly, in the Whitehall court, on 2nd September, 1667. "I went to see a great match at tennis between Prince Rupert and one Captain Cooke against Bab May and the elder Chichly, where the king was, and the court, and it seems they are the best players at tennis in the nation. But this puts me in mind of what I observed in the morning, that the king, playing at tennis, had a steeleyard carried to him, and I was told it was to weigh him after he had done playing: and at noon Mr. Ashburnham told me that it is only the king's curiosity which he usually hath of weighing himself before and after his play, to see how much he loses

in weight by playing, and this day he lost four and a half pounds."

When the Duke of York paid his famous visit to Edinburgh, in 1679–82, the royal party occupied Holyrood House, where they gave balls, masquerades, and private theatricals, much to the enjoyment of the nobility and gentry that attended the court, though the more rigid Presbyterians were horror-struck. (It may be interesting to note here that the Scotch ladies tasted tea at these parties for the first time in Scotland.) The duke and his attendants played golf and tennis; this last in the old tennis court of Edinburgh, which stood immediately without the Water Gate, beside "Queen Mary's Bath," and quite close to the palace. This tennis court also served for a theatre for the company of actors the duke brought from England; and in this connection we may mention that the old building—which in the past had served for the few theatrical entertainments in Scotland then—had good grounds for the boast that Shakespeare acted in it during Lawrence Fletcher's tour with his company of "king's servants" in 1603. It is not absolutely certain that the great dramatist was in Scotland then with Fletcher; but Mr. Charles Knight has shown from internal evidence in "Macbeth," and from other circumstances, that it is highly probable he was. The tennis court by the Water Gate, after it had become a weavers' workhouse, was burnt to the ground in the year 1777, many years after the game for which it had been built had died out in Scotland. The last celebrated Scotch cach-players are said to have been James Hepburn of Keith and his famous contemporary, John Law of Lauriston, Comptroller-General of the Finances of France, and projector of the Mississippi Scheme. A game is still played by school-boys in some parts of Scotland which they call "cage-ball;" it is a rough kind of "fives," but probably in itself, as in its name, it is a reminiscence in a corrupted form of the old cach. As far as we know, there is not a single tennis court now in Scotland.

During the last century the records of tennis are meagre: it seems to have been played only in one or two places. According to Horace Walpole, indeed, in his "Memoirs of the Reign of King George II.," it was a game played by Frederick, Prince of Wales, and it shares with cricket and a fall while riding the imputation of being the cause of the prince's death. Speaking of his sudden death, Walpole says: "An imposthume had broken, which, on his being opened, the physicians were of opinion had not been occasioned by the fall, but from a blow of a tennis ball three years before."

Even in England it may be said that tennis as a popular amusement went out with the Stuarts. Of course the pastime has never actually died out, and in recent years it has had increased attention paid to it, but even now the number of courts does not appear to exceed a score. "Tennis," says the Edinburgh Reviewer we have already quoted, "the most perfect of games, because with the most continuous certainty it exercises and rewards all the faculties of the players, has only been prevented hitherto from becoming as popular as it deserves, from its being, under its original condition, so expensive, so difficult to learn, and so puzzling to count, as to discourage those who were not 'to the manner born' from touching it. . . . . The first difficulty of expense seemed for the many insuperable, until the recent revival turned the ancient and noble but almost moribund game out to grass, and introduced the rudiments of it to the broad levels of a thousand English lawns. To build a tennis court cost from £3,000 to £4,000. Now a few rackets, a few sixpenny balls and a net, with some streaks of whitewash to mark your limits, and *le jeu est fait.*"

Lawn tennis, however, like the pastime, croquet, it drove off the lawn, is not a new form of tennis. It is at least three centuries old, for in 1591, when Queen Elizabeth was entertained at Elvetham, in Hampshire, by the Earl of Hertford, Strutt, quoting from Nichols' "Progress of Queen Elizabeth,"

tells us that "after dinner, about three o'clock, ten of his lordship's servants, all Somersetshire men, in a square green court, before Her Majesty's window, did hang up lines, squaring out the form of a tennis court, and making a cross line in the middle. In this square they, being stript out of their doublets, played, five to five, with hand ball, at bord and cord, as they termed it, to the great liking of Her Highness."

CHAPTER V.

BALLOON BALL.

"O, sweet lady, 'tis a strong play with the arm."
Eastward Hoe, Old Play.

Of the many good old English games, once great favourites in this country, but now so obsolete as to require explanatory notes in the old poets or dramatists that allude to them, one of the best was the "Baloun" of the Middle Ages, a game that our ancestors owed to the Romans, either directly or, which is more likely, through the Italians during the time when the influence exercised by Italy in the common affairs of England was very great. The old English "Baloun," or balloon ball, was a game played with a large inflated ball of strong leather, the players on the opposite sides striking it backwards and forwards with the hand, on which they generally wore a bracer of wood to lend force and a peculiar motion to the ball.

The rudiments of the game we clearly find in the follis or folliculus of the Romans, among whom, as we know from many references in classical authors, this was a very favourite means of gentle exercise. It was especially the game of old men and boys, who found in the large, but very light, inflated ball of leather a pastime that healthily exercised without unduly taxing their weak muscles. Besides this, however, it held a prominent place among the more or less severe varieties of ball-play that the Romans of all ages indulged in to cause perspiration before the daily bath that, along with the exercise, was such an essential in their idea of a regular and healthy mode of life. "Among the Romans," says Dr. J. H. Krause, "in the Republican, as well as Imperial days, ball-play was univer-

sally delighted in, even more as a health-giving, manly recreation than as a puerile sport. Cato the Elder played at pila in the Campus Martius on the very day he had been accepted as a candidate for the Consulate." Another authority, Becker, in his "Gallus," says: "While in modern times games are confined to the period of youth, in Rome, on the contrary, there was not the slightest idea of impropriety when the consul or triumphator, the world-ruling Cæsar himself, sought in the game of ball . . . an exertion wholesome for both body and mind, and they who omitted such exercises were accused of indolence." Cicero was one of the few men of consequence who were exceptions to the general rule, though Augustus, according to Suetonius, showed his increasing love for ease by deserting first the more energetic outdoor exercises for the pila and folliculus, and then, after a time, discontinuing even these gentle games at ball.

The follis, or follis pugilatorius as Plautus calls it, was a large inflated ball of leather, light and easily knocked about; in one of his epigrams, Martial tells us that the pastime in which it was used was the peculiar game of old men and boys:—

> Ite procul juvenes, mitis mihi, convenit ætas;
> Folle decet pueros ludere, folle senes.
>
> Begone swift-footed, fiercely swiping youth,
> From me, too old for racketings uncouth;
> Old age, a second childhood, needs must fall
> Back upon childhood's large, light, soft, slow ball.

"The folliculus," says a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, "was merely a smaller follis, apparently about the same size as the paganica, also a middle-sized ball, stuffed with feathers, and therefore harder than the follis, which was only filled with air, but tenderer than the pila, which was probably as hard and heavy as our tennis ball. Martial mentions all the three principal balls in a couplet—

> Haec quæ difficili turget Paganica plumâ
> Folle minus laxa est et minus arcta pilâ.

"This paganica stuffed with stiff feathers is of tougher substance than the balloon, but of less compact substance than the tennis ball; laxa and arcta, as describing loosenes ss and tightness of girth, beside difference of substance, imply difference of bulk."

It is probable that, in process of time, as the heavier folliculus supplanted the follis in the fisting game, some protection to the hand and aid in striking became necessary. "If we may trust," says Becker, "the copy given by Mercurialis (De Arte Gymnast) of a coin of Gordian III., the right arm was sometimes equipped with a sort of glove to assist in striking." For the same reason in most of the later traces of the game, both in Italy and in other countries, we find some kind of implement employed. It has been held, because the ball in early delineations of players at "club-ball"—the germ from which sprang cricket—is a very large light sphere, that balloon may have been the parent of this game, and therefore of the English national game of to-day; but the evidence of this is very slight, even though Dr. A. L. Fisher, in his treatise on the Italian game of "Pallone," tells us that in an old book of games published at Venice in 1555, there is "a representation of a heavy wooden club about two feet long, called 'scanno,' which, according to the description given of it, was used instead of the bracciale [the Pallone bracer] for the purpose of striking the ball." This scanno and its ball are certainly very like the club and ball that Strutt engraves from a drawing in the genealogical roll of the Kings of England to the time of Henry III., but there is great doubt whether the scanno was ever used in Pallone, though this suggests an interesting question whether a game something like cricket may not have been played by the Italians three centuries ago.

Balloon ball, however, in its pure form—that is, played with or without a hand-guard, as the legitimate descendant of the Roman follis—there is little doubt existed in England at a very early period. Strutt quotes from Commenius a descrip-

tion of it as "a large ball made of double leather, which, being filled with wind by means of a ventil, was driven to and fro by the strength of men's arms; and for this purpose every one of the players had a round hollow bracer of wood to cover the hand and lower part of the arm with which he struck the ball. This pastime was usually practised in the open fields, and is much commended for the healthiness of the exercise it afforded."

Strutt, however, is inclined to believe that balloon ball was originally played in England without the assistance of the bracer; "this supposition," he says, "will be perfectly established if it be granted—and I see no reason why it should not—that the four figures represented below are engaged in balloon play." The four figures Strutt reproduces are from a manuscript of the fourteenth century in the Royal Library. In other illustrations, too—from the Harleian MSS., and one given by Mr. Thomas Wright, from a carving of the *miserere* seats in Gloucester Cathedral, in which the players wear the long tails to the hood belonging to the costume of the latter part of the fourteenth century—no glove or bracer is used. The inconvenience and pain of playing thus with the unprotected hand, especially as we see from some of the old drawings that this was a game of both sexes, would, however, soon suggest the employment of the bracer as described by Commenius.

Except for a short time at the beginning of the seventeenth century, balloon never seems to have become a fashionable game with the upper classes in England, as tennis or pall-mall did. It is not mentioned in King James' list of "pleasant field games," nor in any of the other records of the fashionable English games that we possess, but nevertheless it seems to have been one of the pastimes of Prince Henry, if by the "balownes," for which a Frenchman was paid for bringing him, we understand the balls used in this game. Better evidence of its reputation at this time is afforded by the following

extract from the play of "Eastward Hoe," the joint composition of Ben Jonson, George Chapman, and John Marston, published in 1605, and for which the authors were committed to prison, as some passages in it were held to reflect on the Scots. In Act I., Scene 1., Girtred, the daughter of Touchstone, a rich London goldsmith, and who affects to be a fine lady, asks Sir Petronel Flash, a poor knight, who aspires to her hand:—

G. And how chance ye came no sooner, Knight?

SIR P. Faith, I was so entertained in the progress with one Count Epernoum, a Welch Knight; we had a match at baloon, too, with my Lord Whachum, for four crowns.

G. At baboon? Jesu! you and I will play at baboon in the country.

SIR P. O sweet lady; 'tis a strong play with the arm.

G. With arm or leg, or any other member, if it be a Court sport.

Gervase Markham, too, in his "Country Contentments," (1615) tells us that "not inferior to these sports [archery and bowls] either for health or active exercise are the Tenish and Baloone, the first being a pastime in close or open courts, striking little round balls to and fro, either with the palm of the hand or with rackets; the other a strong and moving sport in the open fields with a great ball of double leather fild with winde, and driven to and fro with the strength of a man's arme in a bracer of wood."

In a few years, however, this game appears to have fallen out of favour as a "Court sport." Burton, indeed, expressly tells us, in the "Anatomy of Melancholy" (1660), that "balowns, running at the quintain, and the like, are common recreations of country folks," not like some other pastimes, "which are disports of greater men." Like throwing the hammer and wrestling, of which Peacham, in his "Complete Gentleman" (1622), says: "I hold them exercises not so well beseeming nobility, but rather the soldiers in the camp and the prince's guard," it was a very favourite game at rural gatherings and "feasts," where the country folk assembled, the

elders to exhibit their best bred cattle, while there were games for the lads, dancing for the maids, and a

> Grassy board,
> With flawns, lards, clowted cream, and country dainties stored,

for all.

The most famous of these festivals was the annual meeting that Robert Dover, a Warwickshire attorney, established at Cotswold in James I.'s time, as a countercheck to the spirit of religious austerity that would fain have put a stop to all merry and wholesome outdoor amusements. Dover had a formal authority from the king, and made the sports at "Cotsall" famous all over the kingdom during the forty years they lasted till, as Anthony Wood says, "the rascally rebellion was begun by the Presbyterians, which gave a stop to their proceedings and spoiled all that was generous and ingenious elsewhere." These sports took place at Whitsuntide, and consisted of horse-racing, coursing (Master Page's fallow greyhound who was "outrun on Cotsall" would have won a silver collar if he had been best dog), wrestling, cudgel-playing, balloon, leaping, &c., for the men, with dancing for the maidens.

Burton's allusion to balloon in his Anatomy appears to be the latest in existence. Strutt thinks that Tom D'Urfey may have meant to include it in the expression "Olympian Games," in his reference to the pastimes of Charles II.'s reign, but it seems certainly to have died out with the Stuarts in England.

While, then, in Britain this game was only for a short time in the front rank of pastimes, on the Continent, and especially in Italy, it has ever been, until quite recent years, held in the highest esteem. Books have been written there in the past to show the athletic and manly character of this "game of giants," while Italian municipalities have built courts for the sport, and public bodies have set up busts of famous players. Pallone in those times caused a *furore* throughout Italy, and, even up to about forty years ago, Dr. Fisher, in his little work on the game

("The Game of Pallone," by Anthony L. Fisher, M.D. London: Bell and Daldy, 1865) "recollects witnessing an exhibition of it in Florence, when there was a concourse of people collected similar to what would now be attracted by an opera executed by a company of first-rate artists. At that day, in every town where an arena for the game existed, there was a company of professional players; but the gentlemen of the place also made it their favourite pastime, as we now see in England with regard to cricket. Challenges were frequently sent from the professionals of one town to those of another, and during the game the *élite* of the place of both sexes were constant in their attendance; high bets were made, and a state of excitement prevailed similar to what may now be seen in a country town in England during its annual race week." A company was annually formed, too, of first-rate players from "all Italy," who visited towns noted for their love of the game; in short, in the Italy of that day pallone occupied exactly the place that cricket does among us nowadays. Naturally enough, in the days of political agitation in the country, men's minds were occupied with other matters, and they became indifferent to the game in which they had formerly taken so much pleasure. Some years ago efforts were made to revive the interest once felt in the game in Italy, while Dr. A. L. Fisher wrote his book "with a view to bring this noble game more prominently before the English public," but in both cases the efforts were fruitless. The old enthusiasm for the game seems no longer to exist in Italy; and in England Dr. Fisher did not succeed in gaining a footing for his favourite pastime.

The game is played in Italy in courts something like tennis courts, only with the playing floor several times larger. In the arena at Bologna—a model court specially built by the municipality fifty-six years ago—the floor is a parallelogram three hundred feet long by sixty feet wide, bounded on one of its sides by a high wall, and on the other side and along the ends by galleries for spectators.

Mr. W. W. Story gives a good description of the game in his "Roba di Roma." "Each of the players," he says, "is armed with a *bracciale* or gauntlet of wood, covering the hand, and extending nearly up to the elbow, with which a heavy ball is beaten backwards and forwards, high into the air, from one side to the other. The object of the game is to keep the ball in constant flight, and whoever suffers it to fall dead within his bounds loses. It may, however, be struck in its rebound, though the best strokes are before it touches the ground. The gauntlets are hollow tubes of wood, thickly studded outside with pointed bosses, projecting an inch and a half, and having inside, across the end, a transverse bar, which is grasped by the hand, so as to render them manageable to the wearer. . . . Whenever a ball either falls outside the lateral boundary of the court or is not struck over the central line, it counts against the party playing it. When it flies over the extreme limits it is called a *volata*, and is reckoned the best stroke that can be made. At the [service] end of the lists is a spring board on which the principal player stands. The best batter is always selected for this post; the others are distributed about. Near him stands the pallonaio, whose office is to keep the balls well inflated with air, and he is busy nearly all the time. Facing him, at a short distance, is the mandarino, who gives ball. As soon as the ball leaves the mandarino's hand, the chief batter runs forward to meet it, and strikes it as far and high as he can, with the gauntlet. Four times in succession have I seen a good player strike a volata, with the loud applause of the spectators. When this does not occur, the two sides bat the ball backwards and forwards, from one to the other, sometimes fifteen or twenty times before the point is won; and as it falls here and there, now flying high in the air and caught at once on the gauntlet before touching the ground, now glancing back from the wall which generally forms one side of the lists, the players rush eagerly to hit it, calling loudly to each other, and often displaying great

agility, skill, and strength. The interest now becomes very exciting; the bystanders shout when a good stroke is made, and groan and hiss at a miss, until finally the ball is struck over the lists or lost within them."

The ordinary game consists of three players on each side, the duty of the two "primi," or best players, being to stand well back to return all the long and difficult balls, while the third is on the look-out for any ball that comes between him and the transverse line, or that is not likely to reach his companions.

The ball is five inches in diameter, and is made of two coats of cowhide inflated with air. It weighs twelve ounces, and as the "bracciale," or wooden instrument into which the right hand is inserted to strike with, weighs four pounds, it can at once be seen what a laborious game pallone is. A complete company of players on an exhibition tour consists of twelve individuals, divided into two parties of six; but in consequence of the excessive exertion required in the game, each party plays only for three days in succession, and then rests for three days to recover from the exhaustion consequent on the exertion. The perspiration caused while playing is so profuse that a necessary part of a man's equipment is a napkin in the left hand, to wipe the moisture from his face.

"I have frequently heard Englishmen," says Dr. Fisher, "who had seen pallone played in Italy, express astonishment that so noble and manly a game had never been introduced into England." A correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, too, writing from Florence in July, 1865, expresses his surprise "that so athletic and exciting a sport should never have been naturalised in England, especially as it bears a certain analogy to the national game of cricket." Certainly the "element of danger" supposed to form one of the attractions of cricket is not wanting in the Italian game. There is even perhaps too much of it, for the ground occupied by the player is comparatively of small extent, and the ball, if missed by the person

whose duty it is to receive and drive it back with his bracciale, or spiked gauntlet, generally alights with terrific force among the spectators, whose sudden scrambles to get out of the way form no small part of the diversion for those who are on the opposite side. The Florentine players have a good reputation, and the ground outside Porta Pinti is occupied every evening by a large concourse of spectators, many of whom lay wagers upon the respective players with almost the eagerness of Englishmen at a race-course."

In the winter of 1852–3 an attempt was made to show London how the game was played. At this time there were a great many Italian refugees in the metropolis, many of whom could play pallone. Dr. Fisher took advantage of this circumstance, and, by their means, and the concurrence of a few members of the Italian opera acquainted with this game, who kindly lent their aid to their less fortunate countrymen, he was able to have an exhibition match played at Lord's Cricket Ground, which "was witnessed by a numerous party assembled to see a cricket match, many of whom strongly expressed their admiration of the performance, and a desire to have a repetition of it," but various circumstances obliged the promoter to abandon the intention of further play at that time.

Among the trees of the Luxembourg Gardens of Paris were certain clear square spaces, where parties of three or four played at "ballon," striking backwards and forwards with the fist a light leather ball, inflated with air, about six or eight inches in diameter; that party losing a point on whose side the ball remained. Though this game—identical with the old Roman follis—was a good deal played some years ago, and possibly still may be, yet an attempt made in 1855 to teach the Parisians the scientific development of it not only failed, but so indifferent were the French to the beauties of pallone, that the crack company of Bolognese players, specially brought over, had to go back again to Italy in a week.

While we may not agree with Dr. Fisher that the British

people "would consider it a want of patriotism to learn any foreign game, no matter what might be its merit," it is surprising that none of the many excellent varieties of the tennis family of ball-games in use in various parts of the Continent should ever have been carried across the channel. Our ancestors freely adopted the pastimes of many nations, but we are seemingly content with those they left us. Though its popularity for long suffered eclipse, tennis proper, as we have seen, has always been played by a select few in England; but until the recent revival of the long-dormant lawn tennis, no one seems to have thought of introducing any of the simpler forms of the game that have long been popular on the Continent. Dr. Fisher mentions two of these varieties of tennis games: one, "le jeu de paume au tamis," played in the North of France and in Belgium; the other an Italian game called "tamburello," played with a ball about the dimensions of an ordinary sized orange, made of pieces of cloth covered with wash-leather. This ball is struck by an instrument made like a tambourine—a round framework covered with stout vellum. The rules are those of pallone; and as an exhibition the game is nearly as interesting, while of course it is much less fatiguing, and might easily be modified so that ladies could join in it. Mr. Story tells us that the boys from the studios and shops of Rome call the game pillotta, and play it in the streets of the city with a round parchment-covered bat.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GAME OF THE CELTS.

SOME time ago a correspondent of *Notes and Queries*, writing about cricket, said that he "did not know that Erin had any national sport, except hunting." As there may be many with the same idea, we propose here to show that the Irish and their brother Celts of the Scotch Highlands have a national game, a sport, in its own way, as typical of the fiery Celt as cricket is of the Englishman.

"Hurling," says Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, in his "Ballad Poetry of Ireland," "is a thoroughly national diversion, and is played with intense zeal by parish against parish, barony against barony, county against county, or even province against province. It is played not only by the peasant, but by the students of the university, where it is an established pastime. Twiss, the most sweeping calumniator of Ireland, calls it, if I mistake not, the cricket of barbarians; but, though fully prepared to pay a just tribute to the elegance of the English game, I own that I think the Irish sport fully as civilized, and much better calculated for the display of vigour and activity."

This game flourishes under many different names—hurling, shinty, club, camanach, &c., but everywhere it is played in pretty much the same way.

As most of my readers are probably familiar with the school game of "hockey," which is, in a very mild form, the wild "hurling" of Irish Patrick, or the "camanach" of his brother Donald in the Highlands, I shall say no more of the mode of play in the game than that two opposing parties, armed with

curved sticks, each try to drive the ball through their own goal. Let me rather do for this game what I have already done for golf and football in these pages, give a slight anecdotic sketch of its life among us, with some notable incidents about the game and its lovers.

Donald is disposed to claim an early origin for his favourite game. Golf he looks upon as an effeminate offshoot of it, having its descent through "bandy-ball," a game much in favour with schoolboys as far back as the thirteenth century. Strutt engraves from an old prayer-book of about this period an illustration of two boys playing at bandy-ball, in which the form of the club or bandy is exactly the same as the caman or hurly used by players at our game in the present day.

There appears to be little doubt that this game is the oldest of all ball games in which a bat or other instrument is used; indeed, under one form in which hurling existed in Cornwall, where the bat was subsidiary to the hand, and was only used on occasion, the game is as old as Homer, where, as Pope translates it, the Princess of Corcyra and her maidens play at ball:—

> O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play,
> Their shining veils unbound; along the skies,
> Tost and retost, the ball incessant flies.

This, however, was rather the graceful ball play in which the ancients indulged as a gentle means of exercise: the ball was thrown from hand to hand without any emulation; it is in the games in which hostile parties strove for success that we find the germ of our game. "In the Greek *epikoinos*, or common ball," says Mr. E. B. Tylor, "the ball was put on the middle line, and each party tried to seize it and throw it over the adversary's goal line. This game also lasted on into modern Europe, and our proper English name for it is hurling. . . . Now, as hurling was an ordinary classical game, the ancients need only have taken a stick to drive the ball instead of using hands or feet and would thus have arrived at hockey. But Cory-

don never seems to have thought of borrowing Phillis's crook for the purpose it would have so exactly suited. No mention of games like hockey appears in the ancient world, and the course of invention which brought them into the modern world is at once unexpected and instructive." We owe the use of the bat or club in these games to the Persians, among whom Sir W. Ouseley has traced its use back to before the eighth century. However it may have reached this country, we find our pastime under various names firmly established in Britain many centuries ago. Northbrooke, in 1577, mentions it as a favourite game in Devonshire, while from many sources we see that it was a much practised pastime in the Western Counties generally. In those days, unfortunately, there were no men with any learned leisure among the Celts of Scotland or Ireland to tell us when the game was introduced among them, but, from references in early Gaelic songs and elsewhere, it is pretty clear that this ball-play must have been adopted by the Gael very long ago.

In Mr. J. F. Campbell's "Popular Tales of the West Highlands" the references to this game show us in what high estimation it was held by the Western Celts. These strange stories—in which, their collector tells us, "amidst curious rubbish you will find sound sense if you look for it"—are of great antiquity, and have been orally handed down through many generations of story-tellers, who recited them to crowds of people who used to gather during the long winter nights to the houses of those who were esteemed good story-tellers. Many of these stories closely resemble the "Nursery Tales" common to all languages, but though Mr. Campbell's object may have been chiefly to make a contribution to the "new science of 'Storyology,'" the student of Celtic manners will find in the local details of these recitations much most interesting information on life and customs in the West.

It would be impossible for a story-teller, speaking before a critical audience, to make his heroes play habitually at games

thought little of, or seldom indulged in, by his hearers; we are entitled, therefore, to believe that the games oftenest mentioned in the stories were the most popular with the people. Shinty is very often referred to. In the story called "The Knight of Riddles," the Hero of the White Shield takes the wandering boy past a palace, beside which twelve men were playing shinty. The boy thought he would join them, but he had not played long till a quarrel arose and he was violently treated. When Osgar, the son of Oisein, was a boy at school, we are told in another story, the pupils played shinty during the mid-day interval, and so expert at the game was Osgar that his side always won when sides were of equal number. In the last of these stories we need refer to here, the "Rider of Grianaig," the adventures of the youngest of the soldier's three sons are caused by his persuading his brothers to play the game on the lawn of the Knight of Greenock. "They went to play shinty and Ian won three hails [goals] from his brothers. The Knight put his head out of a window, and he saw them playing at shinty, and he took great wrath that anyone had the heart to play shinty on his lawn, a thing that was bringing the loss of his daughters to his mind and putting contempt on him." The angry Knight had the lads brought before him, and as a punishment he sent Ian away in a ship to search for his daughters. During the voyage the young man meets with many wonderful adventures before he succeeds in rescuing the youngest of the missing ladies, whom he gets for his wife.

Early in the seventeenth century there was no greater "Chief in the North" than Patrick, Earl of Orkney, cousin-german to King James VI. So grand and ambitious were Earl Patrick's views that, in February, 1615, he was beheaded in the High Street of Edinburgh for usurping royal authority in his island estate. Our ball-play appears to have been a favourite game of his, and it is said that when, in 1604, he paid a visit to the Earl of Sutherland, he was "honourably entertained with comedies, and all other sports and recreations that Earl John

could make him," among them being camanach matches. Martin, who visited St. Kilda in 1697, tells us that the natives "use for their diversion short clubs and balls of wood. The sand is a fair field for the sport and exercise, in which they take great pleasure and are very nimble at it. They play for eggs, fowls, hooks, or tobacco, and so eager are they for victory that they strip themselves to their shirts to obtain it."

Curiously enough, though we see from Fitzstephen, Northbrooke, and others that the game was a popular one at a very early age of our history, yet it escaped mention in all the Acts against unlawful games, that is, those statutes prohibiting farm servants, labourers, artificers, &c., from playing tennis, football, handball, &c. Indeed, it never appears to have got into Parliament at all, unless the mysterious game of somewhat similar name proclaimed against just before the Restoration was our game. On July 13, 1659, the House of Commons ordered "that a Proclamation be issued prohibiting all horse races, cock matches, bull baiting, *out-hurlings*, public wrestling, and other meetings of like nature until the first day of October next."

Carew, in his "Survey of Cornwall" (1602), minutely describes two kinds of hurling played there: one, in which the players of the opposing sides "match themselves by payres, one embracing another," and so strive, man against man, to goal the ball; the other, a large gathering of players, not unlike the great district matches that used to take place in Ireland and the Highlands during the last century, and which are being revived again, to a certain extent, in the North of Scotland just now. Carew says that "two or three or more parishes agree to hurl against two or three other parishes. The matches are usually made by gentlemen, and their goales are either those gentlemen's houses, or some towns or villages, three or four miles asunder, of which either side maketh choice after the nearnesse of their dwellings. When they meet there is neyther comparing of numbers nor matching of men, but a

silver ball is cast up, and that company which can catch and carry it by force or slight to the place assigned, gaineth the ball and the victory." This game looks more like handball than like the hurling of to-day, but a club or bat was used at the old game. Strutt cites a passage in "Philogamus," a book published in Queen Elizabeth's time, where the instrument is called "a clubbe" or "hurle-batte." Besides, both in hurling and shinty, till recently, "carrying" was quite allowable. A writer in Charles Knight's *Penny Magazine* (No. 181, for Jan. 31, 1835, in which there is a very spirited drawing of the game as played in Scotland), tells us he witnessed a match in which one of the players, having gained possession of the ball, contrived to run a mile with it in his hand, pursued by all the other players, till he reached the goal and his victory was admitted.

In early days, in all the three kingdoms, Sunday was the great day for this game, as it still is in many parts of Ireland. There are some curious anecdotes told in connection with this. Mr. Halliwell quotes from a Cornish book a curious belief in the county about a "judgment" that overtook a party of Sunday hurlers. There are a number of large stones, set in a kind of square figure, near St. Clare in Cornwall, which are called "the Hurlers," "from an odd opinion held by the common people, that they are so many men petrified or changed into stone for profaning the Sabbath day by hurling the ball, an exercise for which the people of that country have always been famous. 'The Hurlers' are oblong, rude, and unhewed, and have been conjectured to be sepulchral monuments."

Hugh Miller, in his Cromarty sketches, "Scenes and Legends of the North of Scotland," tells a somewhat similar story:—"Every Sunday forenoon they [the people of Nigg] attended church, but the evening of the day was devoted to the common athletic games of the country. A robust, active young fellow, named Donald Roy, was deemed their best club player; and as the game was a popular one, his

Sabbath evenings were usually spent at the club. He was a farmer, and the owner of a small herd of black cattle. On returning home one Sabbath evening, after vanquishing the most skilful of his competitors, he found the carcass of one of his best cattle lying across the threshold, where she had dropped down a few minutes before. Next Sabbath he headed the club players as usual, and on returning at the same hour, he found the dead body of a second cow lying in exactly the same place. 'Can it be possible?' thought he, 'that the Whigs are in the right after all?' A challenge, however, had been given to the club players of a neighbouring parish, and as the game was to be played out on the following Sabbath, he could not bring himself to resolve the question. When the day came, Donald played beyond all praise, and, elated by the victory which his exertions had at length secured to his parish, he was striding homewards through a green lane, when a fine cow, which he had purchased only a few days before, came pressing through the fence, and flinging herself down before him, expired at his feet with a deep horrible bellow. 'This is God's judgment,' exclaimed Donald; 'the Whigamores are in the right; I have taken *His* day, and He takes *my* cattle.' He never afterwards played at the club, and such was the change effected on his character that at the Revolution he was ordained an elder of the Church, and he became afterwards one of the most notable worthies of the North."

Notwithstanding Donald Roy's defection, the game flourished in the Highlands for the next century after his time. After the "Forty-five," however, for many reasons, shinty and other out-door games fell into disuse among the clansmen. The Rev. A. Stewart, of Moulin in Perthshire, writing in 1793, says:—"It is observable that those gymnastic exercises which constituted the chief pastime of the Highlanders forty or fifty years ago, have almost totally disappeared. At every fair or meeting of the country people there were contests at racing, wrestling, putting the stone, &c.; and on holidays, all the

males of a district, young and old, met to play at football, but oftener at shinty. These games are now only practised by schoolboys." About the same time an Irish clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Ledwich, in the Statistical Account of the Parish of Aghaboe, Queen's County, laments that the "national character of the original natives is with us entirely lost. Their diversions of football and hurling are seldom practised."

Both among the Irish and Scotch, however, there were enthusiastic lovers of the game whose devotion to it carried it over this dead portion of its history into the prosperous times of this century. Strutt tells us how greatly amused he was to see the skill and enthusiasm of the Irishmen who "hurled to goals" in the fields at the back of the British Museum; but perhaps as good an instance of love for the game as any can be found in this quotation from Mr. Sylvanus Urban in 1795: "It may be mentioned that Provost Brown, late of Inverary, when 100 years old, headed one of the contending parties at a shinty match, and carried the town colours in procession among the victors. He died in the 116th year of his age."

This patriarch may have seen the dawn of shinty's new day. With this century the game got a new lease of life, which it is not likely again to lose. On New Year's day (in the old style) this is the game nearly always played in the Highlands. District plays district, or the picked men of one county strive against the flower of another. Most interesting, perhaps, are those mimic fights between neighbouring clans, that recall the contests of a century ago. When the writer was a boy in the Highlands, crowds used to assemble from far and near to be spectators of the annual shinty match in Strathglass, between the Frasers—often headed by Lord Lovat, their chief, or some of his family—and the Chisholms, under their chief. The annual contest may be, and most probably is, still played every "old New Year." At Edinburgh, one of the "things to be done" by the holiday-makers on New Year's day is to witness the "wild Highlandmen" resident in the Scottish

capital play their annual match at our game. Almost thoroughly civilised Macs, whose "brawny limbs" for three hundred odd days in the year are hidden by the garb of "the Saxon," and whose hands usually know no mightier weapon than the pen, on that day don their kilts, grasp their *camans*, and spend two hours of wild excitement and violent exercise in the Queen's Park at their national game. Of course, there are among them players who practise hard for most of the cold weather, but the majority of the "grave and reverend seigniors," notable citizens, whose presence gives interest to the contest, renew on this day only their hot and lusty youth.

Want of time and opportunity to practise their game is a great drawback to its enjoyment in many country districts. It is not that men who have been working hard all day are too tired to indulge in such an energetic amusement, but that, by the time the day's task is over in the shinty season, the short day has closed in, and there is no daylight left for the game. There are no Saturday half-holidays in most country districts yet, so the only thing left is to play by moonlight. On many a clear, frosty moonlight night do the country lads contend for the honour of "hailing" (goals are always "hails" in Scotland at our game) the ball, and wonderful is the skill which the crack players display, as they "birl" (or "dribble," as football players call it) the ball along—running it on past all obstacles and attacks, and keeping it well within reach of their club-head until they have passed all their opponents, and the hail lies before them within reach of the good player's *first* long shot.

At Candlemas time, and on Fastern's E'en, the game is played in some districts still, but the matches on these occasions nowadays are extremely few when we compare them with the contests of the old days, when these festivals were religiously observed as holiday times all over the Highlands. At the old pagan festival of Beltane, too, a shinty match was, till times almost within living memory, a "survival" of the old

sun-worship handed down to us from our fire-worshipping forefathers. At Edinburgh, about the beginning of the century, Hallowe'en was the appointed time, and the great market called Hallow Fair, the proper place for all players to provide themselves with shinty sticks and balls. Boys usually preferred to play with part of the vertebral bone of a sheep instead of a ball, but if one *did* buy a ball, undoubtedly the best were the "penny Herioters"—excellent balls made by the foundationers of "Jingling Geordie" Heriot; a branch of business, by the way, still cultivated by the inmates of the Hospital, though, like everything else, their price has risen since then, and Christopher North could no longer talk in his hearty way of an hour's brisk fun behind a "penny Herioter."

It is easy to account for the popularity of this game among Celtic peoples. It is a stirring, impetuous pastime, with no dry intervals to test the patience—exactly the game suited to the Celtic nature. There may be something in another reason alleged, that Donald or Patrick always likes a weapon in his hand, both in the contests of peace and war. When Englishmen quarrelled, they fought with fists, but the Celt always used claymore or cudgel. So in their games, and it is perhaps this that gave to their manly game, in Celtic eyes, many recommendations that football—the nearest approach to it in Lowland games—lacks. Mr. J. F. Campbell tells two little anecdotes that show how hot and furious Celts on both sides of the water sometimes get over their game, but it is only fair to say that contests, as a rule, even between keenly rival parishes, are conducted with much good humour and quite as few disputes as in many big football matches.

Mr. Campbell was once at a Christmas hurling match in Ireland, where the game was played on ice on a lake. The owner of the lake sent down his Scotch butler with bread and cheese and whisky for the players. For no apparent cause, a furious battle began, "but in ten minutes the storm was over, the butler was up again in his cart dispensing the refreshments, the man in

the bush was consoling himself with a dram, and all was peace. But that night the country party took up a position behind a stone wall, and when the others came, they sallied forth and there was a battle royal."

"So I have seen a parish shinty match in the Highlands become so hot and furious that the leaders were forced to get two pipers and march their troops out of the field in opposite directions to prevent a civil war of parishes."

The fact that in the cradle of humanity there has for ages existed a game which is exactly shinty on horseback, helps to support the contention that our game is the oldest of bat-and-ball games. Not only have those who believe this got the polo of the East, but they contend that in the West they have another proof that this, or something very like it, is the game that would most likely suggest itself to primitive man. Lacrosse, the famous ball-play of the North American Indians, has a strong family likeness to hurling, especially to that variety of it that Strutt tells us he saw played by the Irish in London, when they used a bat, flat on both sides, and curving at the lower end ; they caught up and carried the ball on the flat sides for a considerable time, and then either hit it along with the curve or tossed it to their companions, who were following behind, ready to catch it and help it forward to the goal. It is quite clear, however, that Lacrosse was introduced into America by Europeans, Spanish or French, in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, and thus, of course, is destroyed any argument founded on its supposed originality of invention by the Indians of America.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GAME OF PALL MALL.

AMONG the many things this country has owed to her lively neighbour across the channel, undoubtedly one was the game of pall mall. While in England no trace of the pastime can be found till about the seventeenth century, we know it flourished in France at least as early as the thirteenth. Those who like to begin at the very beginning in such a matter as this tell us that the ancestor of pall mall was the "chugan" of the Persians—a game so-called from the long-handled mallet which the mounted players used in the pastime. This old polo-mallet is the root from which have sprung all the clubs, bats, and mallets of croquet, golf, cricket and other similar games. We first hear of pall mall in Europe as a game of Languedoc, where, according to Ducange, it was called "chicane"—a manifest corruption of its Eastern name of "chugan"—though the other provinces, in adopting the pastime, dropped this name and gave it that of "le jeu de mail," under which, some centuries afterwards, it crossed the channel, and became so fashionable in the England of the Stuart Kings.

The earliest reference to pall mall we have been able to find in this country is in the papers presented to Norfolk, Sussex, and Sir Ralph Sadler, the Commissioners appointed by Elizabeth in 1568, nominally to inquire into the conduct towards his Queen of the Scotch Regent Murray, but in reality to try Mary, Queen of Scots, for complicity in the murder of Darnley. When, in February 1567, a fortnight after the tragedy in

the Kirk o' Field, the Scottish Queen went, by the advice of her Council and physicians, to Seton Castle, she set all the scandal-loving tongues, native and foreign, in her kingdom, a-wagging. Sir William Drury, writing to Cecil from Berwick, regales the Secretary with some of the absurd stories then current, such as that the Queen and Bothwell had been shooting at the butts against Huntley and Seton, for a dinner at Tranent, which the latter had to pay — a story he had afterwards to contradict, and tell Cecil he had been misinformed in regard to the Scottish Queen's proceedings, as she had never stirred from Seton. The undoubted fact that Mary had never "stirred from Seton," however, had only this effect, that it transferred the scene of her "shameful diversions" to the grounds of that house. When George Buchanan appeared as one of the counsellors before the Commissioners at York, and afterwards at Westminster, he charged his Queen, in the "Detection" he presented, with going every day into a field near the Castle, accompanied by a great crowd of nobles, to play "ludos consuetos nec eos plane muliebres;" and, though he does not tell us what those games of the time, which were not quite suitable for ladies, were, luckily another document in the proceedings, written in the vernacular, is more explicit. The Earl of Murray's own "Articles" say that for a "few dayes aftir the murthir, remaining at Halyrude hous, she [then] past to Seytoun, exercising hir one day richt oppenlie at the fieldis, *with the palmall and goif.*" It is beside our purpose here to show how it has been conclusively proved that these statements are as false as Drury's shooting story: the charge is chiefly interesting to us because it proves that our game was known in Scotland at this time, even though we may not be able to claim for it the full force of Buchanan's language, and say that it was one of the games in popular use then in Scotland.

South of the Tweed, pall mall does not appear to have been

played for at least thirty years after the sitting of the Westminster Commission. It can hardly have been introduced in 1598, for in that year Sir Robert Dallington, in his "Method for Travel," extols its merits, and suggests its introduction in these words: "Among all the exercises of France, I prefer none before the paile maille, both because it is a gentleman-like sport, not violent, and yields good occasion and opportunity of discourse as they walke from one marke to the other. I marvell among many more apish and foolish toys which we have brought out of France, that we have not brought this sport also into England."

Whether or not it was owing to the traveller's praises, the game was adopted in England very soon after the publication of Dallington's book. It is one of the "fair and pleasant field games" that King James I. recommends to Prince Henry in the "Basilikon Doron;" and though the King himself does not seem to have been a player at the game, we have abundant evidence that it became very popular at Court during the early years of the seventeenth century.

Though Dr. Jeremy Taylor includes pall mall among the games that are "lawful" if played in moderation, and for "refreshment" only, and not for money, it is very doubtful if he saw it played during the gloomy dozen years before the publication of the "Ductor Dubitantium;" but, when the "white rose bloomed again," among the pastimes that returned in the royal train was pall mall. Indeed, the palmy days of the game were from the Restoration to the Revolution. During this quarter-century it was one of the most fashionable of games at Court; at the Restoration pall mall, like the King, got its "own again," and though, as we shall see, Dr. Chambers is hardly correct in saying, "it is rather surprising that it should have so entirely gone out, there being no trace of it after the Revolution," undoubtedly the landing of King William deposed the game from a pride of place that had no rival among outdoor sports except, perhaps, tennis.

On April 2, 1661, Mr. Secretary Pepys walks "to St. James's Park, where I saw the Duke of York playing at pall mall, the first time I ever saw the sport." Probably the alley the Duke played on was the new mall King Charles had, among other improvements in the Park, caused to be made in place of the old mall that occupied the site of the street now called after it, Pall Mall. Though this avenue does not appear to have been enclosed as a street till about 1690, even in the time of the Commonwealth it began to be built upon, and Charles immediately after his return had a new mall laid out; which still bears the name then given to it as being the arena of our game.

We find many references to the new mall and its frequenters in contemporary writers. Pepys, in September, 1663, falls a-gossiping with the keeper of the alley, "who was sweeping of it; who told me of what the earth is mixed that do floor the mall, and that over all there is cockle shells powdered, and spread to keep it fast, which, however, in dry weather turns to dust and deadens the ball."

We see this smoothness of the alley alluded to by the flatterer Waller, when, in his poem on St. James's Park, he describes the Merry Monarch engaged in this favourite game of his:—

> Here a well polished mall gives us the joy,
> To see our Prince his matchless force employ;
> His manly posture and his graceful mien,
> Vigour and youth in all his motions seen;
> No sooner has he touched the flying ball,
> But 'tis already more than half the mall,
> And such a fury from his arm has got
> As from a smoking culverin 'twere shot.

On January 4, 1664, we find the Secretary to the Admiralty again writing about our game. After a visit to the tennis court, where the king is playing, and being driven away in disgust with the behaviour of the Courtiers, whose "open

flattery is beastly," Mr. Secretary quite recovers his spirits at a little scene of a directly opposite nature he witnesses when he walks "afterwards to St. James's Parke, seeing people play at pell mell, when it pleased me mightily to hear a gallant, lately come from France, swear at one of his companions for suffering his man (a spruce blade) to be so saucy as to strike a ball while his master was playing on the mall."

Evelyn, too, speaks of King Charles's fondness for this game; but while we find such ample testimony to its popularity at Court, there is nothing to show that the game ever became a favourite with the citizens of London generally, or that it was ever played in the provinces, where, however, a game of a ruder kind, but the same in principle, existed as a children's game.

No rules of the game have been preserved, but from contemporary prints and descriptions we can get a good idea of how pall mall was played. Cotgrave, in 1611, tells us that "Palemaille is a game wherein a round box bowle is with a mallet strucke through a high arch of iron (standing at either end of an alley, one), which he that can do at the fewest blows, or at the number agreed on, winnes." A similar description is given in a note to a conversation in a very rare book published in 1621, and quoted by Brand in his "Popular Antiquities," where a lady says to her companion: "If we had paile mals, it were good to play in this alley, for it is a reasonable good length, straight and even." This, along with what we have already seen Waller and Pepys say about the "well-polished mall," shows that a prime requisite for the game was evenness of surface in the playground, as is necessary in our own day for pall mall's descendant, croquet. Mr. Augustus Hare surely must have overlooked this when, in his recently published "Walks in London," he wrote that the name of the street Pall Mall "is derived from a game still popular in the deserted streets of old, sleepy Italian cities, and deriving its name from *palla*, a ball, and *maglia*, a mallet." It is difficult

to say which is the more unsuitable, the game for the street, however sleepy, or the street for the game. Very probably, however, the game Mr. Hare was thinking of is pallone, or pillotta, with which, as we have seen, the Italians, with the strange perversity that made 'prentices play football in the Strand, may waken up their sleepy streets now and then.

In a view of the garden and terrace of the Palace of Nanci, which Jacques Callot, the eminent French engraver, dedicated to the Duchess of Lorraine in 1624, we find a representation of a game at pall mall. "The scene of the pastime," says a writer, describing the engraving in *Notes and Queries*, "is a broad straight walk, running between *parterres*, and apparently a hundred feet in length. At either end is erected a single hoop, of width and height seemingly two and a half feet. Several balls are grouped close to one of these hoops, round which stand several players, mallet in hand, while a few feet in front of the other hoop another player is about to deliver a stroke, and is evidently aiming to send his ball up among its companions near the goal opposite him. Mallets, balls, hoops, and players, though on a minute scale, are all so distinctly drawn that no mistake can occur in perceiving at a glance the action of the performers and the instruments of performance."

Fortunately, however, we have not to depend upon illustrations for our knowledge of the "instruments of performance." A lucky discovery in London brought to light several specimens of both the mallets and balls used in the old game. In January, 1854, in the old house, No. 68, Pall Mall, the residence of the late Mr. Vulliamy, and for more than a century in the possession of his family, a parcel of pall mall mallets and some balls were found in a lumber room, where they had been carefully packed and laid away. "They are," said Mr. Albert Way, F.S.A., "very probably the only existing reliques of the obsolete game of pall mall in this country."

A pair of the mallets and one of the balls were presented by

Mr. G. Vulliamy to the British Museum. The mallet is very like the familiar croquet mallet of our own day, except that the head is slightly curved, and the flat ends are cut obliquely upwards, and strongly hooped with iron. The handle is about three feet eight inches long, and about a foot of the upper part of it is wound round with soft white leather: these little differences showing that the duty of this mallet was to drive a ball further than the croquet mallet is required to do. The ball is two inches and a half in diameter only, and is made of root of box.

While all the authorities we have noted unite in showing us that the object of the player at pall mall was to drive a ball along a specially prepared alley—often lined with boards to prevent the ball from escaping—and through "the pass," or high arch at each end, according to a contemporary print which Charles Knight has reproduced in his "Pictorial History of England," instead of the pass and the "well-polished mall," the goal must sometimes have been a ring, suspended from an arm projecting from a pole, and hanging at a height of about ten or twelve feet above the ground, which appears to be a rather rough piece of grass. Of course, with an ordinary mallet it would be impossible to send the ball through this ring, and accordingly the implements used seem to have been shaped like golf clubs. This must have been the variety of the game alluded to by an anonymous author in the reign of James I., who tells an anecdote of Prince Henry "playing at goff—a play not unlike to pale-maille." This appears to have puzzled Strutt, for, as he says, "if the definition of pall mall given by Cotgrave be correct, it will be found to differ materially from golf." The explanation, however, seems clear enough; there were two kinds of pall mall, one a dainty game, the other a rougher pastime, played in the fields on ground whose ups and downs may have been chosen as an addition to the attractions of the game, just as the "hazards" of the golfing greens are half the fun in that fine game.

Dr. Chambers, as we have seen, is surprised that such a healthful game, and one of such a social nature, should have gone out so entirely, "there being no trace of it after the Revolution"; but it is by no means certain that the game has ever been allowed entirely to die out in this kingdom; indeed, there seems to be pretty good evidence that under various names, and in modified forms, a game virtually pall mall existed in the country from the date of the last records of the old pastime till croquet took the nation by storm a quarter of a century ago.

Mr. Albert Way has been unable to ascertain exactly at what time pall mall ceased to be in vogue, but he has clearly shown from old plates of St. James's Park that the date of the decline was between 1716 and 1724. Among the plates engraved for that "Britannia Illustrata," produced in 1716-19, is a picture of St. James's Palace and the Park. "A brief description notices amongst the attractions of the latter, 'un très beau mail,' shown in the plate, and occupying the central avenue of the long walk, planted probably under the direction of Le Notre, and still known as 'the Mall.' It here appears to have been separated from the avenues on either side by a low barricade, upon the rail of which persons are seated; this served doubtless to confine the ball within bounds and keep off intruders." Two gentlemen are engaged in playing the game with mallets precisely similar to those found in Mr. Vulliamy's house, but, though "the engravers have not neglected to represent the artificial surface of the 'well polished mall,'" they have omitted to put in a "pass" at either end of the alley.

In 1716, then, we may hold that the game was still played, but when a later representation of the Park appeared in an enlarged edition of this work in 1724, pall mall must have either gone greatly out of fashion or perhaps fallen entirely into disuse, for though the Mall is distinctly shown in this "Nouveau Théâtre de la Grande Bretagne," in no part are its occupants pall mall players, but all the avenues are given up to the ladies

and fashionable loungers who continued up to the beginning of this century to hold the Mall in high favour as a promenade.

> The ladies, gaily dressed, the Mall adorn
> With various dyes and paint the sunny morn,

says Gay, in his "Trivia," about the promenade in his time, while Mr. Hare quotes for us a wail over its departed glories when eclipsed by its rival, Hyde Park, in the early years of this century: "Here could be seen in one moving mass, extending the whole length of the Mall, five thousand of the most lovely women in this country of female beauty; all splendidly attired, and accompanied by as many well-dressed men."

But though in the original pall mall, as a mild punster has put it, clubs took the place of mallets, and the new ground of Charles II. knew the old game no more, it seems possible to trace the pastime under other names up till the present time. Strutt, in his article on "Ring-ball," shows that in the seventeenth century that game, then a children's amusement, "consisted in striking a ball with a bandy through a ring fastened into the ground. A similar kind of pastime, I am informed, exists to this day in the north of England; it is played in a ground or alley appropriated to the purpose, and a ball is to be driven from one end of it to the other with a mallet . . . towards an arch of iron, through which it is necessary for the ball to be passed." This brings the pastime into this century, but for the next trace of the game we must cross St. George's Channel. According to a writer in the new edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" (1877), Mr. Dickson, an ivory turner of Gracechurch Street, London, remembers having made a set of croquet implements for Ireland over forty years ago. This is a faint enough proof of its existence in perhaps more than an isolated case, but in 1852, as most croquet players know, the courtly old pastime was brought back again into the country from the South of France by a young Irish

lady, under whose auspices it was played on a lawn at the late Lord Lonsdale's seat in Ireland. Four years afterwards a well-known purveyor of pastime requisites saw the game in the sister isle, and began to manufacture croquet implements in England. Almost at once the game began a new lease of wonderful popularity, but now it seems as if it were destined to obey that law in the life of most contrivances, and drop into disuse just as it has attained perfection.

CHAPTER VIII.

OLD FOOTBALL GOSSIP.

Thir ar the bewteis of the fute ball.

Poem in the Maitland MSS.

It is within comparatively recent times that football ceased to be a rude and lawless pastime of the people of this country. When put down by the force of public opinion, on account of the dangers attending its pursuit as then played on certain long-established football saturnalia, the game was kept alive almost entirely at the public schools for the thirty years before the great athletic revival that followed the Volunteer movement in 1860. Football as played at Rugby was likest the old rough game; how it was and is played we all know from "Tom Brown." At other schools, as Harrow, kicking the ball only was allowed, and from these two great types the game, under the fostering care of the Union and the Association, became the scientific winter sport so popular just now under its two different phases. This later aspect of football, however, lies outside the special purpose of this chapter, which is to gather together some of the many notable incidents in the long career of the old football—the rough, unscientific game of our ancestors for many centuries on both sides of the Border.

Indeed, except in name, the new and the old games have little in common. The roughest "Rugby game" of to-day is mild and harmless when compared with the contests of two or three hundred years ago, when parish fought parish, or all the men of one county kicked their hardest to defeat a neighbour-

ing shire. In its primitive form the game was merely a trial of speed, strength, and endurance; there were no rules and little science. Naturally, therefore, when the player could use any means to bring victory to his side, a premium was put upon violence, and the roughness of the game soon greatly increased. The heroes of the field became those who could plunge into the struggling mass of players, grappling right and left, and giving at least as good as they got in "hacks" on the shins, or more direct blows that laid opposing players sprawling on their backs, with a strong probability of serious damage to limb or even to life. Victory in such a struggle was to be looked for more from the reckless use of muscular strength than from agility or skill; so violent, indeed, did many of the matches become, that at a very early period attempts were made to put them down by authority as a public nuisance. "From this Court," writes James I. to his eldest son, "I debarre all rough and violent exercises, as the footeball, meeter for lameing than making able the users thereof." The author of the following quatrain in the Maitland MSS. grimly recites the beauties of the game in much the same strain:—

> Brissit brawnis and brokin banis;
> Stryf, discorde, and waistie wanis; [dwellings]
> Cruikit in eld, syn halt withall;
> Thir ar the bewteis of the fute ball,—

while in later days we find Bishop Butler, when head-master of Shrewsbury, though he was himself an old Rugbeian, forbidding football in the earlier years of his reign in the western school, and denouncing it as "only fit for butcher boys."

It is difficult to determine when football originated among us, though it is clear we owe its introduction to the Romans. The Greeks had a game called "episkuros," which is described in "Smith's Dictionary of Antiquities" as "the game of football, played in much the same way as with us, by a great number of persons divided into two parties opposed to one another." A

similar ball game seems to have been played by the Romans, though it is rather uncertain under what name, and from them the old Britons picked up the pastime. Fitz Stephen alludes to it, about 1175, among the pastimes of the youth of London in the time of Henry II., when on Shrove Tuesday all the lads went out to the fields of the suburbs, after dinner, to play. The first actual mention of the game as football—pila pedina—occurs in the proclamation of Edward III., in 1365, when that king found it necessary to put down our game and several others, because they interfered with the all-important practice of archery among his subjects. Eighty years afterwards the Scottish king had, for the same reason, to pass the first of a series of Acts against this and other "unprofitabill sportis"; but as he and his followers, keen players all, paid little attention to their own edicts, the game naturally continued quite as popular as ever. Thus, to give one instance, we find the High Treasurer of James IV., in 1497, a few years after Parliament passed one of those Acts, paying two shillings "to Jame Dog to buy fut balles to the king" while at Stirling, in April. In the next reign it was a popular game with all classes in Scotland. That type of the knighthood of his time, Squire Meldrum, of Sir David Lindsay's poem, was a proficient in the game:—

> He won the prize above them all,
> Both at the butts and the foot ball,

the Lord Lyon tells us, while the same poet, in a

> Flash of that satiric rage,
> Which, bursting on the early stage,
> Branded the vices of the age
> And broke the keys of Rome,

makes a priest boast that, though he does not preach,

> I wot there is not one among you all
> Mair ferylie can play at the foot ball.

Barclay, the priest of St. Mary Ottery, in Devon, who adapted

Brandt's "Ship of Fools," has left us in his "Eclogues" a lively picture of football in a rural district in 1514 :—

> And now in the winter, when men kill the fat swine,
> They get the bladder and blow it great and thin,
> With many beans or peason put within,
> It rattleth, soundeth, and shineth clear and fair,
> While it is thrown and cast up in the air,
> Each one contendeth and hath a great delight
> With foot and with hand the bladder for to smite :
> If it fall to ground they lift it up again,
> This wise to labour they count it for no pain,
> Running and leaping they drive away the cold :
> The sturdy ploughmen, lusty, strong, and bold,
> Overcometh the winter with driving the football,
> Forgetting labour and many a grievous fall.

And from many other sources we can gather that the game enjoyed a fair share of popularity for many ages.

Shrove Tuesday was the great day in the year for football matches in all parts of the kingdom. A great many of these contests were held in the streets of towns, when windows had to be barricaded, women kept indoors, and the place given over for the day to a contest that too often ended in fights and broken bones. Strutt quotes a Chester antiquary, who says that "it had been the custom, time out of mind, for the shoemakers yearly on the Shrove Tuesday to deliver to the drapers, in the presence of the Mayor of Chester, at the cross on the Rodehee, one ball of leather called a football, of the value of three shillings and fourpence, or above, to play at from thence to the Common Hall of the said city; which practice was productive of much inconvenience, and therefore this year (1540), by consent of the parties concerned, the ball was changed into six glayves of silver of the like value, as a prize for the best runner that day upon the aforesaid Rodehee."

Perhaps in no place was this Shrovetide sport pursued with greater energy than at Scone, in Perthshire. The sides consisted of the married and single men of the neighbourhood,

who assembled at the village cross at two in the afternoon of the "Fastern's E'en," as Shrove Tuesday is called in Scotland. At the appointed hour the ball was thrown up, and the game, by immemorial custom, had to last till sunset. The minister of the parish describes the game thus in Sir John Sinclair's "Statistical Account of Scotland": The player who at any time got the ball into his hands ran with it till he was overtaken by one of the opposite party; then, if he could shake himself loose from those on the opposite side who seized him, he ran on; if not, he threw the ball from him, unless it was wrested from him by the other party, but no one was allowed to kick it! The object of the married men was to "hang" it, that is, to put it three times into a small hole on the moor, which was the *dool* or limit on the one hand; that of the bachelors was to "drown" the ball, or dip it three times into a deep place in the river, the goal on the other side. The party who could effect either of these objects won the game; but if neither side succeeded in winning a goal, the ball was cut into two equal parts at sunset. In the course of the game there was usually such violence between the parties that this match gave rise to a proverb in Scotland, "All is fair at the Ba' of Scone." Tradition said that this match was instituted centuries ago to commemorate the victory of a Scone champion over an Italian knight who had challenged the chivalry of the county. However this may be, while the custom lasted, every man, gentle or simple, in the district had to turn out to support his side, on pain of fine. At the time the minister wrote (1796), this old match had been discontinued for a few years, and it has never been revived. Writers on "survivals" of old superstitious customs hold that the Candlemas and Beltane games of ball are, like the Breton game of Soûle, lingering vestiges of the old worship paid by the Celts to the sun-god. It is interesting in this connection to read the words of a writer in an early number of *Household Words*, which prove how persistently old customs cling

to districts, and how recently it was necessary for the pulpit to wage war with the remains of heathen rites in Scotland.

"In the year 1826 or 1827," we are told, "the writer heard a sermon against heathen observances preached in the parish church of Stow, a village twenty-four miles to the south of Edinburgh. The pastoral district of Gala-water, in which Stow is situated, was at that time much less occupied with agricultural and other active pursuits than it now is, and its inhabitants were then attached to the observance of several annual solemnities of pagan origin, regarding which, perhaps, they are now less enthusiastic. The special occasion of the sermon was the approach of Fastern's E'en, or Shrove Tuesday, as it is called south of the Tweed. The custom was on that day for the married and unmarried men of the parish to play a match at handball. The day, till within a few years of the date mentioned, had from time immemorial been ushered in by ringing the church bell. This being persisted in in defiance of the minister, was at last discontinued. The ball was the remaining feature of the festival. The first proceeding occurred at two in the afternoon, when the ball was thrown over the church. The contest then began; the one party striving to convey the ball to a given point about half a mile up the valley, and the other party trying to take it about a similar distance in the opposite direction. The down-water winning place was the Lady's Well, a famous spring at or near which tradition says the Virgin Mary descended and left her footprint on a large stone. In the sermon referred to, the preacher pointed out that the ball sport of Fastern's E'en was a mongrel relic of paganism and popery, in which it was sinful to participate. He also said that the superstitious practices of the district peculiar to the 'daft days,' to Beltane, and to Candlemas were equally to be eschewed."

The famous match that up to about forty years ago used to begin in the market-place of Derby on Shrove Tuesday afternoon is a good example of the old game south of the Tweed.

The good folks of Derby turned out in all their bravery to witness the struggle. Ladies filled the windows overlooking the market-place, where, at 2 P.M., the men of St. Peter's parish met to do battle with all comers from the other parishes of the town. The ball was of very strong leather, a foot in diameter, and stuffed hard with cork shavings. At the appointed hour this ball was tossed into the air, and the mass of about a thousand players made a rush at it, the one side, whose rallying-cry was "St. Peter's," trying to drive the ball towards their goal, the gate of a nursery ground about a mile out of town, while the "All Saints" party as strenuously fought to goal the ball against a distant water-mill wheel. It was the policy of the St. Peter's party to get the ball into the river which leads towards their goal. A man swimming with the floating ball had a good chance of getting it far on its way; but the great struggle was in carrying it across the ground that separated the landing-place and the goal-gate. The brook on which was the water-mill sometimes helped the other party; but so great was the press of players that goals were generally taken by stratagem, very seldom by direct and open kicking. Many amusing stories are told of how wily players have slipped unawares through the strong guard that surrounded the goals and brought victory to their side. Sometimes the shavings were taken out and the cover smuggled in under a smock-frock or a woman's shawl. Once the ball was in the middle of a big scrimmage, where everyone was kicking and no one could see the ball. A cunning fellow outside just then threw his hat over the mass; they saw a dark object, called out "There it goes," and dispersed, while he picked up the ball, hid it under his coat, and sauntered to the brook, dropped in the ball, which he did not follow closely but merely kept in view. The goal-keepers saw the mass of players far off, and suspected nothing till the clever fellow slipped past them, jumped into the water, and pushed the ball in triumph against the wheel.

The following day, Ash Wednesday, was the "Boys' Day," when the men of both sides attended to see fair play and to decide delicate questions as to whether claimants were small men or great boys. Disputes were much more frequent on this day than on that of the match proper; indeed, it was said that if a cause of quarrel cropped up on Shrove Tuesday it was by common consent put off for decision on the "Boys' Day." This game was, like most others, put down as "tending to foment quarrels and endanger life."

The ladies of Derby graced the contest with their presence, and even in some cases of stratagem, as we have seen, were ready with more active assistance; but the fair sex in Inveresk went far beyond this, and had an annual match of their own. In an amusing sketch of the fishwomen of Musselburgh, in this parish, Dr. Alexander Carlyle tells us, in the end of the last century, that these women, "having so great a share in the maintenance of the family, have no small sway in it, as may be inferred from a saying not unusual among them when speaking of a young woman reported to be on the point of marriage. 'Hout,' say they, 'how can *she* keep a man who can hardly maintain hersel'?' As they do the work of men their manners are masculine, and their strength and activity are equal to their work. Their amusements are of the masculine kind. On holidays they frequently play at golf, and on Shrove Tuesday there is a standing match at football between the married and unmarried women, in which the former are always victors"—a result which the chronicler of this curious custom declares he must leave to his fair readers to account for.

So much for Shrovetide football, which, however, still lingers among us in its old form in some districts. Thus, lately, a local newspaper told how the tradesmen of Sedgefield, in Durham, beat the ploughmen at a match played on what the writer called "probably the thousandth anniversary" of a game exactly like that of Derby; while in several of the Scottish Border towns the annual matches still excite the greatest

interest, and bring the whole community out to witness the play in a state of high enthusiasm. "On one occasion," says the "Book of Days," "not long ago, when the sport took place in Jedburgh, the contending parties [one end of the town against the other], after a struggle of two hours in the streets, transferred the contention to the bed of the river Jed, and there fought it out amidst a scene of fearful splash and dabblement, to the infinite amusement of a multitude looking on from the bridge." In the towns, "Ba' Day" is recognised as a half-holiday, and all the mills stop at noon. At a recent election it chanced that the polling took place at Jedburgh on the same day as the Ba', and "our own reporter" was much astonished that in this town of keen politicians enthusiasm for the old custom should overcome interest in the election. "Any special stir that prevailed in the morning," writes "our correspondent," "seemed to be caused less by the polling than by the play between the 'uppies' and 'downies,' and during the afternoon interest in the polling paled entirely before the game." The *Scotsman* of February 3rd, 1881, thus describes the latest celebration of this old custom: "Yesterday the Candlemas Ball, or, as it is familiarly called, the 'callants' Ba',' was played in the streets of the burgh as usual. Precisely at twelve o'clock the ball, decorated with ribbons of various colours, was thrown up at the Market Place by the 'King,' and a very large number took part in the game, which was keenly contested. The two first 'hails,' or goals, were won by the townhead players, but the third ball was carried to the townfoot, and kicked into the river. Some 'splendid plunging' took place in the water, and many of the players got a thorough ducking. On the whole, the townhead had the best of the game."

It is difficult to imagine anything more out of place in the streets of a large town than football; yet for centuries the streets of London were every now and then infested with the players at what Stubbes calls "a bloody and murthering prac-

tice rather than a fellowly sport or pastime." In Elizabeth's time we find complaints about this. Davenant's Frenchman thus writes of the streets immediately after the Restoration: "I would now make a safe retreat, but that methinks I am stopped by one of your heroic games called football, which I conceive (under your favour) not very conveniently civil in the streets, especially in such irregular and narrow roads as Crooked Lane." Pepys, under date January 2nd, 1664–5, tells us he went "to my Lord Brouncker's, by appointment, in the Piazza, Covent Garden; the street full of foot-balls, it being a great frost;" while, as late as a century and a half ago, along Cheapside or Covent Garden, or by the Maypole in the Strand, rushed the football players :—

> The 'prentice quits his shop to join the crew,
> Increasing crowds the flying game pursue.

The author of "The Public Schools" alludes to another memorable little disturbance caused by football, when telling us that the Westminster boys now play the game "either in Dean's Yard or Vincent Square, so that there is no risk of the shade of Addison being disturbed, as he complains that his living meditations once were, by the king's scholars playing football in the cloisters."

Away north on the Border in the troublous days the votaries of the game contrived to annoy their neighbours in perhaps a more serious way. Football there was, then as now, a very favourite sport; it smacked of the excitement of a real fight; but probably, too, the facilities the gathering gave for making a raid across the Border, or taking some hostile clan by surprise, added a charm to the game in the moss-troopers' eyes. In Border records we find many bloody endings to meetings ostensibly for playing football, as when in 1600 Sir John Carmichael of Carmichael, the Warden of the Middle Marches, was killed by a band of Armstrongs returning from a football match, at which, as it came out at the trial of his slayers, the

crime was concerted. Sir Robert Carey, in his "Memoirs of Border Transactions," speaks of his vigilance and his apprehension being excited by hearing of a great meeting appointed by the Scottish riders to be held at Kelso for the purpose of playing at football. As the English Warden of the East Marches suspected, this meeting was an expedient for collecting together a large body of moss-troopers, for it appears to have terminated in an incursion into England. Undoubtedly, however, the most notable event in the history of Border football is the famous match played on the plain of Carterhaugh, near the junction of the Ettrick and the Yarrow, on December 4th, 1815. The opponents were those old rivals, the "Souters (*Anglicè*, shoemakers) o' Selkirk" and the Earl of Home with his retainers in the Forest of Yarrow. Lord Home, while at Buccleuch's lodge at Bowhill, challenged Sir Walter Scott, then "Shirra" of Selkirk, to fight out at football the ancient feud alluded to in the old ballad beginning—

'Tis up wi' the Sutors o' Selkirk,
An' 'tis down wi' the Earl of Home,
And 'tis up wi' the bonnie braw lads
That sew the single-soled shoon,

in which the prowess of the Burghers in many a hard-fought field is celebrated, while its sting lay in the tradition that it alluded specially to the conduct of Home and his men of the Merse at Flodden in holding back, while the men of Ettrick fought to the death, and their memory lives as

Those Flowers whom plaintive lay
In Scotland mourns as "wede away."

When the eventful Monday arrived, players and spectators poured from all sides into the Carterhaugh: "the appearance of the various parties," says Scott, "marching from their different glens to the place of rendezvous, with pipes playing and loud acclamations, carried back the coldest imagination to the old times when the Foresters assembled with the less peaceable purpose of invading the English territory, or defending

their own." The signal for action was the unfurling of the old banner of the Buccleuch family, which Lady Ann Scott handed to Master Walter Scott, younger, of Abbotsford, then a boy of thirteen, who rode over the field, appropriately dressed and with his horse caparisoned with old Border housings, bearing aloft this old relic of an ancient military custom. The Duke of Buccleuch then threw up the ball, and immediately began the tug of war. So numerous were the players, and so closely did they press round the ball, that for long the only indication of play was a heaving here and there of the immense mass until two stalwart "Flowers of the Forest" got the ball out. One "chucked" to the other, who at once ran off with it towards the only open side, the woods of Bowhill, intending to make a long circuit and carry it to the Yarrow goal. So fleet of foot was he, that probably he would have succeeded if he had not been ridden down by a man on horseback. So excited were the players, that, it is said, Lord Home swore if he had had a gun he would have shot the horseman. The tide now turned against the men of the Forest, and after an hour and a half's play a mason of Selkirk gained a goal for his side. Three hours more of fierce struggle brought a goal for Yarrow. Honours being now equal, and the feelings of the players being up to the fighting point, it was thought advisable not to bring matters to an issue by playing a deciding game. As it was, in the heat of their passion many came to blows, and, as an eye-witness says, "the ba' had nearly ended in a battle." Scott tells us that, before they left the ground, he threw up his hat, and, in Lord Dalkeith's name and his own, challenged the Yarrow men, on the part of the Sutors, to a match to be played upon the first convenient opportunity, with a hundred picked men only on each side. Lord Home accepted the challenge; but this match never took place, probably for the reason alluded to in what Scott told Washington Irving two years afterwards at Abbotsford, that "the old feuds and local interests and rivalries and

animosities of the Scotch still slept in their ashes, and might easily be roused; their hereditary feeling for names was still great; it was not always safe to have even the game of football between villages: the old clannish spirit was too apt to break out."

While Scott took a prominent part on the side of the people of his sheriffdom, the Yarrow men also had their poet. The Ettrick Shepherd acted as aide-de-camp to Lord Home, and both he and Scott wrote verses specially for the occasion. "The Lifting of the Banner" was Scott's contribution, beginning:—

From the brown crest of Newark its summons extending,
Our signal is waving in smoke and in flame,
And each Forester blythe from his mountain descending,
Bounds light o'er the heather to join in the game;
Then up with the Banner! let forest winds fan her!
She has blazed over Ettrick eight ages and more;
In sport we'll attend her, in battle defend her,
With heart and with hand, like our Fathers before.

James Hogg's "excellent ditty," as Lockhart calls it, is also on the old banner of Bellendaine:—

And hast thou here, like hermit grey,
Thy mystic characters unroll'd,
O'er peaceful revellers at play,
Thou emblem of the days of old?
All hail! memorial of the brave,
The liegeman's pride, the Border's awe;
May thy grey pennon never wave
O'er sterner field than Carterhaugh!

Among the Highlanders, football was never such a favourite game as "shinty" and some others, but with their Lowland neighbours in the north-eastern parts of Scotland our game was a prime favourite. Shrovetide and Yule were the times for the chief contests. At the latter festival, the author of "Notes on Northern Rural Life" tells us, "three entire days were abstracted from the routine of daily labour and reli-

giously devoted to Yule observances. The requisite 'fordel strae' for the cattle had been carefully provided beforehand, so that no flail need be lifted during Yule. In a Presbyterian community there was no formal religious service of a public sort, and thus there was abundant time for the 'ba'in,' or any other recreation that might find favour." The game here was as rough as anywhere else. The Rev. Mr. Skinner, author of "Tullochgorum," in a juvenile poem (written in 1737), "The Monymusk Ba'in," paints for us the incidents and accompaniments of a big contest in Aberdeenshire, of which this is one stanza:—

Has ne'er in a' this countra been
  Sic shoulderin' an' sic fa'in'
As happen't but few weeks sinsyne,
  Here at the Christmas ba'in'.
At evenin' syne the fellows keen
  Drank till the neist day's dawin',
Sae hard that some tint baith their e'en,
  An' couldna pay their lawin'
    Till the neist day.

It is to be feared the observances in the last lines were looked upon as being quite as important and characteristic of the festival as the "ba'in" itself.

In the Eastern Counties of England the villagers used to show so much rivalry in their contests at a game called "camp-ball" that the term "camping" came to be generally applied to contending in anything. At one time it was held to be doubtful whether the game was football under another name, but Mr. Halliwell has clearly proved by many quotations from old writers that the "campar" was, as one extract words it, a "pleyar at foottballe."

Sir Henry Ellis quotes from Moor an account of camp, which shows that the game and name are very old. The "camping pightel" occurs in a deed of 30 Henry VI., about 1486, Cullum's "Hawstead," p. 113, where Tusser is quoted

in proof, that not only was the exercise manly and salutary, but good also for the *pightel*, or meadow.

> In meadow or pasture (to grow the more fine)
> Let campers be camping in any of thine;
> Which if ye do suffer, when low is the spring,
> You gain to yourself a commodious thing.

The ball generally used in Suffolk was about the size of a common cricket ball, which was carried, not kicked; otherwise the game is very like the rough football gatherings noticed above. "Sometimes a large football was used, and the game was then called 'kicking camp,' and if played with the shoes on, 'savage camp.'"

Camp, Moor says, fell into disuse in Suffolk during last century, in consequence of two men having been killed at Easton in their struggles at a grand match.

In the North of England, Brand tells us, it was customary among the colliers for a party to watch the bridegroom coming out of church after the marriage ceremony in order to demand money for a football, a claim that admitted of no refusal.

Mr. Timbs relates a curious football anecdote that well illustrates the state of political feeling in Ireland just before the Union.

"Wogan Browne," he says, "a virulent opponent of the Irish Union, was a magistrate of Kildare, Meath and Dublin, and was highly popular and irreproachable as a magistrate of these three counties. Nevertheless, some time in 1797, he was one Sunday riding past a field where the country people were about to hold a football match. The whole assembly paid their respects to him, and at their request he got off his horse and opened the sports by giving the ball the first kick—a sort of friendly sanctioning of the amusements of their neighbours, which was then not unusual among the gentry in Ireland. The custom, however, was not approved of by the Government, and Lord Chancellor Clare, upon being informed of

what Wogan Browne had done, at once suspended him in the Commission of the peace. He was soon afterwards restored by Lord Chancellor Ponsonby, upon the accession of the ministry of All the Talents, but was again, without further cause, deprived of his commission for two of the counties by Lord Chancellor Manners. This stupid insult, both to the individual and to the body of magistrates—for if Mr. Browne was unfit to be a justice of the peace for two counties, it was an insult to associate him with the magistrates of a third —was warmly resented by the gentry of Kildare."

On the continent the causes that have dealt its death-blow to the old style of football among us have been at work too. The fiercely fought football matches of Friburg, Louvain, and many other cities, "where the contusions would have made some figure in a gazette and where several lives were yearly sacrificed," are as extinct as the similar contests at home. There was till lately one exception to this: the fierce game of the *soûle*, played in Brittany, of which M. Souvestre, in his "Les derniers Bretons" (Paris, 1836), tells the story as played in the Ponthivy district. He relates how a man whose father had been killed, and his own eye knocked out, by Francois, surnamed le Souleur, lay in wait for that renowned player, and got him down, *soûle* and all, half way over the boundary stream.

This contest was the last vestige of the worship the Celts paid to the sun, whence the name of the enormous ball of leather, filled with bran or hay, which was used in the match. The fury and rancour with which the game was played are almost past belief. The combatants were generally the townsman against the rustic, and many a jealous grudge and little piece of caste feeling rankled in the breasts of the players. M. Souvestre speaks of malicious maimings, of bones broken, and even of murders committed from cherished revenge, but so effected as to appear accidental during the press round the ball when its possession was fought for over the miles that

separated the goals. The party that first drove the ball into a township different from that in which the *soûle* was thrown up, won.

It is needless to dwell upon the most rapid extension of football—whether "Rugby" or "Association"—in Great Britain within the last twenty years. Every town and village have now one or more clubs playing under the rules either of the Association (founded in 1863), or the Union (established in 1871), and the old pastime in its new lease of life is pre-eminently the winter game of the kingdom, fitly taking the place of cricket during the months when bat and wickets are laid aside.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GAME OF BOWLS.

Queen. What sport shall we devise here in this garden,
To drive away the heavy thought of care?
First Lady. Madam, we'll play at bowls.
Queen. 'Twill make me think the world is full of rubs,
And that my fortune runs against the bias.

King Richard II. iii. Sc. 4.

"THERE is another recreation," writes the author of the "Country Gentleman's Companion," nearly two centuries ago, "which, howsoever unlawful in the Abuse thereof, yet, exercised with moderation, is, even of Physicians themselves, held exceeding wholesome, and hath been prescribed for a Recreation to great Persons." The amusement that thus received the approval of the Faculty was the old English game of bowling, a fine old pastime too much neglected in its old home in these days of violent athletic exercises.

Probably this game has as long a pedigree as most other pastimes, but little is known of its early days. Strutt declared himself unable "by any means to ascertain the time of its introduction," though he has traced it back in England to the thirteenth century. A writer in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," however, has gone further back than this, and has pretty conclusively proved that the "in jactu lapidum," which William FitzStephen includes among the amusements practised by the young Londoners of the twelfth century on summer holidays, refers to bowls and not to slinging stones, as has been generally understood. However this may be, it is clear the game has been a British pastime for a very long time,

though from the early drawings of players we see that it, like most of our pastimes, has passed through various changes and modifications in its long career. In the earliest of these representations of the game—a drawing in a MS. in the Royal Library, which is reproduced by Strutt—"two small cones are placed upright at a distance from each other; and the business of the players is evidently to bowl at them alternately; the successful candidate being he who could lay his bowl the nearest to this mark." In others of these delineations, in which the attitudes of the bowlers are given with remarkable spirit and effect, we find other varieties of the game—such as one player being required by the game not to lay his bowl close to a mark, but to strike away from its place the sphere cast by his opponent.

In process of time the third ball, or jack, of smaller size than the playing bowls, was introduced to serve as a mark towards which to direct the bowls, and from then the principal changes in the game were probably only in the number of bowls allowed to each player, and in their material and shape. In the old drawings, instead of using two balls, as in the modern game, the player is provided with one only. The bowls were round, and certainly up to 1409, and most probably for long after, were made of stone. As we shall see, stone bowls were used in Scotland pretty commonly till about the end of the seventeenth century; in 1657 Lord Lorn, son of the Marquis of Argyll, was struck senseless by one of these "stone bullets" in Edinburgh Castle, and continued in danger of his life for some time. Dr. Daniel Wilson, in his "Prehistoric Annals of Scotland," thinks it by no means improbable that the spherical stone balls found along with ancient relics, and even in tumuli, may have been used in some such game as bowls.

It seems clear that this game was originally played on open greens, more or less made smooth and prepared for the pastime. These greens, however, being without cover, neces-

sarily restricted the enjoyment of the game to the dry days of the warmer months of the year, and this naturally suggested the idea of making covered alleys, where the ground, being roofed over, might be used when the state of the weather would not permit the pursuit of the pastime outside. Unfortunately for the fair fame of bowls, these alleys became the haunts of idle and dissolute persons, and the discredit that fairly enough attached itself to them was extended to this innocent and healthful recreation as practised on the green in the open air. This discreditable relation it was that brought down on lawn-bowls the pains and penalties fulminated against it by so many statutes from Richard II.'s time till 2 Geo. II. c. 28, though, no doubt, its own popularity, and the consequent interference with the due practice of the all-important archery, had caused it before then to be classed in the Close Roll of Edward III., in 1365, with other "games alike dishonourable, useless, and unprofitable" that absorbed too much of the leisure time of the king's famous bowmen.

The name "bowls" first occurs in an Act of Henry VIII., in 1511, where, and in a subsequent Act thirty years later, various "artificers, husbandmen, apprentices, and others of the lower classes, are prohibited, on pain of twenty shillings, from playing at ". . . bowls . . . or other unlawful games out of Christmas, and in Christmas may play thereat in their masters' houses or presence, and no person shall play at bowls in open places out of his garden or orchard under pain of six shillings and eightpence;" but these laws must have been systematically broken, for many old writers deplore the excessive number of bowling alleys, and the evil effects arising from them. Stephen Gosson, in his "School of Abuse" (1579), speaking of the "wonderful change when . . . our courage is turned to cowardice, our running to ryot, our bowes into bowls, and our darts into dishes," says that "common bowling-alleys are privy mothes that eat up the credit of many idle citizens, whose gaynes at home are not able to weigh downe

theyre losses abroad; whose shoppes are so farre from maintaining their play that their wives and children cry out for bread, and go to bedde supperlesse ofte in the yeere." Stowe, too, laments the closing up for building purposes of the common grounds, before then appropriated to open-air amusements, which began to take place in his day, and which drove the citizens for amusement "into bowling alleys and ordinarie diceing houses neer home, where they have room enough to hazard their money at unlawful games."

Up to the time of Henry VIII., bowling, both in greens and alleys, seems to have been an amusement little played except by the lower classes; but not only did that bluff monarch add to Whitehall "divers fair tennice courts, bowling alleys, and a cockpit," but bowling greens began to be looked on as indispensable in the laying out of gentlemen's gardens. "Though gardening and horticulture in general, as arts," says Mr. Wright, in his "History of Domestic Manners and Sentiments," "were undergoing considerable improvement during this period, the garden itself appears to have been much more neglected, except as far as it was the scene of other pastimes. A bowling green was the most important part of the pleasure garden in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and bowls, and exercises of a similar character, were the favourite amusements of all classes." Tytler, in his life of Raleigh, says that "it is traditionally reported that when the news reached the British navy of the sudden appearance of the Armada off the Lizard, the principal commanders were on shore at Plymouth playing bowls on the Hoe, and it is added that Drake insisted on the match being played out, saying, 'There would be plenty of time to win the game and beat the Spaniards too.'"

Whatever foundation of fact there may be for this story, we may see how popular a pastime bowling was then by the frequent allusions to it in the works of the Elizabethan dramatists. Thus, not only do Shakesperian characters play the

game frequently, but the great dramatist several times adopts figures from the pastime, as when Petruchio says, "forward, forward, thus the bowl should run, and not unluckily against the bias;" or Menenius Agrippa, "Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground, I have tumbled past the throw."

Of all the English kings, Charles I. was the greatest enthusiast in our game. Many anecdotes are told of his great love for it, a love that survived through all his troubles, for we find him alike devoting himself to it while in power and solacing himself with it while a captive.

Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas—"Curl's Corinna," as Pope calls her, when impaling her in the "Dunciad" for selling to Curl some boyish letters of his to Henry Cromwell—in her autobiographic volumes, "Pylades and Corinna," speaks of a house at Barking, called Barking Hall, which once belonged to her great-grandfather, Richard Shute, Turkey merchant, and Member of Parliament for the City of London in Charles I.'s time. According to her description, it was situated at the end of a long avenue of elms, and was an antique building of a castellated form. In the grounds of this house Mr. Shute made one of the prettiest and most commodious bowling greens that had ever been seen. King Charles, Mrs. Thomas tells us, having heard of this fine new bowling green, and being very partial to the amusement, told Mr. Shute when he next came to court that he would dine with him the following day at Barking, and try his skill at bowls. Mr. Shute made the best preparation that the shortness of the warning would allow, and King Charles was so well pleased with his reception and entertainment, that frequently afterwards he would lay aside all state and repair to Barking Hall, with only two or three gentlemen as attendants, that he might enjoy a game on Mr. Shute's unrivalled lawn. They generally played high, continues Corinna, and punctually paid the losings; and though Mr. Shute often won, yet the king would at one time bet higher than usual, till, having lost several games, he gave off. "And if it please

your Majesty," answered Mr. Shute, when asked what he had won, "£1,000;" and then he asked the king to play some rubbers more, as perhaps luck might turn. "No, Shute," replied the king, laying his hand gently on his shoulder; "thou hast won the day, and much good may it do thee; but I must remember I have a wife and children."

In Herbert's "Memoirs of the last two years of King Charles I." we find many allusions to the captive monarch's fondness for the game. While at Holmby, in Northamptonshire, his faithful attendant tells us that "in regard there was no bowling green then well kept at Holmby, the king would sometimes ride to Harrowden, a house of the Lord Vaux, about nine miles off, where there was a good bowling green, with gardens, grass, and walks, that afforded much pleasure. And other whiles to Althorpe, a fair house about two or three miles from Holmby, belonging to the Lord Spencer, now Earl of Sunderland, where also there was a green well kept." Charles was at the Althorpe bowling green when Cornet Joyce arrived at Holmby to take him away. "His Majesty being one afternoon at bowls in the green at Althorpe, it was whispered among the Commissioners, who were then at bowls with the king, that a party of horse, obscurely headed, was marching towards Holmby, and for no good, it was presumed." Herbert and Rushworth refer to many other interesting incidents connected with bowls, but enough shall have been said to show Charles' fondness for the game when we quote this tradition, told by a correspondent of *Notes and Queries* in a note on some tavern signs:—"In a secluded part of the Oxfordshire hills, at a place called Collins' End, situated between Hardwicke House and Goring Heath, is a neat little rustic inn, having for its sign a well-executed portrait of Charles I. There is a tradition that this unfortunate monarch, while residing as a prisoner at Caversham, rode one day, attended by an escort, into this part of the country, and hearing that there was a bowling green at this inn, frequented by the neighbour-

ing gentry, struck down to the house and endeavoured to forget his sorrows for a while in a game at bowls. This circumstance is alluded to in the following lines, written beneath the sign-board:

> Stop, traveller, stop ! in yonder peaceful glade
> His favourite game the royal martyr played ;
> Here, stripped of honours, children, freedom, rank,
> Drank from the bowl, and bowl'd for what he drank ;
> Sought in a cheerful glass his cares to drown,
> And changed his guinea ere he lost a crown.

"The sign," continues the writer, "which seems to be a copy from Vandyke, though much faded from exposure to the weather, evidently displays an amount of artistic skill that is not usually found among common sign-board painters. I once made some inquiries about it of the people of the house, but the only information they could give me was that they believed it to have been painted in London."

Evelyn frequently mentions bowls and bowling greens in his "Diary." When describing the attractions of Swallowfield in Berkshire, he sums up his enumeration of its beauties thus:—"Also a very fine bowling green; meadow, pasture, and wood; in a word, all that can render a country seat delightful." On several occasions, even during the game-abhorring days of the Puritan rule, we find Evelyn, regardless of all risks from fierce zealots, playing bowls, not only for amusement, but for stakes! If this were unpardonable, yet even the starchiest wearer of sad-coloured raiment might have overlooked the anxious husband beguiling the weary hours of waiting at Rye with a game, —"June 11, 1652. About 4 in the afternoon, being at bowls on the green, we discovered a vessel, which proved to be that in which my wife was, and which got into the harbour about eight that evening, to my no small joy," but what would the Puritan despots have said to this indulgence in the "unclean thing"?—"August 14, 1657. We went to Durdans [now Lord Rosebery's seat at Epsom], to a challenged match at bowls for 10*l.*, which we won."

With the Restoration, the click of the bowl was heard again on many a green. It became again a fashionable Court amusement; great attention was paid both to the manufacture of the bowls and to the preparation of the greens, whose velvety softness, and perfect level, excited the admiration of many of the foreign visitors of the day.

In July, 1662, Pepys notes: "Whitehall Gardens and the Bowling Alley (where lords and ladies are now at bowles) in brave condition;" while on another occasion he and some friends, being on an excursion, got "up early and bated at Petersfield, in the room which the king lay in lately at his being there. Here very merry, and played with our wives at bowles." It is in the Grammont "Memoirs," however, that we find the most complete picture of our game as a Court amusement of Charles II.'s reign. When the Court was at Tunbridge Wells—"the place of all Europe," we are told by De Grammont, "the most rural and simple, and yet at the same time the most entertaining and agreeable"—"the company are accommodated with lodgings in little, clean, and convenient habitations that lie, straggling and separated from each other, a mile and a half all round the Wells, where the company meet in the morning. . . As soon as the evening comes, every one quits his little palace to assemble on the bowling green."

"The game of bowls, which in France is the pastime of mechanics and servants only, is quite the contrary in England, where it is the exercise of gentlemen, and requires both art and address. It is only in use during the fair and dry part of the season, and the places where it is practised are charming, delicious walks, called bowling greens, which are little square grass plots, where the turf is almost as smooth and level as the cloth of a billiard table. As soon as the heat of the day is over, all the company assemble there; they play deep, and spectators are at liberty to make what bets they please."

Elsewhere in the Count's "Memoirs" we find the inhabitants of the "little palaces" at Tunbridge using the bowling greens for another purpose: "Those who choose dance in the open air upon a turf more soft and smooth than the finest carpet in the world."

The great John Locke, writing in 1679, says that "the sports of England, for a curious stranger to see, are horse-racing, hawking, hunting, and bowling. At Marebone and Putney he may see several persons of quality bowling two or three times a week; also wrestling in Lincoln's Inn Fields every evening; bear and bull-baiting in the Bear Garden; shooting with the long bow and stob-ball in the Tothill Fields; and cudgel playing in the country, and hurling in Cornwall."

While "persons of quality" were thus casting their bowls through the statute law on the open greens, the lower orders still clung to the alleys, which receive quite as much condemnation from the moralists of this as of an earlier time. Bishop Earle devotes the whole of Essay No. XXX. of his "Microcosmography" to the evils caused by them. "A bowl alley," writes the bishop, "is the place where there are three things thrown away besides bowls, to wit, time, money, and curses, and the last ten for one. The best sport in it is the gamester's, and he enjoys it best that looks on and bets not. It is the school of wrangling, and worse than the schools, for men will cavil here for a hair's breadth, and make a stir when a straw would end the controversy. No antick screws men's bodies into such strange flexures, and you would think them here senseless to speak sense to their bowl, and put their trust in intreaties for a good cast."

In Scotland, as in England, the game had been played from an early date, but probably both the greens and the bowls were of a rougher type than on the south side of the Tweed. James IV. and James V. were players at bowls, as they were of most games then known, but in the general estimation "trulis," as the game was often called, seems to have been

looked upon as rather a childish pastime. Dunbar, in one of his poems, alludes to it in this light when he speaks of—

> So mony lordis, so mony naturall fulis
> That better accordis to play thame at the trulis;
> Nor seis the dulis that commons dois sustene.

In process of time the game grew in popular favour, and many greens and alleys sprang up throughout the kingdom. As we have seen, it is said to have been the game at which Lord Lorn met his severe accident in 1657; but this identification of the particular game is hardly borne out by the account of the mishap in the invaluable letters of Principal Baillie of Glasgow University. Baillie, in a long letter to his cousin in Holland, giving "a large account of our affaires this twelve moneth past" (1657–8), says: "My Lord Lorn, a most excellent and honest-minded youth, prisoner in the castle of Edinburgh, walking about while the lieutenant of the castle with others are playing with hand bullets, one of them, rebounding off the wall, stricks him on the head, whereon he fell down dead and speechless for a long time; his death sundry dayes was expected, but, blessed be God, I hear this day he was better."

We may see from the proceedings noticed in our next chapter, in connection with the patent as "Masters of the Revels," granted to the brothers Fountain, that the bowling green continued, as the century grew older, to be a favourite resort of the Scottish people.

Though bowling in alleys, and such games as nine pins were, as we shall see below, played until years well into the second half of last century, lawn bowls are seldom mentioned among games much played after the Revolution in England, until the Act of Queen Victoria in 1845 made games of mere skill legal again. Even yet, this pleasant and invigorating old pastime is much less popular in the southern counties than it is in the north and in Scotland, where it continues to be held in as high favour as ever it was. In nearly every town of Scotland

there is at least one bowling club and green, on which in the summer evenings elderly men, or people tired out with work, may enjoy a pleasant exercise, and one not too vehement for those even of the most sedentary habits. In Edinburgh the city has long provided public greens for the use of those not able to pay club subscriptions; and lately the Town Council has authorised a considerable additional expenditure for the same purpose in a part of the town convenient for the artisans living in the south-western districts.

The game has long been a favourite in the Scottish capital. Probably the first club in the city of which a trace exists was the society that Hugo Arnot says was "erected by a 'seal of cause' [charter of incorporation] granted by the magistrates of Edinburgh, Nov. 15, 1769. This society immediately upon its erection took from the governors of Heriot's Hospital a lease of the bowling-green belonging to the Hospital for twenty-one years." This is a much older club than the Glasgow "Willow-bank," which the "Encyclopædia Britannica" gives as probably the first regular club ever founded, though Arnot's society is, on the other hand, younger than at least two others, that of Haddington, founded two years after the Union, and Kilmarnock, which dates from 1740.

In Dr. Robert Chambers's "Minor Antiquities of Edinburgh," we find some interesting gossip about old bowling greens in the city. When Dr. Chambers wrote in 1833, bowling, like other pastimes, seems to have suffered a temporary decline in popularity, but now it has much more than recovered the status it held when "honest Allan" Ramsay lived and wrote.

Dr. Chambers—after recounting the traditions clinging to the old Excise Office in the Cowgate, which in its early days had been the residence of the French Embassy in the time of Queen Mary, and then the dwelling of the first Earl of Haddington, nicknamed by his royal master, James VI. and I., "Tam o' the Cowgate"—tells us that at the back of the Secre-

tary of State's house "was a bowling green, which the Commissioners of Excise let out to a person of the name of Thomson. In those days [that is, about 1740] bowling was a much more prevalent amusement than now, being chiefly a favourite with the graver order of the citizens. There were then no fewer than three bowling greens in the grounds around Heriot's Hospital, one in the Canongate near the Tolbooth; another on the opposite side of the street; another immediately behind the palace of Holyrood House, where the Duke of York used to play while in Scotland, and perhaps several others scattered about the outskirts of the town. At present there is only one bowling green in the town or neighbourhood. The arena behind the Excise Office was called Thomson's Green, from the name of the man who kept it, and it may be worth while to remind the reader that it is alluded to in that clever poem by Allan Ramsay in imitation of the "Vides ut alta" of Horace.

> Driving their ba's frae tee to tee,
> There's no ae gouffer to be seen
> Nor doucer folk wysing a-jee
> The byas bowls on Tamson's green.

The green was latterly occupied by the relict of this Thomson, and it is a curious fact that among the bad debts on the Excise books, all of which are yearly brought forward and enumerated, there still stands a sum of something more than six pounds against Widow Thomson, being the last half-year's rent of "the green," which the poor woman had been unable to pay.

Mr. W. W. Story describes, in his "Roba di Roma," a favourite game among the modern Romans, which may possibly be the truest survival of the game played by their ancestors in the days of the Cæsars. This pastime is called "bocce" or "boccette," and is played by two sides, each person having two wooden balls; besides this there is the smaller "lecco" or jack. The mode of play is exactly the same as at lawn

bowls, but instead of the smooth prepared surface of the bowling green, this game is played on any piece of ground: "And as the lecco," says Mr. Story, "often runs into hollows, or poises itself on some uneven declivity, it is sometimes a matter of no small difficulty to play the other balls near to it. The great skill of the game consists, however, in displacing the balls of the adverse party so as to make the balls of the playing party count, and a clever player will often change the whole aspect of affairs by one well-directed throw. . . . In the Piazza di Termini numerous parties may be seen every bright day in summer or spring playing this game under the locust trees, surrounded by idlers who stand by to approve or condemn, and to give their advice. The French soldiers [written in 1864] free from guard or drill, or from practising trumpet-calls in the old agger of Servius Tullius near by, are sure to be rolling balls in this fascinating game. Having heated their blood sufficiently at it, they adjourn to a little *osteria* in the Piazza to refresh themselves with a glass of asciutto wine, after which they sit on a bench outside the door, or stretch themselves under the trees and take a siesta with their handkerchiefs over their eyes, while other parties take their turn at the bocce."

CHAPTER X.

KAYLES.

Waive quoits and nine pins, those bear-garden sports.
T. D'URFEY.

AMONG the quieter games that amused our ancestors in their abundant leisure hours, none have had a more chequered career, or suffered more ups and downs in popular estimation than the kindred pastimes that have been known at various times as kayles, loggats, nine pins, skittles, and several other names.

In early times we find them in high favour as gentle, healthful exercises, specially adapted for ladies, monks, old men and boys; then down they go in the scale of opinion and are fulminated against by Acts of Parliament and social reformers as "privy moths that eat up the credit of many idle citizens." Now and then there were breaks in the cloud their gambling and drinking accompaniments cast over these games—as in those years of last century when they enjoyed a fitful popularity at a time when, curiously enough, cricket was not considered a proper game for gentlemen to play at—but in general the respectable half of the world has looked askance at pastimes excellent in themselves, and likely enough to be popular again if they could only be dissociated in men's minds from ideas of bad beer and "sharping."

Whether we owe these games, like lawn-bowls, to the Roman invader, it is difficult to say, but at any rate they are among the oldest of our extant pastimes.

In Capgrave's "Chronicle" we are told that Pope Gregory IX.

commanded his penitencer, Raymond, to gather "out of many books that book which they yclepe 'Decretals.' And the Pope wrote to the doctors of law that they should in school use this compiling." A copy of this text book was made for the priory of St. Bartholomew, founded by Rayer, monk and jester to Henry I., in West Smithfield. This copy, a manuscript of the thirteenth century, is now in the British Museum "It is lavishly adorned with pictures," says Mr. Henry Morley, the historian of Rayer's Priory and Fair, "which are valuable illustrations of the manners, arts, and literature of the time;" and here, among the many games figured by the old friar of St. Bartholomew, we find a player in the act of casting a stick at nine pins, which the friar's bad perspective arranges in three rows, perpendicularly one above the other.

More accurate in drawing than the delineator of the recreations of the youth of London on the "Smooth Field" six centuries ago, are the illuminators whose works are copied by Strutt, from MSS. of about the same age. In an engraving from a Book of Prayers that belonged to Mr. Francis Douce, we see the player about to cast his bâton at six pins arranged in a row, while in another, from a MS. in the Royal Library, the castor has knocked over three pins and is about to repeat his throw at the five still standing in a line with the fallen three. In this old game so figured, while the number of pins varied, the missile thrown is always a stick, not, as now, a ball. This was a form of the game of bowling "which was called in French," says Mr. Thomas Wright, "the *jeu de quilles a baston*, and in English *club-kayles*." In kayles, or closh, as it was also called, a ball was used instead of the bâton, as we may infer from the qualifying "club" here, as well as from more positive evidence of later date.

Great as is the antiquity of the game of pins proved by these illustrations, it is of yesterday compared with the age of implements of the game discovered under twelve feet of peat in Kirkcudbright in 1834, if we apply to this depth

of peat the calculations of growth put forward by many geologists.

Mr. Joseph Train, whose help in supplying him with the groundwork of some of his novels, Sir Walter Scott so heartily acknowledges, tells us how these interesting relics of antiquity came to light. "In the summer of 1834," he writes, "as the servants of Mr. Bell of Baryown were casting peats on Ironmacaunnie Moor, when cutting near the bottom of the moss they laid open with their spades what appeared to be the instruments of an ancient game, consisting of an oaken ball eighteen inches in circumference, and seven wooden pins, each thirteen inches in length, of a conical shape, with a circular top. These ancient *keel pins*, as they are termed by Strutt, were all standing erect on the hard till, equidistant from each other, with the exception of two, which pointed towards the ball that lay about a yard in front, from which it may be inferred they were overthrown in the course of the game. The ball had been formed of solid oak, and from its decayed state must have remained undisturbed for centuries till discovered at a depth of not less than twelve feet from the original surface. At Pompeii utensils are often found seemingly in the very position in which they were last used. This may be accounted for by the suddenness of the calamity that befell that devoted city; but what induced or impelled the ancient gamesters in this remote corner of the Glenkens to leave the instruments of their amusement in what might be considered the middle of the game?"

Dr. Daniel Wilson tells us, in his "Prehistoric Annals of Scotland," that in this lonely moss peats have been cut from time immemorial. "It were vain," he says, "to speculate on the origin or owners of these homely relics of obsolete pastimes; yet to the curious fancy, indulging in the reanimation of such long-silent scenes, they seem suggestive of the sudden intrusion, it may be of invaders, the hasty call to arms, the utter desolation of the scene, and then the slow lapse of

unnumbered centuries, during which the moss accumulated above them so gently that it seems as if the old revellers were to return to play out their unfinished game."

We have ample evidence that our game enjoyed considerable popularity in the later years of the fifteenth century among all classes of society. That it was played by Queen Elizabeth and her ladies in 1472 we know from an interesting contemporary MS. published by Sir F. Madden in the *Archæologia*, vol. xxvi., entitled the "Narratives of the Arrival in England of Louis of Bruges, Seigneur de la Gruthuyse."

When Edward IV., after Warwick's landing at Dartmouth in 1470, left crown and kingdom in the hands of the king-maker, and set sail from Lynn for Flanders, his ship was chased by pirate Easterlings, from whom the fugitive king was rescued by Louis de Bruges, the governor of Holland under Charles the Bold of Burgundy.

Louis acted with great kindness to Edward, and in return the king on his restoration made him Earl of Winchester, and caused him to get the thanks of Parliament. The MS. Sir F. Madden edits is the description, by a herald who was an eye-witness of the scene, of his reception in England and creation as Earl of Winchester in 1472. In it we read that after the Burgundian's arrival, "when they had supte, my Lord Chamberlain had hym againe to the kinge's chamber. Then incontinent the kinge had hym to the quene's chamber where she had there her ladyes playinge at the *morteaulx*, and sum of her ladyes and gentlewomen at the *closheys* of yvery and dansinge. And sum at divers other games accordinge, the whiche sight was full plesaunte to them." Sir F. Madden quotes from Roquefort's "Glossaire," "*Morteaux jeu des petits palets*," and thinks it also was probably a game resembling bowls.

A year or two after we thus find his queen and her ladies playing at closh, Edward passed what Barrington calls "the most severe law ever made in any country against gaming," and among the forbidden games we find closh, kayles, and

half-bowl. Mr. Wright says that at this time "the game was looked upon as belonging to the same class as hazard. In a series of metrical counsels to apprentices, compiled in the fifteenth century and printed in the 'Reliquiæ Antiquæ,' ii. 223, they are recommended to

> Exchewe allewey eville company,
> Caylys, carding and haserdy."

The bad repute into which these games fell in England never attached to them in Scotland, though these forms of bowling never could compare there in popularity with the game played on the bowling-greens. However, in April, 1497, we find the Lord High Treasurer paying eighteen shillings for James IV. "to play at the lang bowlis" in St. Andrews, and in the previous year, while Perkin Warbeck was his guest at Stirling, we find James playing at "kilis" in Drummond Castle. On the whole, however, skittles then was looked upon in Scotland as a childish game, unworthy to divide men's leisure hours with tennis or golf or football.

This game of long-bowls, at which King James played, is thus older than Strutt appears to think. "Bowling alleys, I believe," he writes, "were totally abolished before I knew London, but I have seen there a pastime which might originate from them, called long bowling. It was performed in a narrow enclosure, about twenty or thirty yards in length, and at the further end was placed a square frame with nine small pins upon it: at these pins the players bowled in succession, and a boy stood by the frame to set up the pins that were beat down by the bowl, called out the number which was placed to the account of the player, and the bowl was returned by the means of a small trough, placed with a gradual descent from the pins to the bowlers, on one side of the enclosure. Some call this game Dutch rubbers." Indeed, many are of opinion, with Mr. R. S. Charnock, in *Notes and Queries*, that in closh, kayles, &c., "both the name and the game were imported

from Holland. The Dutch," he tells us, "have always had a fondness for skittles and bowls. Even at the present day many of the towns in Holland are surrounded with gardens where the people amuse themselves at these games. Moreover, the Dutch has *klos*, bobbin, whirl, bowl; *klos baan*, a place for playing at bowls; *klossen*, to play at bowls. They, however, now generally make use of *kegel baan* for a skittle ground, and *kegel* (whence *kail*, *kayle*), for a skittle."

In the sixteenth century we find frequent complaints of the increase in the number of skittle-alleys, and the evil consequences caused by their position in the yards of taverns and other places, where they were convenient haunts for the idle and dissolute. An Act of Henry VIII. prohibited certain classes of the community, such as artificers, husbandmen, and apprentices, from playing at these games except at Christmas, and then only in their masters' premises or presence. The object of the statute was to put down gambling, not to discourage innocent recreation, and licenses could, apparently, be easily enough obtained to allow a man "to kepe in any place within our citie of London and the suburbs of the same, only for ale and bere and no money, the game of closshynge, for the dysport and recreation of honest persons resorting thither: al maner apprentices and vacabundes onely except," and this in spite of any Act to the contrary then existing.

What the condition of things was in those bowling alleys where the stakes were not "for ale and bere and no money," we can easily gather from the condemnation of these nurseries of vice in Stephen Gosson, Stow, and Bishop Earle, already noticed in our last chapter; and it is clear that Henry's enactments, like the many statutes subsequently directed against gambling in skittle-alleys, had very little effect in remedying this evil. "The frequent repetition and enforcement of the statutes in former times," says Strutt in 1801, "proves that they were then, as they are now, inadequate to the suppression of gaming for a long continuance; and when one pastime was

prohibited, another was presently invented to supply its place. I remember, about twenty years back, the magistrates caused all the skittle frames in or about the city of London to be taken up, and prohibited the playing at dutch-pins, nine pins, or in long bowling alleys, when in many places the game of nine-holes was revived as a substitute, with the new name of "Bubble the Justice," because the populace had taken it into their heads to imagine that the power of the magistrates extended only to the prevention of such pastimes as were specified by name in the public Acts and not to any new species of diversion."

Shakespeare mentions only one of our kindred games, and naturally Hamlet's question in the graveyard scene, "Did these bones cost no more the breeding but to play at loggats with them?" has given this variety of the game a special prominence, and made the mode of play in it a matter of discussion by the editors of the great dramatist. Sir Thomas Hanmer says it is the same game as "kittle-pins, in which boys often make use of bones instead of wooden pins, throwing at them with another bone instead of bowling." Strutt, who agrees with Hanmer, quotes in corroboration an old Elizabethan play in which a rustic boasts of his skill

At skales and playing with a sheepes joynte.

This would make loggats exactly the same as the club-kayles we have seen figured in the St. Bartholomew MS. book of "Decretals," but other Shakesperian commentators hold that it was a new and different game. "Loggating in the fields," says Malone, "is mentioned for the first time among other new and crafty games and plays in 33 Henry VIII., chap ix. Not being mentioned in former Acts against unlawful games, it was probably not practised long before the statute of Henry VIII. was made." Blount tells us "a loggat ground, like a skittle ground, is strewed with ashes, but is more extensive. A bowl much larger than the jack of the game of bowls is thrown first.

The pins, which I believe are called loggats, are much thinner and lighter at one extremity than the other. The bowl being first thrown, the players take the pins up by the thinner and lighter ends and fling them towards the bowl, and in such a manner that the pins may once turn round in the air and slide with the thinner extremity foremost towards the bowl. The pins are about twenty-one or twenty-two inches long."

Stevens adds some interesting details to these descriptions. "This is a game," he says, "played in several parts of England even at this time (1766). A stake is fixed into the ground: those who play throw loggats at it, and he that is nearest the stake wins. I have seen it played in different counties at their sheep-shearing feasts, where the winner was entitled to a black fleece, which he afterwards presented to the farmer's maid to spin for the purpose of making a petticoat, and on condition that she knelt down on the fleece to be kissed by all the rustics present."

Loggats and ten pins occur together in an enumeration of "Auntient Customs in Games used by Boys and Girles, merrily set out in verse," quoted by Strutt in his "Manners and Customs," from Harleian MS. 2057.

> To play at loggets, nine holes or ten pinnes,
> To try it out at foote-ball by the shinnes.

Though in early days alley-bowling was not much thought of in Scotland, we find, curiously enough, in the century after the Reformation, not infrequent allusions to the pastime of a kind that attest considerable popularity for it. When the Reformers had overthrown the old Church, a great point they set themselves to attain was the observance of Sunday, but their demand for a complete abstinence from work or amusement on this day was not fully granted by the people for long after the Reformation; indeed, many of the local courts seem to have looked upon it as an object impossible of attainment, and were disposed to be satisfied if neither market nor games were held during "the time of the sermons." Fine and imprisonment

were decreed by many town councils and other bodies against those who, instead of going to church, played games, made "mercat merchandise," or walked idly about, and a pretty exhaustive list of the games of the period could be compiled from the ordinances of the various burghs and minutes of Kirk sessions dealing with the contumacious golfers, football players, bowlers, and others who preferred the open air and the customs of the old unthinking days to the long sermons and rigid discipline of the new order of things. It is unnecessary to multiply instances of these proceedings here, but one of those against our pastime may be cited. In June, 1619, the Kirk session of Perth dealt with John Brown, a gardener, of the Fair City, "for as meikle as delation being made that he permits men to play at alye-bowles in my Lord Sanquhar's yard at the time of the sermones on the Sabbath day."

Twenty years after this, Henry Adamson, in his curious poem, "The Muses Threnodie," when enumerating the implements of the games preserved by the old man whose death his verses lament, speaks of

> His alley-bowles, his curling stones,
> The sacred games to celebrate
> Which to the gods are consecrate.

Sir Thomas Urquhart, of Cromarty, would not have taken this metaphor from the game if he had not thought the pastime was one of which the method of play would be well known to his readers. In his curious book, "The Discovery of a most exquisite Jewel, found in the kennel of Worcester Streets the day after the Fight," he says: "Verily I think they make use of kings as we do of card kings in playing at the hundred; anyone whereof, if there be the appearance of a better game without him . . . is by good gamesters without any ceremony discarded. They may likewise be said to use their king as the players at nine pins do the middle kyle, which they call the king, at whose fall alone they aim, the sooner to obtain the gaining of their prize."

A little later on in the century we get more positive evidence of how widespread the love of bowling was. "In 1673, two brothers, probably of English birth," says the "Domestic Annals of Scotland," "Edward Fountain of Loch-hill, and Captain James Fountain, had their patent formally proclaimed throughout Scotland as 'Masters of the Revels within the Kingdom.' They thus possessed a privilege of licensing and authorising balls, masks, plays, and such like entertainments. Nor was this quite such an empty or useless privilege as our traditionary notions of the religious objections formerly cherished against public amusements might have led us to suppose. The privilege of the Messrs. Fountain must have in time become an insupportable grievance to the lieges, or at least such of them as were inclined to embroider a little gaiety on the dull serge of common life." So grievous did their exactions become that, Lord Fountainhall tells us, when the Scots Parliament sat in August, 1681, among other proposals, "rumoured as designed to be past in Acts," was one against "Mr. Fountain's gift as Master of the Revels, by which he exacts so much off every bowling green, kyle alley, &c., throughout the kingdom, as falling under his gift of lotteries." Nothing was done then, but in 1684 another complaint was made that the Masters of the Revels went "almost through all Scotland" taxing every person who kept any such place of recreation; and an idea may be formed of the number of these places from the statement that they forced six thousand persons to compound with them, and had thus realised £16,000, "which is a most gross and manifest oppression."

In the days of Charles I., when bowling of all kinds was so fashionable an amusement, the chief bowling place in London was the royal garden between Charing Cross and St. James's Park, known as Spring Garden, from a water-work in it that wetted those whose foot unguardedly pressed some part of its mechanism. Garrard, who was himself so devoted to bowling that he thus expresses the intensity of his concern for

Northumberland's dangerous illness, "I never had so long a time of sorrow; for seven weeks I did nothing heartily but pray, nor sleep, nor eat; *in all that time I never bowled*"—in a letter to Lord Strafford, in 1634, says: "The bowling in the Spring Gardens was by the king's command put down for one day, but by the intercession of the queen it was reprieved for this year, but hereafter it shall be no common bowling place. There was kept in it an ordinary of six shillings a meal; continual bibbing and drinking wine all day long under the trees; two or three quarrels every week. It was grown scandalous and unsufferable. Besides, my Lord Digby, being reprehended for striking in the king's garden, he answered that he took it for a common bowling place where all paid money for their coming in."

It is doubtful whether this reprieve was not made indefinite in Charles's time; at any rate the gardens seem to have been frequented by gay crowds till the time of the Civil War. Evelyn tells us "Cromwell and his partizans shut up and seized on Spring Garden," but we may see from his diary that even during the Commonwealth our games did not share in the condemnation accorded to so many other pastimes. Such a grave writer as Jeremy Taylor, in his "Ductor Dubitantium," written before 1657, includes bowling among pastimes that are "lawful" when separated from "evil appendages," and when the player is not immoderately addicted to them—"not playing for money but for refreshment."

We have at least one reference to nine pins among the amusements of the exiled courtiers, when, in the "Grammont Memoirs," the Earl of Arran speaks of his sister-in-law, the Countess of Ossory, Miss Hyde, and Jermyn playing at nine pins in the gallery at Honslaerdyk.

After the Restoration the favourite bowling places seem to have been at Marylebone Gardens and Putney, where, according to Locke, in 1679, "a curious stranger" might have seen "several persons of quality bowling two or three times a

week." In the days of Pope and Gay, Buckingham and many others "bowled time away" in the famous alleys of the Marylebone Gardens, while in a puff of "The London Spa" in 1720 we are told that

> Now nine-pin alleys and now skittles grace
> The late forlorn and desolated place;
> Arbours of jasmine fragrant shades compose,
> And num'rous blended companies enclose.
> The spring is gratefully adorned with rails,
> Whose fame shall last till the New River fails!

We find occasional references to nine-pins being played by "persons of quality" in later times, as in the interesting instance Samuel Rogers has preserved in his "Recollections." "In a walk round Hyde Park," he writes, "with Mr. Thomas Grenville [one of the elder brothers of William, Lord Grenville] in August, 1841, he said, 'My father lived at Wotton [Bucks], and if I remember right, it was in 1767, when I was in my twelfth year and my brother George and myself (Eton boys) were at home for the midsummer holidays, that Lord Chatham and Lord Temple came there on a visit. We dined at three o'clock, and at half-past four sallied out to the nine-pins alley, where Lord Chatham and Lord Temple, two very tall men, the former in his fifty-ninth year, the latter in the fifty-seventh year of his age, played for an hour and a half, each taking one of us for his partner; the ladies sat by, looking on and drinking their coffee, and in our walk home we stopped to regale ourselves with a syllabub under the cow.'" Within the last century, however, penal statutes, and what Jeremy Taylor calls "evil appendages," have reduced skittle play to the low position it now holds in popular estimation.

CHAPTER XI.

CURLING.

Of a' the games that e'er I saw,
Man, callant, laddie, birkie, wean,
The dearest far aboon them a'
Was aye the witching channel stane.

The Ettrick Shepherd.

When a black frost seals up the ground, and ice covers our ponds and lochs, among the amusements then open to those north of the Tweed there is none more healthful and exhilarating than the game of curling. This "manly Scottish exercise," as the old poet Pennycuick calls it, is, as we said in our chapter on golf, the worthiest rival of that pastime for the title of the national game of Scotland. Alas, however! it fights this battle under immense disadvantages. The good old times seem to have passed away when, for weeks on end,

O'er burn and loch the warlock Frost
A crystal brig would lay,

and good ice might be confidently counted on for a long time. But this, far from disheartening curlers, only makes the ardent votaries of the game the more eager to take every advantage of such fleeting chances as the variable winters of our day send them. Night has often been added to day, when the interest in a great match has been more intense than the frost, and the ice has shown any signs of passing away. All this, and the endeavours made to get an artificial substitute for the too-fleeting ice of these days, shall be spoken of below. Meanwhile, the history of the game requires a few words.

Endless disputes have raged about the origin of this sport; papers have been written to prove, on etymological and other grounds, that it was, and that it was *not*, introduced into Scotland by the Flemish emigrants who came over towards the end of the sixteenth century. All the words in the technical language of the game are of Low Country origin; but the "Noes" thought nothing of that, especially as one waggish enthusiast of their party had, they thought, triumphantly settled the origin of the game as native, or, at least, as of very great antiquity in Scotland, by the lines in "Ossian," telling how, "Amid the circle of stones, Swaran bends at the stone of might."

He, however, was completely eclipsed by another patriotic joker who, in many verses, in the old *Scots Magazine* of last century, takes us much further back than the Fingalian heroes, and tells us how

> Auld Daddy Scotland sat ae day
> Bare-legged on a snawy brae,
> His brawny arms wi' cauld were blae,
> The wind was snelly blawing.

When to him comes the King of gods, rebuking him for his grumbling against the weather:

> Quo' Jove, and gied his kilt a heeze,
> Fule carle! what gars you grunt and wheeze?
> Get up! I'll get an exercise,
> To het your freezing heart wi'.
>
> I'll get a cheery, heartsome game,
> To send through a' the soul a flame,
> Pit birr and smeddum in the frame,
> And set the blude a-dinling.

And forthwith Jove explained to the shivering old fellow all the mysteries of our game.

Where doctors so differ, in joke and in earnest, it is difficult to decide; but though curling is now so eminently a Scottish game, evidence goes to prove pretty clearly that the pastime was

brought to us from the Continent not very long ago—three hundred years or so—and that, as in the case of golf, we are probably indebted to outsiders for the first rough sketches of the "roaring game." The technical language of the game is, as we have said, all of Low Country origin, and it is supposed to have been introduced into this country by the Flemish emigrants who, at various times during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were encouraged to settle on the eastern coast of Scotland.

No authentic mention of the game occurs in any work till about the beginning of the seventeenth century, and there is no trustworthy evidence of any other kind of its existence much before this time. In the Carse of Gowrie, indeed, there is a model of a curling-stone in silver, which is played for annually by several parishes. Tradition says that it was given as a challenge trophy by King James IV., himself a keen curler, during Perkin Warbeck's visit to his Court. If it was so presented, then certainly this merry monarch must have omitted to pay his silversmith for it, as in the accounts of his Lord Treasurer, though there are many entries relating to the king's other games of golf, football, "cach" (tennis), "langbowlis," "kiles" (skittles), and many others, not a word is said about curling; and it is quite clear James was not, as tradition says, a keen player, or else some expense would have been incurred in connection with it.

It is said that the unfortunate Henry, Lord Darnley, amused himself during the severe winter (1566–7) he spent in exile at the little town of Peebles, on the Tweed, by curling on a flooded meadow, now part of the clergyman's glebe. Here, too, tradition is our only authority, and it is not until we get into the next century that the ground becomes firm under our feet, and we come upon undoubted references to the pastime in books. Curiously enough, the first author who mentions the game was neither a Scot nor a curler. This is Camden, who, in the sixth edition of his "Britannia," published in 1607,

speaks of this game as if it were well known then. Writing of the Orkney Islands, he tells his readers that "to the east of the mainland [of Orkney] lies Copineta, or Copinshay, a little isle, but very conspicuous to seamen, in which, and in several other places of this country, are to be found in great plenty excellent stones for the game called curling." Interesting as stones from Copinshay are to antiquarian curlers, from their connection with this first historic notice of the game, they pronounce Camden mistaken in calling them "excellent," as upon trial that great authority upon the game, Sir Richard Brown of Lochmaben, reports them "not worth a rap."

At this time, and for long after, the game appears to have been merely a rough kind of quoiting on ice; indeed, for a great part of the last century its common name in this country was *kuting*. The stones of that day, rough undressed blocks —so different from the polished missiles now used—had no handle, but merely a kind of hollow or niche for the finger and thumb, and were evidently intended to be *thrown* for at least part of the course. Since these days, great strides have been taken in the improvement of the game; now it is highly scientific, and with its many delicate strokes, its "wicks," or cannons, calculations of angles, of force, and of bias, it may without presumption be called the billiards of ice. In some places, however, the old game with its primitive implements, usually flattish stones from the bed of the nearest stream, still holds its place under the name of "channelling."

The *Caledonian Mercury*, of 20th December, 1830, records the finding of one of these old seventeenth century kuting stones. "Last week," it says, "while the foundation of the 'Old House' of Loig, in Strathallan, was being dug out, a curling stone of a very different shape and texture from those now generally in use in that district was discovered. It is of an oblong form, and had been neatly finished with the hammer. The initials, J. M., and the date, 1611, are still distinctly legible, having been deeply, though uncouthly, engraven."

After Camden, there are many references to curling in books of the seventeenth century, clearly proving that it had taken its place as a favourite pastime of the people.

Sir William Scott, younger, of Harden—a member of that noted family of Border raiders, one of whom is the hero of the "Mickle-mouthed Meg" story, when he, a captive, had set before him the alternative of the rope or wedding his captor's ugly daughter, and wisely chose the latter, thereby getting an excellent wife—having got into trouble in 1684 for his connection with Jerviswoode's and Lord Tarras's conspiracy, and their correspondence with Russell, Shaftesbury, and the "Carolina Company," we are told by Lord Fountainhall, in his gossippy "Decisions of the Lords of Session," that a party of the forces were sent out to apprehend him, but that a William Scot of Langhope, getting notice of their coming, went and told Harden of it, "as he was playing at the curling with Riddell of Haining and others." The story goes that Harden was so engrossed in his game, and so unwilling to spoil it by leaving, that he narrowly escaped capture, and had to ride hard before he baffled his pursuers; but Fountainhall does not bear this out, as he makes Harden leave the ice at once.

In the bead-roll of curling are no such mighty names as those that golf boasts of; our winter game has not got mixed up with historic events and personages, as the older pastime has; but what her devotees lack in greatness is made up by the intense affection shown by them in all ages for their favourite sport.

It appears to have been always a great game with poets. Allan Ramsay and Burns allude to it, and a host of minor bards have sung its praises at varying lengths, but with uniform appreciation of its excellences. One of the most eloquent passages in Christopher North's "Winter Rhapsody" deplores the failing popularity of the game in his later days; for, like many other good things, curling has had its ups and downs in this world. In some few districts where it once flourished for

a time, the interest in the game has died out; but of later years the establishment of so many clubs has given a new impetus to the game, which now prospers in its season beyond all former experience. The south-western districts of Scotland were long the chosen home of curling, and the players of Lanark and Dumfriesshire were specially renowned for their great skill in the art; but now it has spread over the whole country, and the grand matches of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club witness the friendly rivalry of worthy foemen from Maidenkirk to John o'Groat's, and excite the enthusiasm of branch clubs south of the Tweed, and even across the Atlantic.

The curlers of Lochmaben, in Dumfries, have long been celebrated for their excellence. They have given a phrase to the game, "Soutering," which has puzzled curling philologers to explain before now. Soutering means defeating an opposing party in so hollow a way that they stand "love" when the victors are "game." In Lochmaben there was a rink of seven players, all shoemakers—Scoticé, *souters*—by trade, who were so expert that not only did they conquer all comers, but often without allowing their opponents to score a single shot; hence the phrase. On the same loch, during the French war, there was another rink, headed by Sir James Brown of Colstoun, famed all over curling Scotland as the "Invincible Board of Lochmaben." Many are the feats recorded of these doughty champions. So marvellous was the skill of Deacon Jardine, Chief of the "Souters," that he could with his stone thread a needle! He attached, with a piece of shoemaker's wax, two needles to the side of two curling stones, just the width of the one he played with apart; then, upon two stones in front, similarly apart, and in the line of direction, having affixed two "birses"—bristles—he played his stone so accurately that, in grazing through the "port," or opening between the stones, it would impel the birses forward through the eyes of the needles. Unique as was this feat, it has often

been rivalled in difficulty by delicate shots of other curlers. Nor was their strength behind their skill and delicacy of aim. There have been instances of a curling stone being thrown a mile upon the ice. Sir Richard Brown says that in his days there were many alive who could throw a stone across "the Kirk Loch"—one of the many lakes at Lochmaben—"a feat not much short of the above." Once a celebrated player of Tinwald, named Lawrie Young, challenged the Lochmaben curlers to a trial of strength. Their President stepped forward, and taking his stone, threw it with such strength across the "Mill Loch" that it jumped off the brink upon the other side, and tumbled over upon the grass. "Now," said he to Lawrie, "go and throw it back again; I will then confess that you are too many for us."

Captain H. Clapperton, R.N., an African traveller of some repute sixty years ago, used to play with an enormous mass of granite, known far and wide as "the Hen." This rough stone weighed about seventy pounds; and yet such a strong man was Clapperton that he not only played some capital shots with it, but could hold it out at arm's length, and whirl it about as if it were a feather. An uncle of his used even a heavier stone, because, as he said, no other curler on the Lochmaben ice could throw it up but himself. These were roughly-shaped stones, almost as they were when found, and would never be allowed on a rink nowadays.

At Edinburgh, perhaps as much as at any other place, has curling prospered within the last century, though in one point the game has lost a recognition it once had, if we believe the old tradition that, about a hundred and fifty years ago, the Town Council used to go to the ice in all the pomp and circumstance that it now reserves for the Commissioner's procession, with a band playing "appropriate airs" before it, which discoursed sweet music while the fathers of the city gave an hour or two to the game. The citizens then played on the Nor' Loch, a sheet of water which in those days divided the old Town from

the New; when it was drained, they went to the ponds at Canonmills, and subsequently to Duddingston Loch, where arose the Duddingston Curling Club, instituted in 1795, which has done great things in infusing a new spirit into the game. Among its members have been many fine curlers and good fellows, famed in other fields than this; and even if the club had done nothing beyond giving us the capital songs of Sir Alexander Boswell (son of Johnson's "Bozzy"), Miller, and many others, it would still have deserved well of its country.

Of late years, however, there has arisen a mightier than it—the Royal Caledonian Curling Club—now forty years old, which numbers among its members most curlers of note, both at home and abroad; and to which are affiliated all the local societies, who once a year, when the weather permits, send their chosen champions to contend at the grand match held under the auspices of the Royal Club.

No game promotes sociality more than curling; none unites on one common platform the different classes of society better than it does.

> The tenant and his jolly laird,
> The pastor and his flock,

join in the game, without patronage on one side or any loss of respect on the other. Harmony and friendly feeling prevail: and if, on the ice as elsewhere, all men are *not* equal, it is because a quick eye, a sound head, and a steady hand, make now the shepherd, now the laird, "king o' a' the core."

Estimating the "transparent board," as he does, highly, on account of its rarity and short life, it is *always* a trial for a curler to see a sheet of ice lying fallow and unoccupied; and when, on a Sunday in Scotland, the "crystal brig" on some fine loch lies smooth and keen, who has not seen hopeful enthusiasts taking a glance at the virgin expanse, with expression of countenance impossible to misunderstand! The marvel is that the strong temptation is so universally resisted, and that

so little effect has followed the example set by that Bishop of Orkney two centuries ago, whose "process," says Baillie, in his Letters, "came before us; he was a curler on the Sabbath-day."

Many amusing stories are told of Sunday curling. Long ago it was believed that this was the favourite amusement of fairies on a fine frosty Sunday afternoon, and no doubt this helped, as much as anything else, to keep superstitious youngsters off the ice, lying there before them tempting as only forbidden fruit and Sunday ice can be. In an early number of *Blackwood*, a good story is told of "a pedlar, well known in Dumfriesshire, whose love of gain was generally considered as an overmatch for his conscience, but who was withal very fond of the amusement of curling, who chanced to pass Loch Etterick, with his pack on his back, upon a Sabbath morning. The ice was evidently in fine order, and there were a few curling-stones lying on the banks of the loch, with which the shepherds of those mountainous districts had been in the habit of occasionally amusing themselves. Watty hesitated a little. . . . On the one hand there was the 'Lord's Day' and the sin, and so forth: but then, on the other, appeared the stones, lying quite ready; the fine board of ice, together with the absence, at present, of all human eye. In a word, the result of this deliberation was an advance made by Watty into the middle of the loch, where he quietly deposited his pack, and had recourse to a pair or two of the best stones he could select. Everybody who understands the game knows quite well how Watty would proceed. He would just set a stone on each tee, and then try to hit it off. The sport, no doubt, was imperfect without a companion, and so Watty felt it to be. He gave a glance or two to the surrounding hills, as if half desirous that 'Will Crosby,' a rattling, reckless body, might heave in sight and bear a hand, but there was no human creature within view. The play became tiresome, and Watty, in order to rest and resolve upon future measures, seated himself quite at

his ease upon his pack. No sooner had he done this, however, than, with a boom and a roar that made the ice shake and sink beneath him, an invisible, and consequently a fairy curling-stone came full drive against Watty's shins. The instinct of self-preservation restored Watty immediately to his legs, and in the course of a certain number of hasty strides, to the adjoining bank. This was doubtless a visitation upon him for his profanation of the Sabbath. What was to be done? The pack was in the power—at least within the dominion—of the 'Fairy Queen,' and to contest the possession upon her own element seemed little short of madness. At this instant another fairy stone made its presence audible, and Watty, unable any longer to resist his terrors, fled. He fled to a shieling about four miles off, and, with the assistance of Will Crosby, whose faith was not much stronger than Watty's, possessed himself *next morning* of his lost goods. The story I have often heard him tell with a serious countenance; nor have I the smallest doubt that he believed every word which he said."

The following good story has been told by a reverend doctor whose projected history of this game is looked for with much interest by all curlers :—The Rev. Adam Wadderstone, minister of Bathgate, who died in 1780, was a most excellent man, and took a deep interest in the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of his flock. He was also an enthusiastic curler, and almost always headed his flock in their encounters on the ice with the neighbouring parishes. John Clarkson, a worthy member of his session, also a "true son of the broom," having very late one Saturday evening received from the people of Shotts a challenge to the curlers of Bathgate to meet them early on the following Monday, was at a loss how to communicate the pleasing intelligence to his minister. After many qualms of conscience and several hours of sleepless anxiety, he made up his mind to tell him the news in the session house on Sunday morning. Mr. Wadderstone no

sooner entered than John said in a low tone, "Sir, I've something to tell ye—there's to be a parish play wi' the Shotts folk the morn at ——" "Whist, man, whist," was the rejoinder; "O, fie shame, John, fie shame; nae speaking to-day about warldy recreations!" But the ruling passion proved too strong for the worthy clergyman's scruples of conscience, for just as he was about to enter the kirk door he suddenly wheeled round, and returning to the elder, who was now standing at the plate, he whispered in his ear—"But whan's the hour, John? I'll be sure and be there."

One of the Dukes of Athole, very fond both of curling and skating, suggested a game in which both were combined. The skater, armed with a long pole, impelled his curling-stone with it; but, though it was described as an "elegant mode, making a highly interesting game," it never took with either curlers or skaters, never at any time best of friends on the ice.

At a time when the game was not as fashionable with the Scottish nobility as it is nowadays, "Archibald the Handsome," the ninth Duke of Hamilton, was a great patron of curling. He often headed rinks from Hamilton in contests with other parishes, and took the keenest interest in the "spiel." Once in the "dear years," when meal *was* meal, the fate of a game depended on a critical shot being played; his Grace called out to the player about to attempt it, "Now, John, if you take the shot and strike away the winner, your mother shanna want meal a' the winter—I'll send her a load"—a prize John had the satisfaction, both as a curler and a son, of winning.

The Duke often risked more than a few sacks of oatmeal on the issue of a curling match, notably in 1784, when he and his Hamilton men played and won the famous match on Lochwinnoch for a thousand guineas, against Macdowal of Garthland and a rink of celebrated curlers from Paisley.

Let us now see how the game is played; and first we shall give what is perhaps the earliest description of the game on

record, that given by Pennant in his "Tour" in 1792. "Of all the sports of these parts," he says, "that of curling is the favourite, and one unknown in England. It is an amusement of the winter, and played on the ice by sliding from one mark to another great stones of from forty to seventy pounds weight, of a hemispherical form, with an iron or wooden handle at the top. The object of the player is to lay his stone as near the mark as possible, to guard that of his partner, which had been well laid before, or to strike his antagonist's."

The game is played on a carefully-chosen piece of ice called the "rink," which should be forty-two yards long, unless special circumstances—such as thaw and consequently "dull" ice—require to be shortened. This piece of ice should be as level, smooth, and free from cracks as possible; there is usually a trifling bias, which, however, to the skilled curler rather adds interest to the game, as it calls forth additional science in the play.

When the rink is chosen, a little mark is made at each end; this is called the "tee"; it takes the place of the white ball or "jack" in bowls, and the whole object of the game is for the players of one side to lay as many of their stones as they can closer to this mark than the nearest stone of the opposite side. Round the tees are scratched several concentric circles or "broughs," a foot or so apart from each other, so that the distance at which stones are lying from the goal may be seen at a glance during the game. In the normally long rink, a scratch, called the hog-score—usually made wavy, to distinguish it from any accidental crack—is drawn across the line of play near each end, eight yards from the tee; and any stones that have not had impetus enough imparted to them to carry them over this line are "hogs," and are put off the ice as useless for that "end." A common number of players in one rink is eight—four against four; but in some places more play on one side, and in others less, according to circumstances. As a general rule, each man plays two stones. The game is

counted by points; and each stone of a side closer than their antagonists' nearest, is a point which scores towards the game. It will be observed that "tees," "broughs," and "hog-scores" are in duplicate, for as in quoits and bowls, ends are changed after each round.

The best player of each side is usually made captain or "skip," and on his tact, judgment, and knowledge of the exact amount of confidence he can place on the skill of each of his followers depends much of the success of his side. As in bowls, he plays last himself, that the critical shot, on which perhaps victory or defeat hangs, may be in the best possible hands; at the earlier part of the "end" he stands at the goal aimed at, directing and advising the play of the three first players of his side.

The course of a game is generally something like this, though in no sport are there greater variations, or more circumstances calling forth all that judgment, skill, and experience only can teach. The "lead" or first player's object is simple: he tries to "draw" his shot—that is, to play his stone as near the tee as he can, and if he is a skilful player his stone rests say a few feet short of the mark. The lead of the opposite side probably does much the same thing, or perhaps with one stone knocks his opponent's best away and rests in its place. Then comes the turn of the second players. If an opposing stone lies near the tee, this player tries to change places with it by driving it away; but if a stone of his own side is next the tee, his play will be to "guard" it —that is, to lay his own stone in a direct line before it, so that the enemy may be less likely to dislodge it. As the game proceeds it gets more intricate—the stones round the tee may have been so placed that the "winner" is perfectly guarded from direct attack. Then is the time for the display of science: an experienced player by a cunning twist of the wrist may make his stone curl round the opposing guard and lie first, or he may hit a stone near the winner in an oblique direction,

and so cannon off it on to the winning stone and knock it away. This last is called "wicking," and is exactly a stroke of the same kind so necessary in billiards.

And so the game goes on—a game of give and take; but as Græme says, who can

> Follow the experienced player
> Through all the mysteries of his art, or teach
> The undisciplined how to wick, to guard,
> Or ride full out the stone that blocks the pass!

Stories innumerable are told of the delicate feats of aiming performed by adepts in the game; and it is wonderful what skill is often shown in the shots taken by good curlers with their unwieldy looking weapons; the narrow "ports" or openings between two stones that they can make their missiles pass through, and the dexterity they show in calculating the bias of the ice and the exact amount of angle necessary to make their cannons.

Each player provides himself with a broom to sweep up the ice before a too lazy stone; and upon judicious sweeping much of the game depends. The shouts of "Soop! soop!" that follow the signal of the skip; the excited gestures of the "capering combatants"; the constant cries of victory or defeat after the frequent changes of fortune; the general exhilaration of spirits attending a healthy and exciting exercise in the bracing air of winter—all tend to make the scene an extraordinary one. Of course if, instead of the ordinary match or game among the members of a club, we are witnessing a "bonspeil," or match between two rival clubs or parishes, the excitement is much intensified. Wraps put on by the careful goodwives' hands before the curlers left home are recklessly cast aside; brawny arms vigorously ply the besoms; strong lungs shout out encouragement; and the engrossed combatants await the issue of a shot in all the attitudes so cunningly portrayed in Sir George Harvey's well-known picture. Of course the point of most breathless interest is when perhaps one shot must

decide the game. Hear how that inimitable curling song-writer, the Rev. Dr. Duncan, describes that moment:

A moment's silence, still as death,
Pervades the anxious thrang, man,
Then sudden bursts the victors' shout,
Wi' hollos loud and lang, man;
Triumphant besoms wave in air,
And friendly banters fly, man;
Whilst, cold and hungry, to the inn
Wi' eager steps they hie, man;

where awaits them the true curlers' dinner of "beef and greens"; to which simple viands the appetites, sharpened by the keen frost, do ample justice. And if a temperate tumbler of toddy is emptied, what then? A merry evening is spent; and however keen the contest has been, or strong the rivalry between closely matched parishes, we can always say with the old song:

They met baith merry in the morn,
At night they parted friends.

During these jovial evenings, "in words the fight renewed is fought again," and many stories of past curling are told, old jokes—venerable, but all the better liked for that—are retold, and all is mirth and jollity. Strange are the pranks sometimes suggested by the too potent toddy, and many are the stories told of them. Here is one that takes us back to the ice again, but by night this time.

A large party of Kilmarnock curlers had heen playing all day in a match, which they had won. After dinner, while the social glass was being drained, it was proposed that they should again repair to the ice; the hint met with universal approbation. It was about eleven o'clock, and they had to walk a mile in the country to reach the loch. The night was very dark, but a lantern at each tee head guided the player in his delivery; "the stone," says the poetic chronicler of this game, "having left the hand, was heard booming, unseen, along the ice, 'startling the night's dull ear,' its desti-

nation unknown until it dashed among the others around the tee. The stilly calmness of the dark night, the roar of the stones in their progress along the ice, and the screaming and fluttering of flocks of wild water-fowl, startled from the margin of the loch by the unusual intrusion on their haunts, formed a scene of interest and novelty. In these strange circumstances the game was continued with the utmost enthusiasm and hilarity till long past 'the wee short hour ayont the twal'; and ere the party finally separated 'gray morning, like a warder on his tower,' was beginning to smile upon the snow-clad world."

The shortness of good curling weather in modern winters stimulated inventive minds to do for this game what roller-skating and Mr. Plimpton have done for its sister ice sport. The most notable of these devices for making curling perennial and altogether independent of Jack Frost, are Dr. Robert Foulis's substitute for ice and curling stones, and Mr. Gamgee's invention of "real ice" artificially made. Of these Mr. Gamgee's patent, in which the game can be played with stones on perfect ice, is, of course, the best; but glaciaria are expensive and rare, and the enthusiastic curler who pines for the "roaring play" all the year round will most probably have to turn to Dr. Foulis's "pond," which, in its most perfect form, is made of very smooth pitch pine panels dovetailed into one another, so as to make a floor twenty-six feet long by twelve feet wide. This is laid on sleepers, and a light framework of wood running round the edge serves to keep the "stones" from toppling over. The surface of the floor is coated with a patent composition, which makes it extremely smooth and slippery. The stones are of precisely the same shape as those used on ice, but instead of being made of granite, the upper part is hard wood, while the lower portion, or "sole," is just a circular scrubbing-brush filled with short bristles. Round the widest part of the "stone" is a band of iron to give weight, and encircling this is an outer band of indiarubber, which prevents damage to the rink should the stone be overturned, and

at the same time makes the stones more lively when cannons are attempted in the course of play. While this is the perfect form of the "pond" and stones, a small size of the missiles is made for use in ordinary houses, where the game is played on a prepared substance resembling oil-cloth; indeed, a capital "home rink" can readily be made by coating wax-cloth with the patent composition.

CHAPTER XII.

SKATING AND SKATERS.

THOUGH it appears to be impossible to fix on the time when skating first took root in this country, there can be no doubt that it was introduced to us from more northern climates, where it originated more from the necessities of the inhabitants than as a pastime. When snow covered their land, and ice bound up their rivers, imperious necessity would soon suggest to the Scands or the Germans some ready means of winter locomotion. This first took the form of snow-shoes, with two long runners of wood, like those still used by the inhabitants of the northerly parts of Norway and Sweden in their journeys over the immense snow-fields. These seem originally to have been used by the Finns, "for which reason," says a Swedish writer, "they were called 'Skrid Finnai' (sliding Finns), a common name for the most ancient inhabitants of Sweden, both in the North Saga and by foreign authors."

When used on ice, one runner would soon have been found more convenient than the widely separated two, and harder materials used than wood: first bone was substituted; then it, in turn, gave place to iron; and thus the present form of skate was developed in the North at a period set down by Scandinavian archæologists as about A.D. 200.

Frequent allusions occur in the old Northern poetry which prove that proficiency in skating was one of the most highly esteemed accomplishments of the Northern heroes. One of them, named Kolson, boasts that he is master of nine accom-

plishments, skating being one; while the hero Harold bitterly complains that though he could fight, ride, swim, glide along the ice on skates, dart the lance, and row, "yet a Russian maid disdains me."

Eight arts are mine: to wield the steel,
To curb the warlike horse,
To swim the lake, or skate on heel
To urge my rapid course.
To hurl, well aimed, the martial spear,
To brush with oar the main—
All these are mine, though doomed to bear
A Russian maid's disdain.

In the "Edda" this accomplishment is singled out for special praise: "Then the king asked what that young man could do who accompanied Thor. Thialfe answered, that in running upon skates he would dispute the prize with any of the countries. The king owned that the talent he spoke of was a very fine one."

Olaus Magnus, the author of the famous chapter on the Snakes of Iceland, tells us that skates were made "of polished iron, or of the shank-bone of a deer or sheep, about a foot long, filed down on one side, and greased with hog's lard to repel the wet." These rough-and-ready bone skates were the kind first adopted by the English; for Fitzstephen, in his description of the amusements of the Londoners in his day (temp. Henry II.), tells us that "when that great fen that washes Moorfields at the north wall of the city is frozen over, great companies of young men go to sport upon the ice. Some striding as wide as they may, do slide swiftly; some, better practised to the ice, bind to their shoes bones, as the legs of some beasts, and hold stakes in their hands, headed with sharp iron, which sometimes they strike against the ice; these men go as swiftly as doth a bird in the air or a bolt from a cross-bow." Then he goes on to say that some, imitating the fashion of the tournament, would start in full career

against one another, armed with poles: "they meet, elevate their poles, attack and strike each other, when one or both of them fall, and not without some bodily hurt."

Specimens of these old bone skates are occasionally dug up in fenny parts of the country. There are some in the British Museum, in the Museum of the Scottish Antiquaries, and probably in other collections; though perhaps some of the "finds" are not nearly as old as Fitzstephen's day, for there seems to be good evidence that even in London the primitive bone skate was not entirely superseded by implements of steel at the latter part of last century.

Mr. Roach Smith, F.S.A., describing one found about 1839 in Moorfields, near Finsbury Circus, in the boggy soil peculiar to that district, says that "it is formed of the bone of some animal, made smooth on one side, with a hole at one extremity for a cord to fasten it to the shoe. At the other end a hole is also drilled horizontally to the depth of three inches, which might have received a plug, with another cord to secure it more effectually."

There is hardly a greater difference between these old bone skates and the "acmés" and club skates of to-day than there is between the skating of the middle ages and the artistic and graceful movements of good performers of to-day. Indeed, skating as a fine art is entirely a thing of modern growth in Britain. So little thought of was the exercise that for long after Fitzstephen's day we find few or no allusions to it, and up to the Restoration days it appears to have been an amusement confined chiefly to the lower classes, among whom it never reached any very high pitch of art. "It was looked upon," says a writer in the *Saturday Review* in 1865, "much with the same view that the boys on the Serpentine even now seem to adopt, as an accomplishment, the acmé of which was reached when the performer could succeed in running along quickly on his skates and finishing off with a long and triumphant slide on two feet in a straight line forward. A gen-

tleman would probably then have no more thought of trying to execute different figures on the ice than he would at the present day of dancing in a drawing-room on the tips of his toes."

Even as an amusement of the common people it is not alluded to in any of the usual catalogues of sports so often referred to. Among the many games which Holinshed tells us were played on the Thames ice during the great frost of December, 1564, he does not include skating; but when the exiled Court returned to Britain at the Restoration, we find that many of King Charles's suite must have profited by their sojourn in the Low Countries, and had attained to considerable proficiency in swift, straightforward skating. Evelyn, under date December 1, 1662, notes "having seen the strange and wonderful dexterity of the sliders on the canal in St. James's Park, performed before their Majesties by divers gentlemen and others with skates, after the manner of the Hollanders, with what swiftness they pass, how suddenly they stop in full career upon the ice. I went home by water, but not without exceeding difficulty, the Thames being frozen, great flakes of ice encompassing our boat." Then a fortnight afterwards his brother diarist, Pepys, records that he went to the Duke of York, "and followed him into the Parke, where, though the ice was broken and dangerous, yet he would slide upon his skates, which I did not like, but he slides very well."

From this time, then, we may consider skating firmly established as a British pastime. In Evelyn's description of the great Frost Fair on the Thames in January, 1684, when the river "was planted with booths in formal streets; coaches plied from Westminster to the Temple and from other stairs, to and fro, as in the streets," he tells us the people amused themselves with "sliding on skates, bull-baiting, horse and coach races, &c." In the illustrations of the next great Frost Fairs on the Thames, in 1716 and 1740, we see figures on skates wheeling round the oxen roasted whole, the puppet shows, and all "the fun of the fair" provided for the regale-

ment of the crowds that disported themselves on the ice. Addison sang its praises in a Latin poem—the "Cursus Glacialis;" Strype and Maitland give it a place among the pastimes of the Londoners; Thomson has a spirited description of a skating scene in his "Winter;" so that the exercise can complain of no want of notice during the eighteenth century.

During all this time, when skating was struggling into notice in Britain, in its birthplace it continued to be cultivated as the one great winter amusement. In Holland, too, where it is looked upon less as a pastime than a necessity, nothing has so frequently struck travellers as the wonderful change the advent of ice brings about on the bearing of the inhabitants. "Heavy, massive, stiff creatures during the rest of the year," says Pilati, in his "Letters on Holland," "become suddenly active, ready and agile, as soon as the canals are frozen," and they are able to glide along the frozen surface with the speed and endurance for which their skating has been so long renowned, though these very qualities are bought at the expense of the elegance and grace we nowadays look for in the accomplished skater. Thomson thus graphically describes the enlivening effects of frost on the Dutch :—

> Now in the Netherlands, and where the Rhine
> Branched out in many a long canal, extends,
> From every province swarming, void of care,
> Batavia rushes forth; and as they sweep,
> On sounding skates, a thousand different ways
> In circling poise, swift as the winds along,
> The then gay land is maddened all to joy.
> Nor less the northern courts, wide o'er the snow,
> Pour a new pomp. Eager on rapid sleds,
> Their vigorous youth in bold contention wheel
> The long resounding course. Meantime to raise
> The manly strife, with highly blooming charms
> Flushed by the season, Scandinavia's dames
> Or Russia's buxom daughters glow around.

Though the poet of the "Seasons" speaks of Russia here, it is curious to note that skating is not a national amusement

of the Russians, but is entirely of foreign and quite recent introduction. It is quite unknown in the interior, and no Russian—except a few who have picked up the art in St. Petersburg—ever thinks of availing himself of the many pieces of water annually frozen hard in so cold a country.

Perhaps it is in Friesland that the skate is most especially a necessary of life. What stilts are to the peasant of the Landes, skates are to the Frisian. The watercourses of the summer are his highways when winter sets in. "He goes to market on skates; he goes to church on skates," we are told; "he goes love-making on skates." Indeed, it may be doubted if this province could be inhabited if the art of skating were unknown, for without it the inhabitants would be confined to home for several months of each year. Frisians of both sexes actually skate more than they walk, says M. Depping; no sooner is an infant able to stand upright than the irons are fastened on his feet; his parents lead him on to the ice, and teach him how to move along. At six years most of the young skaters have attained great proficiency, but in Frisian opinion even the best performers improve up to thirty.

Here, as elsewhere in Holland, ice races are of frequent occurrence during the winter. "The races on the ice," says Pilati, "are the carnivals of the Dutch: they are their fêtes, their operas, their dissipations;" naturally, therefore, the people manifest the greatest interest in them; skate long distances to be present, and cherish the names of distinguished winners in a way we should never expect from such an unemotional people as the Hollanders appear when the ice is gone and when most travellers see them.

The races take place on large canals that intersect the country in every direction. In Friesland long strips of wood are ranged at length in lines to mark out the course of each competitor, so that there can be no fouling or crossing even in the heat of the most closely contested struggle. To make the heats perfectly fair for all the competitors, it is a rule that

when the course on one side of the lines of separation is more favourable than on the other, the skaters must change their side every time. To win one of the more valuable prizes is a most arduous undertaking, as the victor must have come in first in from sixty to eighty heats.

The women have races of their own; but most interesting of all the contests are those in which the sturdy dames, whom their own painters delight in depicting as gliding along to market with baskets on their heads and knitting needles in their busy fingers, are matched against the best of the other sex. Though, as a rule, these "Atalantas of the North" excel the men rather in beauty of style than in speed, yet the prize often enough goes to one of them. Captain Clias in his book on "Gymnastics," published about fifty years ago, says that at many contests at which he was present at Leuwarden, he saw young women beat their masculine rivals in long races. In 1808, he tells us, two young women, named Scholtens and Johannes, won the prize in a skating race at Gröningen. They went thirty miles in two hours—a feat that will bear comparison with any well authenticated record either in Holland or among our own swift skaters of the fens. Among these authentic instances we can hardly include a marvellous story told in the "Delights of Holland," a book published at Amsterdam in 1697, where a father is said to have skated more than 120 leagues in one day in order to reach the bedside of his son, who lay in danger of death; though a favourite feat of expert skaters therein mentioned—going from Leyden to Amsterdam, a distance of fifteen miles, in an hour and a quarter—has been often excelled. In the fens on the long running skates two miles have been covered in seven minutes four and a half seconds; a mile, according to the *Saturday Review*, "in a little over the two minutes, the fastest pace in the world;" though this has been beaten by the feat said to have been accomplished by William Clark of Madison, Wisconsin, United States, who is credited with covering a mile in one minute

fifty-six seconds. These "records," however, have no authentic evidence to support them. Time and distance were probably alike uncertain; indeed the fastest authentic feat of skating on a properly measured mile is that of Mr. Sidney Tebbutt, who traversed a mile in two minutes fifteen seconds. Mr. Heathcote, in his "Reminiscences of Fen and Mere," has much to say of the old skating times before the draining of so much of the fen country of Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, "the greatest blow which has fallen upon English skating in modern times." When the fens were in an undrained state it was possible to skate from Connington to Ely Cathedral and back in the course of a winter's day. In 1799, one Francis Drake, an officer of the Bedford Level Corporation, is said to have put on his skates at Whittlesea and crossed both the Middle and South Levels without taking them off, having thus covered a distance of nearly fifty miles. Other flying fenmen on their long "runners," with the important help of a fair wind behind, have traversed seventy miles a day.

Here, too, as in Holland, the event which excited the greatest interest was a skating race. "A good surface of ice," says Mr. Heathcote, "gave as good a prospect of competition and as happy a holiday as a day of the Derby." The candidates came from the surrounding towns and villages of the fens, and much rivalry was excited between them, and keen and severe were the contests for the cocked hat, the pig, or the purse of money offered as prizes.

The fenmen still keep up their winter races, and most probably attain a speed as great as the best in the days of old. The well-known fen skater, "Fish" Smart, over a straight course and with the wind behind him, is probably as fast a skater as ever stood on steel.

In the great frost of 1860 three companies of Lincolnshire Volunteers gave a remarkable display of their skill as skaters on the Witham. They assembled below the Stamp End Lock on December 29, 1860, and, after going through a number of

evolutions in a steady and orderly way, skated down the river to Boston in "fours," rifle in hand, "keeping step" as well as on land. At the time it was suggested that in a special emergency in winter a rendezvous of the local troops might be effected with unusual expedition in this way. Similar musters, we believe, took place during the recent severe frosts: at one interesting parade by the City of Lincoln Volunteers, the newspaper correspondents say the corps went past in line and in column at the "quick" in good style, but "marking time" was a matter rather difficult of accomplishment.

Frequently on the Continent skates have proved themselves excellent engines of war, both in actual fighting—as when a Dutch army on skates once repulsed a force of Frenchmen on the Scheldt—and as a rapid means of communication. During the winter of 1806, Napoleon, after the battle of Jena, wished to send an order with the utmost despatch to Marshal Mortier, directing him to make himself master, without delay, of the Hanseatic towns. The officer charged with this order found himself at the mouth of the Elbe at a point where it was seven and a half miles from bank to bank. To cross in a boat was impossible, as the river was coated with a surface of newly-frozen ice; to get over by a bridge would necessitate a detour of more than twenty miles. The officer, knowing how precious time was, determined to skate over the thin ice; and though it was too weak to bear a man walking, he skimmed along so rapidly that he got across in safety; gaining great honour for the ingenuity and boldness that enabled him to deliver his despatch six hours sooner than he possibly could have done by the ordinary route.

In Holland, regiments have regular parades on the ice; but Norway is probably the only country where it has been considered necessary to embody a special corps of skaters. In this regiment, "the men are furnished," says Mr. Russell in his translation of Guillaume Depping's book, "with the skates in ordinary use in the North, that fixed on the right foot

being somewhat longer than that on the left. Furnished with these, the soldiers descend steep slopes with incredible rapidity, re-ascend them as quickly, cross rivers and lakes, and halt at the slightest signal, even while moving at the highest speed."

It is only within the last hundred years that "the rude steps of the skaters were first moulded by cultivation, though who the instructor was who first taught the slippery foot to adapt itself to 'threes' and 'eights' history does not record." A good deal of the credit, at least, of fostering the new-born art appears to be due to Edinburgh, whose skating club, immortalised in the "Noctes Ambrosianæ," was the first instituted in this kingdom. In Scotland generally, up to that time, skating was not a common form of recreation. What there was of it was very rude, and the "iron age" of the pastime must have been some centuries later in ousting that of bone than in England. Dr. Jamieson thinks that "guyting," a common provincial name for skating, is derived from a Teutonic word meaning a bone. But, besides this, we know that skates were called "bones," and probably were bones till comparatively recent times. Thus, in Adamson's rhyming inventory of the contents of Mr. George Ruthven's cabinet (Perth, 1638) are these lines :—

> His hats, his hoods, his bells, his bones,
> His alley bowles, his curling stones,
> The sacred games to celebrate
> Which to the gods are consecrate.

The skating enthusiasm of a few prominent Edinburgh men gave an immense impetus to the exercise about the beginning of the century in Scotland. These were the days before the recent woful degeneracy in winter weather that threatens to make skating one of the lost arts. Instead of Duddingstone Loch then rippling under a gentle westerly breeze on a mild January day, Dr. Robert Chambers could recall "with pleasure skating exhibitions which he saw there in the hard winters early in the present century, where Henry Cockburn and the

philanthropist James Simpson were conspicuous amongst the most accomplished of the club for their handsome figures and great skill in the art. The scene of that loch "in full bearing," on a clear winter day, with its busy stirring multitude of sliders, skaters, and curlers, the snowy hills around glistening in the sun, the ring of the ice, the shouts of the careering youth, the rattle of the curling stones and the shouts of the players, once seen and heard, could never be forgotten."

Our best authorities on skating—Messrs. Vandervell and Witham, authors of "A System of Figure Skating"—affirm, from long experience and very close observation, that, in spite of mild winters, the art has gone on improving up to the present time. This has often been denied, and many are the wonderful feats of renowned skaters of the past cited in support of this denial. Benjamin West, the President of the Academy, it is said, could trace with his skates on the ice the outlines of any statue that might be named. The Chevalier de St. George could sign his name upon the ice with the blade of his skate; while Strutt speaks of skaters "readily describing upon the ice the form of all the letters in the alphabet." "Who has not heard," says Mr. Vandervell, "from many old skaters of a generation that is fast fading away, how some famous skater of their day *cut out his name?* and who has not brought down their ire if the possibility of the feat was doubted? . . . It is most strange, but no less strange than true, that this feat (except when done by standing on one foot and scraping the ice into the resemblance of letters with the other) is an *impossibility* either to ancient or modern skating."

Skating has had many enthusiastic votaries, but probably none more so than the two illustrious names that continental skaters are so proud to reckon in their guild.

Klopstock, even in his old age, was so ardent a lover of it that, after skimming over the ice of Altona for hours, "to call back that warmth of blood which age and inactivity had

chilled," he retired to his study and wrote fiery lyrics in its praise. His friend and great successor, Goethe, took to skating under peculiar circumstances. He sought relief in violent exercise from embittered memories of a broken-off love affair. He tried in vain riding and long journeys on foot; at length he found relief when he went to the ice and learned to skate, an exercise of which he was devotedly fond to the last. "It is with good reason," he writes, "that Klopstock has praised this employment of our physical powers which brings us in contact with the happy activity of childhood, which urges youth to exert all its suppleness and agility, and which tends to drive away the inertia of age. We seem, when skating, to lose entirely any consciousness of the most serious objects that claim our attention. It was while abandoning myself to these aimless movements that the most noble aspirations, which had too long lain dormant within me, were reawakened; and I owe to these hours, which seemed lost, the most rapid and successful development of my poetical projects."

That skating has been in certain circumstances something more than mere elegant accomplishment is well illustrated by two anecdotes, told by the author of some entertaining "Reminiscences of Quebec," of two settlers in the Far West, who saved their lives by the aid of their skates. In one case the backwoodsman had been captured by Indians, who intended soon after to torture him to death. Among his baggage there happened to be a pair of skates, and the Indians' curiosity was so excited that their captive was told to explain their use. He led his captors to the edge of a wide lake, where the smooth ice stretched away as far as the eye could see, and put on the skates. Exciting the laughter of the Indians by tumbling about in a clumsy manner, he gradually increased his distance from the shore, till he at length contrived to get a hundred yards from them without arousing their suspicion, when he skated away as fast as he could, and finally escaped.

"The other settler is said to have been skating alone one

moonlight night, and, while contemplating the reflection of the firmament in the clear ice, and the vast dark mass of forest surrounding the lake and stretching away in the background, he suddenly discovered, to his horror, that the adjacent bank was lined with a pack of wolves. He at once 'made tracks' for home, followed by these animals; but the skater kept ahead, and one by one the pack tailed off; two or three of the foremost, however, kept up the chase, but when they attempted to close with the skater, by adroitly turning aside, he allowed them to pass him. And after a few unsuccessful and vicious attempts on the part of the wolves, he succeeded in reaching his log-hut in safety."

The art of figure-skating had hardly outgrown its infancy before its delighted votaries, tantalised by the too frequent open winters of our variable climate, began to sigh for some means by which skating might become independent of temperature, that thus they might practise their figures in all seasons of the year. Ingenious inventors taxed their brains to supply this want: some striving to devise an "artificial ice" medium which might be skated upon as pleasantly as the real thing; but the difficulty of this caused the great body to set themselves the easier task of modifying the skate and adapting it to use on any smooth surface. In neither case was the success attained very great till within the last few years, when something as near perfection as probably will ever be reached has been attained in the one department by the roller-skate of Mr. Plimpton, and in the other by the "real ice" of Professor Gamgee.

The earliest of the roller-skates was probably that invented by Joseph Merlin, an ingenious mechanician, who was born in the city of Huys, between Namur and Liége, on September 17, 1735. Dr. E. F. Rimbault, in a sketch of his life, tells us that, after living some years in Paris, Merlin, on the recommendation of the Royal Academy of Sciences, came to England in May, 1760, in the suite of the Spanish Ambassador, Count

de Fuentes, with whom he resided for some time in Soho Square. He was director of Cox's Museum in Spring Gardens for many years, and in it and elsewhere he exhibited many curious inventions, among others, as we see from this extract from "Bushby's Concert Room Anecdotes," a pair of roller-skates :—"During the latter part of the eighteenth century this ingenious mechanician and musical instrument maker gratified the curious and tasteful by the public exhibition of his organ, pianoforte, and other inventions at his Museum in Prince's Street, Hanover Square. Merlin's mind was adequate to the embracing the whole compass of mechanical science and execution, at least in his articles connected with elegant and domestic amusements. One of his ingenious novelties was a pair of skates contrived to run on wheels. Supplied with a pair of these and a violin, he mixed in the motley group of the celebrated Mrs. Cornelly's masquerade at Carlisle House, when, not having provided the means of retarding his velocity or commanding its direction, he impelled himself against a mirror of more than five hundred pounds value, dashed it to atoms, broke his instrument to pieces, and wounded himself most severely."

After these disastrous results of Merlin's skating, we hear no more about roller-skates till M. Petitbled took out a patent in France, in 1819, for a skate on which the skater could, according to the inventor, execute every figure in a room that could be done on ice with ordinary skates. This skate did not come at all up to the inventor's expectation, nor did the next invention—that of a Piccadilly fruiterer, named Tyer—turn out a greater success. About this time we find a great many of these inventions both here and in France; but though several attracted a great deal of attention, they soon went the way of so many patents. In 1823 there was a roller-skate exhibition in the old tennis court in Windmill Street, London; in 1829 M. Perrine undertook for a wager to skate across the gardens of the Tuileries on these wheeled

skates; the "Ravel Family" used similar skates for many years, in their drama, "The Skaters of Wilna"; but, notwithstanding all this, roller-skating attracted comparatively little attention till Meyerbeer wrote his opera "Le Prophète" and it became necessary to devise a skate for use in the famous skating scene. M. Lagrange's "practicable" skate, used at the first representation of the opera in Paris, on April 16th, 1849, has often been set down as the first roller-skate; but all that can be said for it in this way is, that the interest excited by the well-known scene, both in Paris and London, gave an impetus to long dormant roller-skating greater far than any of the above-noted wagers, accidents, or exhibitions had ever done. Again invention followed invention, until at last Mr. J. Plimpton hit upon the idea of the "rocking-skate" that we all know so well.

While some tried in this way to make skating possible at all seasons, other inventors attempted to achieve the same object by making artificial ice to be skated upon by ordinary skates. The first public effort in this direction was that in the Glaciarium in Baker Street, in 1842; but the attempt was a failure here and elsewhere, until Professor Gamgee established his "real ice" rinks at Chelsea, Manchester, &c., and gave skaters a beautiful sheet of genuine ice all the year round, frozen by conducting a mixture of glycerine and water, chilled by ether, through pipes laid on a non-conducting floor covered by an inch or two of water. These rinks have been used most successfully both by skaters and curlers, and it is a mere question of expense whether they should not become as common as were the Plimpton rinks that we have just seen pass away from among us.

CHAPTER XIII.

ARCHERY IN SCOTLAND.

Now let us see your archery.—*Titus Andronicus*, iv., 3.

THOUGH it has often been hastily assumed that the annals of the bow in the northern kingdom would require no more space in the writing than did Olaus Magnus's famous chapter on the snakes of Iceland, yet this is only true of archery in battle; and it is a curious fact that, though the Scots could never be induced to take to the bow as a military weapon, they became very fond of archery as a pastime, when firearms took the place of bows and arrows as "artilyerie," and there was no further need for statutes forcing the bow into their hands, and forbidding all outdoor amusements that interfered with its practice. It is a curious problem why, in two races so akin as the English and the Lowland Scots, national bent should in this respect take such opposite directions. While the southern yeoman delighted in his long-bow and the sheaf of shafts—"the twelve Scots' lives" he bore under his girdle—his kinsman foe across the Tweed could never be compelled either by experience or a long series of penal statutes to take to the weapon whose power in skilful hands he had felt on many a bloody field. "Few of thaim was sekyr of archarie," laments Blind Harry, the Minstrel, of Wallace's followers; and not only was this true of all succeeding Scottish soldiers, but it may be that the same national prejudice can be traced back for centuries before the Blind Minstrel's time, to the days of the sculptured stones that stud the north-eastern districts of Scotland. While on them are many delineations of the hunter

aiming his arrow at deer or wild boar, there is only one instance, in all their many scenes of war, in which fighting men are armed with the bow.

When the first James of Scotland returned to his northern kingdom with his "fairest English flower," Lady Jane Beaufort, he brought back with him from his long captivity a deep impression of the value of the bow. Under the careful instruction of the Constable of Pevensey, James had become a fine marksman; and he tried by every means in his power to popularise the exercise at home. He forbade football and other "unprofitable sports"; he ordered every man to shoot at the bow-marks near his parish church every Sunday; he chose a body-guard for himself from among the most skilful archers at the periodical "Wappinshaws"; and in his poem of "Christ's Kirk on the Green" he published a scathing satire on the clumsiness and inefficiency of his peasantry in archery. What the most energetic of the Stuart kings set his mind to he generally succeeded in; and possibly, if the dagger of "that mischant traitour, Robert Grahame," had spared his life at Perth, James might have done what so many Scottish kings failed to do; as it was, we see signs of improvement among his people. It was in his reign that Charles VII. formed from the survivors of Lord Buchan's Scots the famous Archer-guard of France, familiar to every reader of "Quentin Durward," who, "foreigners though they were, ever proved themselves the most faithful troops in the service of the French crown."

The body-guard that the author of the "King's Quhair" embodied for himself was the origin of the famous "Royal Company of Archers" that still flourishes vigorously in Edinburgh. So say the present "Body-guard for Scotland," though their oldest extant records stop short two centuries and a half of King James's time.

With James's assassination at Perth, the new-born zeal for archery seems to have died away; and it is not till we come to

the time of James V. that any noteworthy traces of its practice can be found. If we may judge from a story told in Lindsay of Pitscottie's quaint old chronicle of Scotland, the Commons' king had some fine archers in his kingdom; for Lindsay tells us how the Scottish marksmen were victorious in what must surely have been the earliest friendly shooting-match between England and Scotland. The occasion of this international match was Henry VIII. sending an embassy with the Garter to his nephew, the young King of Scots, in 1534. "In this year," says Pitscottie, whose spelling we modernise, "came an English ambassador out of England, called Lord William Howard: a bishop and other gentlemen, to the number of three-score horse: who were all able wailled [picked] gentlemen for all kinds of pastimes, as shooting, leaping, wrestling, running, and casting of the stone. But they were well essayed in all these before they went home, and that by their own provocation, and they almost ever tint [lost]: while at the last the king's mother favoured the Englishmen, because she was the King of England's sister; and therefore she took a wager of archery upon the Englishmen's hands, contrary to the king her son, and any half-dozen Scotsmen, either noblemen, gentlemen, or yeomen, that so many Englishmen should shoot against them at 'rovers,' 'butts,' or 'prick-bonnet.' The king hearing of this bonspiel [sporting match] of his mother, was well content. So there was laid a hundred crowns, and a tun of wine pandit [staked] on each side. The ground was chosen in St. Andrews. The Scottish archers were three landed gentlemen and three yeomen; to wit, David Wemyss of that ilk, David Arnott of that ilk, and Mr. John Wedderburn, Vicar of Dundee. The yeomen were John Thomson in Leith, Steven Tabroner, and Alexander Baillie, who was a piper. [The Scottish archers] shot wondrous near, and won the wager from the Englishmen; and thereafter went into the town, and made a banquet to the king and the queen and the English am-

bassador, with the whole two hundred crowns and the two tuns of wine."

Archery from this time became an established pastime in Scotland, amicably sharing men's leisure with its old enemies golf and football, while with the ladies it took rank as their chief, if not only, outdoor pastime. Queen Margaret herself might possibly have taken her place with credit beside the six Englishmen she backed in this match against her son; for we are told by Leland and others that Henry's sister was no mean shot, while her unfortunate grandchild, Mary Queen of Scots, was as fond of archery as was her cousin Elizabeth of England and many another lady of that time. One story of Queen Mary's shooting has often been cited against her since the time Sir William Drury wrote to Mr. Secretary Cecil from Berwick, telling him how Mary, a fortnight after her husband Darnley's murder in the Kirk O'Field, had been shooting with Bothwell at the butts of Tranent against Huntley and Seton for a dinner, which the latter pair had to pay. This story Drury soon afterwards found out to be untrue, but, certainly, as much prominence has not been given by many a writer since then to this contradiction as to his original statement.

At schools, as we know from the "Memorie of the Sommervilles," and from James Melville's Autobiography, archery was a favourite pastime of the boys. When Melville, who "by our maister was teached to handle the bow for archery" while at school, went to college at St. Andrews, he found archery and golf were then the favourite amusements of the gay little university town.

Scottish literature in the early years of the seventeenth century is full of allusions to the pastime. "Buttis for archery" seem to have been indispensable adjuncts to a gentleman's house; and we find the loyal Town Council of Aberdeen so impressed with this idea that, when it was expected that King James VI. was to visit their town, they voted among their

other grants a sum of £10 to erect "one pair of buttis besyd the Castyll-hill, for serving of His Hieness and the noblemen that is to come heir with his Grace."

King James V. had presented silver arrows to the royal burghs of Scotland to be competed for twice a year at the "Weapon Schawings," which his Act of 1540 ordained to be held. None of these sixteenth century arrows can be proved to be in existence now, though, as the "Musselburgh Arrow" has, on the earliest of the medals it is customary for the winner to hang to the trophy as a memorial of his victory, the date 1603, Mr. Balfour Paul is inclined to think it is the sole survivor of the "Commons' King's" challenge trophies. However this may be, we find the seventeen-century archers of various good towns keenly competing for their arrows, notwithstanding the frowns of the Reformers and the repressive measures of both ecclesiastical and civil courts. Adamson, the rhyming chronicler of Perth and its worthies, dwells with pride on the

> Matchless skill in noble archery
> In these our days when archers did abound
> In Perth, then famous for such pastimes found;

and refers to matches with other towns in which the bowmen of the fair city

> Spared neither gains nor pains for to report
> To Perth the worship by such noble sport.

The most interesting records of Scottish archery of this period are, however, those we find in Mr. Mark Napier's "Memoirs of Montrose." When James Graham, then Earl of Montrose, went to St. Andrews' University in 1627, he was accompanied by a tutor and guardian who was also purse-bearer, and from his careful entries of "my lord's expenses" Montrose's biographer is enabled to give us a graphic picture of the social life and amusements of the period at the university. Hunting, hawking, horse-racing, billiards, and tennis,

all had a vigorous adherent in young Graham, and, says Mr. Napier, "to those who take interest in ancient sports the fact, hitherto unknown, will be acceptable that a most enthusiastic promoter of those still approved exercises, archery and golf, was the great Montrose. The fact acquires additional interest when compared with a passage in a letter from the Queen of Bohemia, sister of Charles I. In the month of August, 1649, twenty-one years later than the period we are now recording, and within a twelvemonth of Montrose's death, while he held a commission as plenipotentiary from Charles II. to the foreign states, Her Majesty, who had conceived a great affection for him, writes in these terms: 'We have nothing to do but to walk and shoot. I am grown a good archer to shoot with my Lord Kinnoul. If your office will suffer it, I hope you will come and help us to shoot.' (This letter was written from Rhenen, the queen's summer residence on the Rhine.) Montrose had retained throughout his life the reputation of a good archer, which, no doubt, he had acquired at the college of St. Andrews. In the old college there, three antique silver arrows, with many silver medals attached, are still preserved and exhibited to the curious. The medals are all dated, and bear the name, and generally some armorial insignia, of the prize-holder. . . . Upon one of them there is engraved, underneath the full arms of the earldom, 'James Earle of Montroes, 1628,' and on the reverse is rudely sculptured the figure of an archer drawing his bow, the usual effigies on most of the ancient medals. Montrose, it seems, held this arrow from 1628 to 1630, by which time, being married, he had left college."

For many years before this the dominant Puritan party in Scotland had been trying to put down all games. They first succeeded, by vigorously prosecuting all offenders against their new laws, in putting an end to archery and the other pastimes the people were in the habit of indulging in on Sundays; and though King James's famous "Book of Sports,"

in which the British Solomon declared it to be his pleasure "that after the end of divine service our good people be not discouraged from any lawful recreation, such as dancing, either men or women, archery for men," compelled them for a time to overlook practices they never ceased to abhor, yet when the days of civil war came, games were unsparingly put down, and in Scotland, as Macaulay says of Puritan England, "it was a sin to hang garlands on a Maypole, to drink a friend's health, to fly a hawk, to hunt a stag, to play at chess, to wear lovelocks, to put starch into a ruff, to touch the virginals, to read the Fairy Queen." As in other games there is a blank in the annals of pastime-archery till the Restoration; it is said, however, that Montrose employed the bow as a weapon in his campaigns. His fondness for it would make this appear likely enough, but for the fact that he relied chiefly on his Highland troops, "whose mode of fighting was by the impetuous dash with pike and claymore, and had not the steadiness and discipline indispensable to a body of archers." At the same time it is undoubted that the Highland deer-stalkers in the northern forests used the bow in the chase very frequently in those days. Many of them preferred it to the gun of the period, partly for its greater accuracy, but chiefly because by its use the deer were less disturbed than by the report of the musket.

Though we find some references to archery meetings in the years succeeding the Restoration, the bowmen do not seem to have taken up their weapons again with the same zest with which golfers resumed their clubs, and it was with a view to stimulate this flagging interest in the ancient sport that the present Royal Company of Archers was revived in 1676, under the presidency of the Marquis of Atholl. We have already alluded to the tradition that would make the company the lineal descendants of the Archerguard raised by the first James of Scotland; but whether or not this is founded on fact, there is certainly evidence in the Company's records

to show that in one shape or another it existed for some time previous to the commencement of its present records in 1676.

The first entry in their minute-book tells how "the noble and useful recreation of archery being for many years much neglected," several noblemen and gentlemen associated themselves in a company for its encouragement. They appointed a goodly list of office-bearers, framed laws for the body, and obtained the approval of the Privy Council, which august body recommended the Treasury to grant the Company "one prize once in the year to be shot for as a public prize, to be called the King's Prize," a grant still annually voted by Parliament among the Queen's Plates.

In December, 1703, Queen Anne granted a charter to the Company ratifying and confirming their old privileges, and prohibiting anyone "to cause any obstacle or impediment to the said Royal Company in the lawful exercise of the ancient arms of Bows and Arrows," the Company to render for this yearly to the sovereign "one pair of barbed arrows, if asked only." Mr. Balfour Paul, in his "History of the Royal Company of Archers" (Blackwood, 1875), tells us that these *Reddendo* arrows have twice been delivered to the sovereign; first to George IV., during his visit to Edinburgh in 1822, and again when Queen Victoria and Prince Albert first came to Scotland in 1842.

From the very beginning the Company had been composed almost entirely of men who had a common tie in their attachment to the Stuarts. Many of the members suffered severely for this in the "Forty-five," and for long after then the Government looked with suspicion on the body as a stronghold ot devotion to the cause of the exiled house. In Mr. Kington Oliphant's Grampian Club volume, "The Jacobite Lairds of Gask," is printed a letter from Oliphant of Gask in 1777, giving an amusing account of the adventures of his Archer uniform in the Rebellion. "Few things could give me greater

pleasure than to hear of the revival of the Royal Company of Archers," he writes. "It is a manly and agreeable amusement, and associates the best of the kingdom together. I lose no time in acquainting you," continues the Jacobite laird, "that my archer coat is still preserved. It is pretty odd if my coat be the only one left, especially as it was taken away in the '46 by the Duke of Cumberland's plunderers; and Miss Anne Graeme, Inchbrakie, thinking it would be regretted by me, went out to the court and got it back from a soldier, insisting with him that it was a lady's riding habit; but putting her hand to the breeches to take them too, he, with a thundering oath, asked if the lady wore *breeches?*" This interesting relic is carefully preserved by the Company. There is little of very general interest in the history of the Company for the last century, during which time they have continued steadily to prosper. A curious incident in October, 1818, however, deserves notice. A party of North American Indians, who were engaged at the Theatre Royal in the play of *La Perouse, or the Desolate Island*, were invited by the Company to visit Archers' Hall and display their skill in archery. At about twelve paces their practice was very good, but at longer distances, and at field shooting, "their bows were too weak for the weight of their arrows," and they had no chance with the members of the Royal Company. Mr. Paul gives an interesting account of the Indians' mode of shooting and way of holding the bow, and says that after dinner their chief, through their interpreter, expressed his astonishment "to find warriors in a country so remote from his own who could exhibit such power and dexterity with the bow and arrow."

The annals of Scottish archery, even within the last hundred years, have not always recorded such peaceful and friendly encounters as this. On one occasion, at least, bows have been bent with most bloodthirsty intent. On February 10, 1791, a very ludicrous duel took place at Edinburgh, of which, unfor-

tunately, only this meagre account is preserved:—"Two gentlemen met on the Meadows, supplied with bows and arrows, to decide a point of honour. They were accompanied by seconds, and had a surgeon in attendance in case their Indian artillery should by any means prove effective. After a harmless exchange of three shots the parties retired, the point of honour, doubtless, being satisfactorily arranged. If similar weapons were always employed in duelling," adds the newspaper reporter, "this amusement would speedily become unfashionable, seeing that the seconds would run quite as great, if not a greater, risk than the principals." "Let us hope," with Mr. Paul, "for the honour of the Royal Company, that the two Hectors—we cannot call them 'fire-eaters'—did not belong to that respectable and peaceable body."

The practice of archery in Scotland is now nearly entirely confined to the members of the Body-guard. The Company possess a great number of handsome "Arrows," cups, and other prizes, which are periodically shot for. In these enlightened days, of course, such old competitions as "The Goose Prize" and the "Papingo" exist only as names, though in comparatively recent times the archer shot at a live goose, "failled and biggit" (turfed and built) into a butt with nothing but the head visible. "The sport in all its barbarity," says Mr. Paul, "seems to have been kept up a considerable time, as it is only about 1764 that we find the item of 'half-a-crown for a goose' omitted from the treasurer's accounts. The method now adopted for shooting for the prize of the Goose is by inserting a small glass globe of about an inch in diameter in the centre of the butt-mark, which is a circular piece of cardboard four inches in diameter. The competitor whose arrow first breaks this globe is declared 'Captain of the Goose' for the year." The Goose medal is made of part of the very coins paid by Tippoo Sultan to the allies at the treaty of Seringapatam in 1792.

The "Papingo"—"the trembling mark at which their arrows fly" of the funeral games of Patroclus in the "Iliad"—was in early times a milk-white dove tied to the top of a pole, or, as at Kilwinning, to the steeple of their abbey church; then a wooden or stuffed bird, like the one Scott refers to in "Old Mortality." Now it is shot for in the butts like an ordinary butt prize.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE QUINTAIN.

My better parts
Are all thrown down; and that which here stands up
Is but a quintain: a mere lifeless block.—*As You Like It*, i. 2.

THOUGH in process of time the quintain became a mere pastime and a source of amusement both to player and spectator, it was originally strictly a military exercise, and occupied an important place in the severe course of schooling that the young aspirant to knighthood had to go through in feudal times. Almost as soon as the youth of gentle blood began to learn his page's duty, he was set on horseback, and taught to ride at the ring, or to risk the sandbag and wooden sabre of the "Turk's head" quintain, till, from constant training of hand and eye, the young knight, by the time he had won his golden spurs, found it no very difficult matter to couch a lance in the lists, and to strike with true aim the helmet or shield of his opponent in the joust.

The quintain that tyros in chivalry originally practised at was nothing more than a trunk of a tree, or a post set up for the purpose; then a shield was fixed to this post, or often a spear was used, to which the shield was bound, and the tilter's object was to hit this shield in such a way as to break the ligatures and bear it to the ground. "In process of time," says Strutt, "this diversion was improved, and instead of the staff and the shield, the resemblance of a human figure, carved in wood, was introduced. To render the appearance of this figure more formidable, it was generally made in the likeness of a Turk or a Saracen, armed at all points, bearing a shield

upon his left arm, and brandishing a club or a sabre with his right. Hence this exercise was called by the Italians 'running at the armed man,' or 'at the Saracen.'" This is "the Turk" of the old fifteenth century poet, whose apparently bloodthirsty lines read so strangely familiar to us after so much of the Eastern Question nowadays.

> Lepe on thy foe; look if he dare abide.
> Will he not flee? wounde him: make woundes wide;
> Hew of his honde: his legge: his theyhs: his armys:
> It is the Turk, though he be sleyn noon harm is.

In tilting at the Saracen, the horseman had to direct his lance with great adroitness—Strutt goes on to tell us—and make his stroke on the forehead of the figure, between the eyes, or on the nose; "for if he struck wide of these parts, especially upon the shield, the quintain turned about with much velocity, and, in case he was not exceedingly careful, would give him a severe blow upon the back with the wooden sabre held in the right hand, which was considered as highly disgraceful to the performer, while it excited the laughter and ridicule of the spectators."

The authorities are all at variance about the derivation of the word quintain, as well as the source from which the exercise was introduced into Britain. Some say it was a Greek game named after its inventor Quintas, about whom nothing is known; equally absurd the derivation of Minshew, who thinks it derives its name from *Quintus*, either because it was the last of the "pentathloi," or because it was engaged in on the fifth or last day of the Olympic games; while sticklers for a home derivation seem to have agreed that it was a corruption of the Welsh "gwyntyn," meaning a vane, till Dr. Charles Mackay recently published his book on the Gaelic etymology of the English language, and argued that the name of our pastime owes its origin to the Gaelic *guin*, which means to pierce.

Where doctors so differ it is unnecessary to say more than that an exercise something like quintain seems to have been in

common use among the Romans, who caused their young military men to practise at it twice in the day, with weapons much heavier than those employed in actual warfare.

Strutt points out that, in the code of laws compiled by the Emperor Justinian, the quintain is mentioned as a well-known sport; and allowed to be continued upon condition that, at it, pointless spears only should be employed, contrary to the ancient usage, which, it seems, required them to have heads or points.

Dr. Kennett was so convinced of the Roman origin of the game that he says he never saw the quintain practised in any part of the country but where Roman ways ran, or where Roman garrisons had been placed.

While tyros in chivalry were practising hard at the Saracen to acquire skill, and older knights were charging it in the constant training needed to retain that skill, burgesses and yeomen began to adopt the quintain as a merry pastime, and village greens were beginning to resound with uproarious mirth as the staff or sandbag whirled round to belabour the clumsy rider who had failed to hit the proper part of the Turk's forehead. What made the quintain such a favourite pastime of the common folk, was the rule of chivalry that forbade any person under the rank of an esquire to enter the lists as a combatant at tournament or joust. Accordingly, as the prohibition did not extend to the quintain, young men whose station debarred them from entering the lists set up a simple form of quintain on their village green, and, if they were not able to procure horses, contented themselves with running at this mark on foot. These village quintains—of which one specimen at least is still preserved, that of Offham, in Kent—consisted only of a cross bar turning on a pivot, with a broad end to strike against, while from the other extremity hung a bag of sand or earth, that swung round and hit the back of a lagging rider. A correspondent of *Notes and Queries* says that the Offham quintain is still in good order; had it not been

that a road has been made to pass within a few feet of it, a man might ride at it now. The striking board is not perforated, that is, bored through, but some small round holes about a quarter of an inch deep are cut on it, probably to afford a better hold for the lance, and to prevent its glancing off.

When many joined in running at the quintain, prizes were offered, and the winner was determined by the number and value of the strokes he had made. At the Saracen a stroke on the top of the nose counted three, others less and less, down to the foul stroke that turned the quintain round and disqualified the runner. It was at one of these prize gatherings that the unlucky incident took place that Stowe tells from Mathew Paris. In 1254, the young Londoners, who, the historian tells us, were very expert horsemen, met together one day to run at the quintain for a peacock, a bird very often in those days set up as a prize for the best performer. King Henry the Third's Court being then at Westminster, some of his domestics came into the city to witness the sports. They behaved in a very disgraceful manner, and treated the Londoners with much insolence, calling them cowardly knaves and rascally clowns; conduct which the citizens resented by beating the king's menials soundly. Henry, however, was incensed at the indignity put upon his servants, and not taking into consideration the provocation on their part, fined the city one thousand marks. "Some have thought these fellows were sent thither purposely to promote a quarrel, it being known that the king was angry with the citizens of London for refusing to join in the crusade."

Stowe goes on to say that in London this exercise of running at the quintain was practised at all seasons, but more especially at Christmas time. "I have seen," continues the author of the "Survey of London," "a quintain set up on Cornhill by Leadenhall, where the attendants of the lords of merry disports have run and made great pastimes; for he that hit not the broad end of the quintain was laughed to scorn,

and he that hit it full, if he rode not the faster, had a sound blow upon his neck with a bag full of sand hanged on the other end."

Though running at the quintain was a common exercise at all festive gatherings of the country people, it was the especial exercise at marriage rejoicings. Ben Jonson alludes to this when he writes of the bridegroom—

> . . . at quintin he,
> In honour of his bridal-tee,
> Hath challenged either wide countee.
> Come cut and long taile, for there be
> Six bachelors as bold as he,
> Adjuting to his company ;
> And each one hath his livery.

Roberts, in his "Popular Antiquities of Wales," gives this interesting account of the ancient marriage customs in the Principality:—"On the day of the ceremony, the nuptial presents having previously been made, and the marriage privately celebrated at an early hour, the signal to the friends of the bridegroom was given by the piper, who was always present on these occasions, and mounted on a horse trained for the purpose; and the cavalcade being all mounted, set off at full speed, with the piper playing in the midst of them, for the house of the bride. The friends of the bride in the meantime having raised various obstructions to prevent their access to the house of the bride, such as ropes of straw across the road, blocking up the regular one, &c., and the quintain: the rider in passing struck the flat side, and, if not dexterous, was overtaken, and perhaps dismounted, by the sandbag, and became a fair object for laughter. The *gwyntyn* was also guarded by champions of the opposite party, who, if it was passed successfully, challenged the adventurers to a trial of skill at one of the four-and-twenty games, a challenge which could not be declined; and hence to guard the gwyntyn was a service of high adventure."

Laneham, in his "Progresses of Queen Elizabeth," gives an amusing description of a "country bridal," which the virgin Queen witnessed when she was at Kenilworth in 1575. After the wedding there "was set up in the castle a comely quintane for feats at armes, where, in a great company of young men and lasses, the bridegroom had the first course at the quintane and broke his spear very boldly. But his mare in his manage did a little stumble, that much adoe had his manhood to sit in his saddle. But after the bridegroom had made his course, ran the rest of the band, a while in some order, but soon after tag and rag, cut and long tail; where the speciality of the sport was to see how some for his slackness had a good bob with the bag, and some for his haste to topple downright and come tumbling to the post; some striving so much at the first setting out that it seemed a question between man and beast, whether the race should be performed on horseback or on foot; and some put forth with spurs, would run his race byas, among the thickest of the throng, that down they came together, hand over head. Another, while he directed his course to the quintane, his judgment would carry him to a mare among the people; another would run and miss the quintane with his staff, and hit the board with his head."

This interesting old wedding custom continued to be observed at marriages down to comparatively recent times. It is possible that it may still hold a place among the bridal rejoicings in the Principality; at any rate, Mr. John Strange, writing in 1796 ("Archæologia," vol. i., p. 303), says that "this sport is still practised at weddings among the better sort of freeholders in Brecknockshire;" and then goes on to describe the variety of the pastime in use there—a few flat planks, erected on a green, against which the young men tilt with long thick sticks, "striking the stick against the planks with the utmost force, in order to break it, where the diversion ends;" a variety of the quintain very like the "cane game," at which Richard Cœur de Lion lost his temper on Sunday afternoon

outside the walls of Messina in Sicily, while on his way to the Holy Land.

Mr. Anthony Trollope, in one of his Barsetshire novels, makes pleasant fun of old Miss Thorne's attempt to revive the quintain at a rural fête ; but, though the novelist makes dire disaster befall the old lady's riders, the old pastime has sometimes been revived in real life, and with success. Indeed, as Mr. Bernhard Smith observes in *Notes and Queries*, the quintain is probably not so uncommon as is generally supposed. Mr. Smith has seen two—one at Chartley, Lord Ferrers' seat in Staffordshire, and another in a riding-house belonging to the late Mr. Harrington, at his house near Crawley, in Sussex. The *Times* (August 7, 1827) had a long account of a revival of the old pastime, in which several varieties are described, and of which we may quote a part. "Viscount and Viscountess Gage gave a grand fête on Friday (August 3, 1827) at their seat at Firle Place, Sussex, to about a hundred and sixty of the nobility and gentry, at which the ancient game of quintain was revived. The sports commenced by gentlemen riding with light spiked staves at rings and apples suspended by a string, after which they changed their weapons to stout poles, and attacked the two quintains, which consisted of logs of wood fashioned to resemble the head and body of a man, and set upright upon a high bench, on which they were kept by a chain passing through the platform, and having a weight suspended to it, so that if the log was ever struck full and forcibly the figure resumed its seat. One was also divided in the middle, and the upper part being fixed on a pivot, turned, if not struck in the centre, and requited its assailant by a blow with a staff, to which was suspended a small bag of flour.

"The purses for unhorsing this quintain were won by John Slater and Thomas Trebeck, Esqrs. The other figure, which did not turn, offered a lance towards the assailant's face, and the rider was to avoid the lance and unhorse the quintain at

the same time. The purses were won by Sheffield Neave, Esq., and the Hon. John Pelham.

"A third pair of purses were offered for unhorsing the quintain by striking on a coloured belt, which hooped round the waist of the figure, thereby raising the weight, which was considerable, by a much shorter lever than when struck higher up. This was a feat requiring great strength and firmness of seat, and though not fairly won according to the rules of the game, the prizes were ultimately assigned to the very spirited exertions of Messrs. Cayley and Gardener."

Strutt notices a great many games akin to or derived from the quintain, of which, perhaps, the most interesting were the "water quintain" and "running at the ring."

The boat quintain and tilting at each other upon the water (a favourite pastime still at some sea-bathing places), were introduced by the Normans as amusements for the summer season, and were very soon established favourites among all classes of the people. Fitzstephen describes the exercise as practised by the Londoners of his day during the Easter holidays, when a pole was fixed in the Thames, with a shield strongly attached to it, towards which a boat, with the tilter standing in the bows, was swiftly pulled. If the tilter's lance struck the shield fairly and broke, all went well; but if otherwise, he was thrown into the water, greatly to the amusement of the people who crowded the bridges, wharves, and houses near the river, and "who come," says the author, "to see the sports and make themselves merry."

Stowe has often seen, "in the summer season, upon the river of Thames, some rowed in wherries, with staves in their hands, flat at the fore end, running one against the other, and for the most part one or both of them were overthrown and well ducked." When Queen Elizabeth visited Sandwich, in 1573, "certain wallounds that could well swim" entertained her with a water tilting, in which one of the combatants "did overthrow another, at which the Queene had good sport."

A much more important descendant of the quintain than this laughable pastime was running at the ring, a sport demanding all the skill of the quintain, but without its roughness and horse-play. Accordingly we find that, while Giles and Hodge continued to urge their dobbins with unabated relish against the whirling board and sandbag, the squire and the courtier transferred their attention to the more delicate exercise, and attained to high skill at it. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "this generous exercise," as Whitelocke calls it, was reduced to a science, with minute rules and directions on all points of procedure and parts of the equipment necessary.

Randolph, in a letter from Scotland to Secretary Sir William Cecil, on December 7, 1561, gives us an account of the pastime as celebrated at the Scottish Court of Queen Mary. He is reporting part of a conversation he had with De Fois, the French Ambassador :—"From this purpose we fell in talk of the pastimes that were the Sunday before, when the Lord Robert, the Lord John, and others ran at the ring, six against six, disguised and apparelled, the one half like women, the other half like strangers in strange masking garments. The Marquis [d'Elbœuf, the Queen's uncle], that day did very well ; but the women, whose part the Lord Robert did sustain, won the Ring. The Queen herself beheld it, and as many others as listed."

A few years later, when the Admirable Crichton was in Paris, we find him distinguishing himself as highly in the tilt-yard as among the doctors of the University. Pennant, in his sketch of Crichton's life, quotes from Sir Thomas Urquhart, of Cromarty, the account of the famous disputation when Crichton caused notices to be affixed to the gates of the Parisian colleges and schools, inviting all the renowned doctors of the city to dispute with him at the College of Navarre in any art or science, and in any of twelve languages, on that day six weeks ; "and during all this time, instead of making a close applica-

tion to his studies, he minded nothing but hunting, hawking, tilting, cards, dice, tennis, and other diversions of youth." "Yet on the day appointed he met with them in the College of Navarre, and acquit himself beyond expression in that dispute, which lasted from nine till six of the clock." But still, after all this hard work, "he was so little fatigued with that day's dispute that the very next day he went to the Louvre, where he had a match of tilting, an exercise in great request in those days; and in the presence of some princes of the Court of France, and a great many ladies, he carried away the ring fifteen times on end, and broke as many lances on the Saracen." No wonder that "ever after that he was called the Admirable Crichton!"

When King James's brother-in-law, Christian of Denmark, was in England in 1606, the recorder of his "Welcome" then tells us that:—"On Monday, being the 4th day of August, it pleased our King's Majestie himself in person, and the King's Majestie of Denmark, likewise in person, and divers others of his estate, to runne at the ring in the tilt-yard at Greenwich, where the King of Denmark approved to all judgments that majestie is never unaccompanied with vertue; for there, in the presence of all the beholders, he tooke the ring fower severall times, and would, I thinke, have done the like four score times, had he runne so many courses."

Echard, in his "History of England," says that Charles the First was "so perfect in vaulting, riding the great horse, running at the ring, shooting with crossbows, muskets, and sometimes great guns, that if sovereignty had been the reward of excellence in those arts, he would have acquired a new title to the crown, being accounted the most celebrated marksman and the most perfect manager of the great horse of any in the three kingdoms." Gross flattery this probably was; but many other passages might be cited to prove the fondness of the age for this and similar pastimes, by which, Burton tells us, "many gentlemen gallop quite out of their fortunes."

Both the quintain—"common recreation of country folk," and the ring—"disport of greater men," according to the "Anatomy of Melancholy"—appear to have gone out with the Stuarts in England, though in Scotland traces of tilting at the ring are found now and then in notices of country fairs and gatherings during the last century. A curious instance of this, where the pastime was cultivated as a preventive to intemperance that should endear it to Sir Wilfrid Lawson, is given in Sir John Sinclair's "Statistical Account of Scotland in 1798." An old Perthshire Society, the Fraternity of Chapmen, held their annual meeting for the election of their "Lord," or president, in the parish of Dunkeld. After the election the members dined together, and, after dinner, the minister of the parish tells us, "to prevent that intemperance to which social meetings in such situations are sometimes prone, they spend the evening in some public competition of dexterity or skill. Of these, riding at the ring (an amusement of ancient and warlike origin) is the chief. Two perpendicular posts are erected on this occasion, with a cross beam, from which is suspended a small ring; the competitors are on horseback, each having a pointed rod in his hand, and he who at full gallop, passing betwixt the posts, carries away the ring on his rod, gains the prize."

In recent years running at the ring has again become popular, especially at "military sports," where the pastime, along with tent-pegging, its brother sport from the East, cultivates quickness of eye and hand, and management of the charger among our cavalry, exactly as the old quintain and ring were designed to do among our ancestors eight centuries ago.

CHAPTER XV.

COURSING.

Yet if for sylvan sports thy bosom glow,
Let thy fleet greyhound urge his flying foe.
With what delight the rapid course I view,
How does my eye the circling race pursue!

GAY, *Rural Sports.*

COURSING with greyhounds, though, as the author of "The Booke of Huntinge," says, "doubtlesse a noble pastime, and as meet for nobility and gentlemen as any of the other kinds of Venerie," probably was a mode of hunting of much more recent origin than that department of the chase in which hounds pursued the game by scent instead of by sight alone. It certainly was so in the classical world. Homer, indeed, has references to a sport very like coursing, as in the "Iliad," where he compares Ulysses and Diomede pursuing Dolon:—

As when two skilful hounds the leveret wind;

or praises in the "Odyssey" the swiftness and keenness of sight and smell of the famous hound "Argus":—

His eye how piercing, and his scent how true
To wind the vapour in the tainted dew.

"But we cannot allow such a hound," says a learned translator of Arrian's "Cynegeticus," "within the precincts of a coursing kennel, where speed and keensightedness are the essential properties; to stoop to 'the tainted green,' with the sagacity of a harrier, invalidates the claim."

"Greyhounds," says old Gervase Markham, "are onely for

the coursing of all sorts of wilde beasts by main swiftnesse of foot; they doe not anything more than their eyes govern them unto;" and such dogs, we have the authority of the younger Xenophon for saying, were quite unknown in ancient Greece.

Ovid is the first classical author who refers to coursing. The accuracy of this description and the correctness of its technical phraseology imply not only that the poet was a practical courser and derived his imagery from experience in the field, but that the sport must have had a systematic form and been governed by a well-established set of rules in Ovid's day. It probably was introduced into the southern parts of the Roman empire some little time before the poet lived, from the country of the Galli or Celts. The northern plains of Europe appear to have been the birthplace of coursing; and the greyhound is generally referred to by Greek and Roman writers as the Gallic dog, the Celtic dog, or as Vertragus, a name that is generally supposed to mean a dog adapted for coursing over plains or open country.

Casual allusions to the Vertragus acer in Martial and other authors are all the records of coursing we have till we come to the time of Adrian and the Antonini, when we get a full and perfect picture of the pastime in the elaborate "Cynegeticus" of Arrian of Nicomedia, in Bithynia, "the younger Xenophon," as he calls himself. His object, he tells us, was to supply an omission in the treatise on hunting of the son of Gryllus, who knew nothing of coursing, and accordingly the Bithynian—like Xenophon, "a sportsman, a general, and a philosopher"—enters minutely into all the details of kennel management, the "points" of a properly bred greyhound, and the laws and practise of coursing, in a manner that his best translator and annotator tells us has left "little to be added to our knowledge in any department of coursing."

The classical history of the leash may be said to terminate in the fourth century. Long before then, however, we come upon allusions to the existence of greyhounds in our own

islands. Nemesian, a Carthaginian writer on the chase in the third century, speaks of these British dogs being exported to Rome; and we know that, in the reign of Theodosius, Flavian sent seven Celtic or Irish dogs—septem Scoticorum canum oblatio—of the greatest speed and fire, to grace the spectacle of his brother Symmachus at Rome. Though Ireland was at that time the country of the Scoti, there is little reason to doubt that similar dogs of the chase were known in what is now Scotland; for, besides the statements in Hector Boece, Fordun, and other old Scottish chroniclers of the high estimation in which greyhounds were held in those early times, we have the more trustworthy evidence of the sculptured stones of the North of Scotland, on many of which are stirring pictures of the chase in which lithe greyhounds are depicted in hot pursuit of their quarry. These invaluable pictures of old manners, which have been made accessible to us by Dr. John Stuart's Spalding Club volumes, have been set down by the best authorities to dates from the third to the ninth centuries.

We have evidence of the renhund, or greyhound, being an inmate of Anglo-Saxon kennels as early as the days of Aelfric of Mercia. The Saxons got these dogs from Wales; they always seem to have been favourite hounds, and there can be little doubt, from illustrations in old MSS., that coursing was an Anglo-Saxon pastime, and that the hounds there depicted in the leash in couples were slipped at game very much as greyhounds always have been.

For a long time after the Norman Conquest we know nothing of coursing, though there are frequent incidental allusions to the greyhound and his high repute, but principally as distinctive of the rank and grandeur of his possessor. A greyhound was among the most highly prized of gifts in times when the custom of making presents was an important point in social ceremony. It was an especial favourite with ladies and with the clergy. In the old metrical romance of "Sir Eglamore" a princess tells the knight that she would, as an especial mark of

her favour, give him a greyhound, so swift in deer-coursing that nothing could escape him :—

> Sir, if you be on hunting bound,
> I shall you give a good greyhound
> That is dun as a doe.
> For as I am true gentlewoman,
> There was never deer that he at ran
> That might escape him fro.

While among the gifts the King of Hungary promises his daughter in the "Squyer of lowe Degre" is

> A lese of herhounds with her to strake.

We find Richard I. giving to Henry de Grey, of Codnor, permission to hunt the hare in any lands belonging to the crown; and probably this refers to coursing, especially as we know that King John had a large stud of greyhounds which he used in hare-coursing. It was in the reign of Edward I., however, that the sport was first established on a scientific footing, with regular rules for its guidance. Edward was himself a courser, if we may judge by a curious tenure by which Bertram de Criol held the manor of Seaton in Kent from the king; he was to provide a veltrarius, or greyhound keeper, to lead three greyhounds when the king went into Gascony, so long as a pair of shoes, valued at four pence, should last him.

Though the hare was always considered the most appropriate quarry for the greyhound, and the field instructions of Arrian refer almost exclusively to hare-coursing, yet, both in his day and at later times, we find the deer, the wolf, the fox, and even sometimes the wild cat, coursed with greyhounds. Even yet, though the hare alone competes in speed with the longtail, his rough-coated brother, the deerhound, is sometimes slipped at a stag, and hunts him by sight alone. In old British field sports, however, deer-coursing held an important place, and many stories are told us in old writers of the prowess of famous dogs in this sport of high repute.

Father Augustus Hay, in his "Genealogie of the Sainte Claires of Rosslyn," tells a story of a deer-coursing in the days of King Robert the Bruce, a passionate lover of the chase, by which the St. Clairs gained a fine tract of territory near Edinburgh. When peace had been restored in Scotland, one day there was a great hunting in the Pentland Forest, at which a white deer was seen, which Bruce said he had often coursed, but that his hounds "could never prevail, and he desired his nobles if they had any swifter dogs to try them. They, hearing the king's speech, denied that they had any could kill the deer." Sir William St. Clair, however, jocularly said that he would wager his head his two hounds, Help and Hold, would pull down the deer before she could cross a stream called the March Burn. Bruce, "taking indignation that his hounds should be speediest, would have him abide by his word, and laid against his head all Pentland Hills and Pentland Moor with the Forest." The worthy father goes on to relate in great detail how Sir William went on horseback with his hounds to the appointed spot; how beaters with dogs drove out the deer, at which Help and Hold were slipped. The hind managed to reach the middle of the stream before the hounds turned her back, and slew her on the right side to save St. Clair's head, and win for him the lands of Pentland in "free forestrie."

Here we see a method of coursing in which two kinds of hounds were employed: dogs of scent to follow up and drive out the prey instead of "beaters," while the greyhounds were placed outside the covert ready to be slipped when the game appeared in sight. This is the sport Scott describes in "Marmion":—

> And foresters in greenwood trim
> Led in the leash the gazehounds grim,
> Attentive, as the brachet's bay
> From the dark covert drove the prey,
> To slip them as he drove away.
> The startled quarry bounds amain,
> As fast the gallant greyhounds strain,

It is a variety of coursing, however, that the oldest British authorities condemn. Thus, Edmund, Duke of York, who wrote a treatise on hunting called the "Mayster of Game," in the latter part of the fourteenth century, for the use of the young prince, afterwards Henry V., says, if "spaynels and greyhounds" be in the same field, "the spaynel will make al the ryot and al the harme." This treatise of Edmund de Langley's is the oldest English work on coursing we have. An earlier work, "The Crafte of Huntyng," by Twety and Gifford, huntsmen to Edward II., only mentions the greyhound once, and makes no allusion at all to hare-coursing, so that the sport must have greatly advanced in importance as the fourteenth century grew old.

From the "Mayster of Game," and such subsequent works as the celebrated "Book of St. Albans," of Dame Juliana Berners, we get minute descriptions of the various kinds of coursing in fashion in olden times. Deer were coursed in forest and in paddock: in the one case the game was free, but in the paddock the quarry was enclosed in a portion of the park railed off with palings. At one end of this long enclosure were erected stands for the accommodation of the spectators, while at the other the game was kept confined in a covert. At this end were the greyhounds ready to be slipped when the deer were driven out of the cover, and matters were so arranged that dogs and deer went along in full view of the "trists," or stands on which the spectators were. This was the kind of pastime witnessed by Queen Elizabeth at Lord Montecute's seat, Cowdrey in Sussex, in 1591, when her Majesty one day after dinner saw from a turret "sixteen bucks, all having fayre lawe, pulled down with greyhounds in a lawn."

In all the records of coursing we have glanced at hitherto the emulation seems entirely to have been looked on as between the dogs on the one hand and the game on the other, a trial of speed between hare, or deer and hound, and not at all as a struggle for victory between the two hounds slipped at the

game. In fact, frequently only one dog was slipped, and sometimes we find three slipped all together.

It is not till the reign of Elizabeth that we find any traces of match-coursing, which was usually in enclosures after deer. Hare-coursing, however, was a fashionable sport in her reign, and in the laws of the leash, compiled by the Duke of Norfolk in her reign, we find rules laid down that not above a brace of greyhounds should course a hare.

We may see from the frequent allusions in Shakespeare and his brother-poets how popular coursing was then. King Henry V. sees his soldiers, impatient for the assault of Harfleur—

> Stand like greyhounds in the slips,
> Straining upon the start.

When Sly wakes from his drunken slumber his

> Greyhounds are as swift
> As breathed stags, ay, fleeter than the roe.

Ben Jonson's references show he must have witnessed many a course; while, to give one more instance, Drayton has a long and accurate description of a coursing in his "Polyolbion."

The first public coursing meeting in Britain must have originated about this time at the great annual gathering of the country people of Gloucestershire, among the Cotswold hills. From an early period these good folk seem to have met in the Vale of Evesham to hold a primitive cattle show and pass a day in jovial festivity. Then games were added to the day's proceedings, and among them "coursing of silver-footed greyhounds," for which pastime the Cotswold Games became very famous, especially when Robert Dover, a Warwickshire attorney, with strong views against Puritanism, resolved to enlarge and systematise the Cotswold gathering as a practical antidote to the kill-joy Puritan teaching. This he did in the reign of King James, but the public coursing match was part of the old programme, for it is immortalised by Shakespeare in the opening

scene of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, when Slender asks Page:—

> How does your fallow greyhound, sir?
> I heard say, he was outrun on Cotsall.
> *Page.* It could not be judged, sir.

"The phrase, 'I heard say he was outrun on Cotsall,' can obviously only refer," says Mr. E. W. Gosse, "to a competitive coursing in which Page's greyhound failed to win the first prize. It is remarkable that this passage does not occur in the quartos, and rests on the authority of the first folio; but it would be very rash to argue from this fact, as has been done, however, that the Cotswold Games began between 1619 and 1623. There can be no doubt that at the latter date they had the notoriety which follows twenty years of success. It was made a great point by the humane Dover that not the killing of the hare, but the winning of the prize, should be the aim men set before them in competing. He desired to supersede hunting as much as possible by instituting these games of skill."

In a quaint frontispiece to a rare volume of poems published in 1636, composed by Ben Jonson, Drayton, Randolph, and many others of the best poets of the time, we see Dover in full costume, on horseback, with his wand of office as ruler of the sports, while behind him are depicted scenes of coursing, horse-racing, dancing, feasting, wrestling, and other sports in his programme. This woodcut is reproduced in the "Book of Days," and recently the Rev. A. B. Grosart has reprinted the very rare little volume, the "Annalia Dubrensia"—of which it is the frontispiece.

The Cotswold Games, like other mirthful gatherings, were put down during the Puritan rule, and though they were revived again at the Restoration, their new lease of life seems to have been short, and public coursing cannot be said to have existed again until Lord Orford founded the Swaffham Club in 1776. This club was restricted to twenty-six members; in the

Ashdown Park, Malton, and other clubs founded in the latter years of the last century, the membership was also very small, and none but members could enter dogs at the meetings. It was not until about half a century ago that the first public open coursing meeting was held in Glasgow. How numerous such meetings have become since then we all know nowadays, when the doings of greyhounds at all sorts of gatherings from lordly Altcar to the humblest local meeting fill up the gap in sporting life between the close and the opening of the legitimate racing season.

With the absorbing attention given to match-coursing nowadays, private coursing and the merry gatherings it gave rise to are in danger of falling aside: and yet one cannot help thinking how much more real sport there was with Arrian after his fine bitch Horme, or "out wi' the grews" on the Ettrick hills with Christopher North and the Shepherd, than at public coursing meetings nowadays, with all their sordid accompaniments subordinating all interests to that of betting.

Lockhart, in his "Life of Scott," records one of these pleasant coursings on Newark Hill, in which Sir Walter, with Sir Humphry Davy, Dr. Wollaston, Mackenzie, "the Man of Feeling," and a merry party of other guests took part. "A faithful sketch of what you at this instant see," said Lockhart to Sir William Allan the painter, as they were starting from Abbotsford, "would be more interesting a hundred years hence than the grandest so-called historical painting that you will ever exhibit at Somerset House."

"Coursing on such a mountain as Newark Hill is not like the same sport over a set of firm English pastures. There were gulfs to be avoided and bogs enough to be threaded; many a stiff nag stuck fast—many a bold rider measured his length among the peat bogs, and another stranger to the ground besides Davy plunged neck deep into a treacherous well-head, which, till they were floundering in it, had borne all the appearance of a piece of delicate green turf. When Sir

Humphry emerged from his involuntary bath, his habiliments garnished with mud, slime, and mangled water-cresses, Sir Walter received him with a triumphant *Encore!* But the philosopher had his revenge, for joining soon afterwards in a brisk gallop, Scott put Sibyl Grey to a leap beyond her prowess, and lay humbled in the ditch, while Davy, who was better mounted, cleared it and him at a bound. Happily there was little damage done."

Scott was always a passionate lover of coursing, and nothing delighted him more, as he often tells us, than to take part in the great annual coursing day, "the Abbotsford Hunt," or "at humbler sport," with a friend or two, after his

> Greyhounds true.
> O'er holt or hill there never flew,
> From slip or leash there never sprang,
> More fleet of foot or sure of fang.

Loudly have been sung the praises of many a gallant greyhound. Horme and Laelaps, Snowball, Maida and Bonny Heck, with the more modern heroes like Cerito and Master M'Grath, triple winners of the Waterloo Cup; but certainly never was hare immortalised except the Hare of Balchristy, hero of this amusing anecdote told by Scott:—

"There was a coursing club once upon a time which met at Balchristy, in the Province, or as it is popularly called, the Kingdom of Fife. The members were elderly social men, to whom a very moderate allowance of sport served as an introduction to a hearty dinner and jolly evening. Now, there had been sent on the ground where they usually met, a certain large, stout hare, who seemed made on purpose to entertain these moderate sportsmen. She usually gave the amusement of three or four turns, as soon as she was put up—a sure sign of a strong hare, when practised by any beyond the age of a leveret: then stretched out in great style, and after affording the gentlemen an easy canter of a mile or two, threw out the dogs by passing through a particular gap in an enclosure.

This sport the same hare gave to the same party for one or two seasons, and it was just enough to afford the worthy members of the club a sufficient reason to be alleged to their wives, or others whom it might concern, for passing the day in the public-house. At length a fellow who attended the hunt, nefariously thrust his plaid into the gap I mentioned, and poor puss, her retreat being thus cut off, was in the language of the dying Desdemona, 'basely, basely murdered.' The sport of the Balchristy Club seemed to end with this famous hare. They either found no hares, or such as afforded only a halloo and a squeak, or such, finally, as gave them further runs than they had pleasure in following. The spirit of the meeting died away, and at length it was altogether given up.

"The publican was, of course, the party most especially affected by the discontinuance of the club, and regarded, it may be supposed, with no complacency the person who had prevented the hare from escaping, and even his memory. One day, a gentleman asked him what was become of such a one, naming the obnoxious individual. 'He is dead, sir,' answered mine host, with an angry scowl, 'and his soul kens this day whether the Hare of Balchristy got fair play or not.'"

CHAPTER XVI.

BELTANE.

. . . . . At Beltane game
Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme.—*Lady of the Lake.*

Long after the Druids were no more, and when Christianity had become established in Britain, many of the superstitions connected with the old fire-worship lingered among the people. So tenaciously did they cling to these old rites, that it is probable the early Christian priesthood made a virtue of necessity, and grafted on to the ceremonial of their faith modified forms of the old customs, endeared to their converts by life-long observance. To this day, in some places, we find curious remains of these ancient rites in usages which the people, though ignorant of their origin and meaning, still periodically observe. No clearer link of this kind between present and remote past exists than the observances of *La Bealtuinn*, or Beltane, as practised in Scotland till within the recollection of living people, and which, indeed, are not yet wholly extinct in remote districts.

In the days of the Druids the first of May was the great festival in honour of Belus or Baal. From the sacred fires on the altars mighty fires were lighted on the hill-tops, through which were driven all the four-footed beasts of the district. The cattle were merely driven through, not sacrificed, and the object of the ceremony was partly to expiate the sins of the people, but chiefly to keep away from the herds all disorders till next May-day. On this day, too, all the hearth fires in the district were extinguished, in order that they might be rekindled from this purifying flame.

From these circumstances, this day was called "La Beilteine," the day of Belus' fire. As lately as 1790, we know that in the West of Scotland the cow-herds and young people in the country districts used to kindle these fires on the high grounds, in honour of Beltane; while in many other parts of the country we find observances that, even more clearly still, point to the rites of the sun-god's worship. Several of the clerical contributors to Sir John Sinclair's "Statistical Account of Scotland," published at the end of last century, allude to the Beltane usages in their parishes; but the most detailed account is that given by the Rev. James Robertson, the minister of the parish of Callander, in Perthshire, who, writing in 1791, says :— "The people of this district have two customs, which are fast wearing out, not only here but all over the Highlands, and therefore ought to be taken notice of while they remain. Upon the first of May, which is called Beltane or Baltein-day, all the boys in a township or hamlet meet on the moors. They cut a table in the green sod of a round figure, by casting a trench in the ground of such circumference as to hold the whole company. They kindle a fire, and dress a repast of eggs and milk in the consistence of a custard. They knead a cake of oatmeal, which is toasted at the embers against a stone. After the custard is eaten up, they divide the cake into so many portions, as similar as possible to one another in size and shape, as there are persons in the company. They daub one of these portions all over with charcoal until it be perfectly black. They then put all the bits of cake into a bonnet. Everyone, blindfold, draws out a portion. He who holds the bonnet is entitled to the last bit; whoever draws the black bit is the devoted person who is to be sacrificed to Baal, whose favour they mean to implore in rendering the year productive of the sustenance of man and beast. There is little doubt of these inhuman sacrifices having been once offered in this country as well as in the East, although they now pass from the act of sacrifice, and only compel the devoted person to leap three times

through the flames, with which act the ceremonies of this festival are closed."

While it is clear that some of these rites are peculiarly like those of sun-worship, others suggest the Roman *Palilia*, or festival in honour of Pales, the goddess of shepherds. Below we shall see that in the Beltane usages there are suggestions of the *Floralia*, or festival in honour of the goddess of flowers, remains of which are so conspicuous in the less primitive May-day observances of England; also that another Roman festival, the *Lemuria*, contributed to the strange medley of pagan rites grafted on to the pliant Christianity of the second-century Briton.

Ovid, in the fourth book of the "Fasti," tells how the shepherds, in order to get the protection of Pales for themselves and their flocks, kindled fires in the fields, baked cakes, purified themselves by leaping through the flames; while, for the caudle of the Perthshire peasants, they drank milk and *sapa*, that is, new wine boiled till only a third part of it remained.

Pennant, in his "Tour in Scotland," gives an account of the Beltane rites in which some additional particulars are noted. "On the first of May," he says, "the herdsmen of every village hold their *Beltein*, a rural sacrifice. They cut a square trench on the ground, leaving the turf in the middle; on that they make a fire of wood, on which they dress a large caudle of eggs, butter, oatmeal, and milk, and bring, besides the ingredients of the caudle, plenty of beer and whisky, for each of the company must contribute something. The rites begin with spilling some of the caudle on the ground, by way of libation; on that, everyone takes a cake of oatmeal, upon which are raised *nine* square knobs, each dedicated to some particular being, the supposed preserver of their flocks and herds, or to some particular animal, the real destroyer of them; each person then turns his face to the fire, breaks off a knob, and, flinging it over his shoulders, says:—'This I give to thee, preserve thou my horses; this to thee, preserve thou my

sheep'; and so on. After that they use the same ceremony to the noxious animals:—'This I give to thee, O fox! spare thou my lambs; this to thee, O hooded crow! this to thee, O eagle!' &c.

"When the ceremony is over, they dine on the caudle, and after the feast is finished, what is left is hid by two persons deputed for that purpose; but on the next Sunday they re-assemble and finish the relics of the first entertainment."

There is a place in Perthshire on the borders of the Highlands which is called Tulliebeltane, that is, the eminence, or rising ground of the fire of Belus. "In the neighbourhood," says Dr. Jamieson in his Scottish Dictionary, "is a Druidical temple of eight upright stones, where it is supposed the fire was kindled. At some distance from this is another temple of the same kind, but smaller, and near it a well, still held in great veneration. On Beltane morning, superstitious people go to this well and drink of it; then they make a procession round it nine times. After this they in like manner go round the temple."

Nine was the sacred number in Druidical times, hence the number of turns here, and the number of knobs on the Beltane cakes. The Celtic veneration for the sun appears, too, in the way the pilgrims to the well would go round it. All would follow the course of the sun, "deas-iuil," the lucky way, while the opposite is "tuath-iuil," or the way that would make their pilgrimage bring misfortune to them. "When a Highlander goes to drink water out of a consecrated fountain," says Mr. Robertson, "he must approach by going round the place from east to west on the south side. So when the dead are laid in the grave, so when the bride is brought to her future husband before the minister; so a bottle goes round a company, &c."

The proximity of dates caused many of these May-day rites to be transferred to Rude-day—which, indeed, is called Beltane several times in old writers, as well as by its Christian name of "The Invention of the Cross." There is a quotation in

Jamieson's Dictionary from Bellenden's Chronicle that shows this very well :—"On *Beltane* day, in the yeir nixt following, *callit the Inventioun of the haly Croce*," James Stewart, the third son of Duke Mordo, burnt Dunbritane, and killed Stewart of Dundonald and thirty-two men because the Duke "was haldin in captivitie" there. From Acts of the Scots Parliament, too, it is clear Beltane often meant the season, perhaps equivalent to Whitsuntide. The Scotch proverb, "You have skill of man and beast, you were born between the Beltans" (*i.e.*, in the first week of May), shows this too; while we may see in it another proof of sun-worship in the idea that special strength and skill were given to those born during the festival of the god.

These Rude-day observances that still linger in many parts of the Highlands clearly point to a pagan origin. There are still traces of the superstition that would not allow a bit of kindled coal to be carried out of a house on this day, lest it should be used for purposes of witchcraft. Children still "reel their bannocks" down many a hill-side on this day, to learn their future fate. On Beltane eve their mothers carefully bake these flat round cakes, marking on one side the cross, the sign of life, on the other the cipher, boding death. Next morning the children meet on some smooth, sloping hill; range their bannocks in a line, and send them down the slope on their edges. This they repeat three times, and read their fate according as the cross or cipher oftenest turns up at the end of the journey. If the cross, then the owner will live to celebrate another Beltane, but if the cipher, he is doomed to die in the course of the year.

Before the pulpit and the schoolroom waged a successful war against the remains of paganism in many Scotch parishes —and the success has only been very marked since the beginning of this century—Rude-day was a time of much anxiety to country people, and was full of rites designed to allay their anxiety by counteracting the evil influences supposed to be

particularly busy on that day. Satan, on its eve, held a review of all witches, fairies, and imps of evil of all kinds, who, naturally, on this great occasion tried to work as much mischief as possible. So, to make everything secure, bunches of the sacred mountain ash, the "rowan tree," were tied above the doors of cow-house and stable, with scarlet ribbon, while pieces were bound by the same means to the animals' tails. This was specially the time when the witches "milked the tether," that is, carried off the cows' milk by pretending to perform the operation of milking on a hair tether; so the milk-maid on this day always milked a little out of each dug on to the ground. This libation, clearly a pagan survival, would give the cow luck all the year, while its omission would be fatal to the animal's usefulness as a milker.

The only trace we can find in Beltane celebrations of that outburst of pleasure at the new-born profusion of flower and blossom that found expression in the English May-day rites is in some Rude-day customs. Besides the branches of rowan-tree, the peasantry often gathered other greenery and flowers, but still the traces of the *Floralia* are very faint in Scotland—indeed, so faint that many think that, where this custom of flower decoration existed, it too was a part of the sun-worship, an expression of gratitude to the sun-god for his genial influence in ripening the fruits of the earth.

It is a curious fact that, while to this day we find one relic of sun-worship in tolerably vigorous life in the Scotch capital, another only died out within the memory of people still alive. In the early days of this century, the magistrates and council of the Canongate—one of the three municipal bodies that governed the Edinburgh of that day—used to walk to church in procession on the first Sunday after Beltane, each civic ruler carrying a nosegay, while their attendants were profusely adorned with flowers.

Longer lived has been the other May-morning custom of Edinburgh—going to the top of Arthur Seat to see the first

May sun rise and bathe the face in May-dew. "In Scotland there are few relics of the old May-day observances," says "The Book of Days," "we might rather say none, beyond a lingering propensity in the young of the female sex to go out at an early hour and wash their faces with dew. At Edinburgh this custom is kept up with considerable vigour, the favourite scene of the lavation being Arthur's Seat. On a fine May morning, the appearance of so many gay groups perambulating the hill-sides and the intermediate valleys, searching for dew, and rousing the echoes with their harmless mirth, has an indescribably cheerful effect." The young ladies who now climb the hill-side do it merely as a frolic, but their grandmothers believed that May-dew was an infallible cosmetic, and would ensure a blooming complexion for at least a year. A century ago, young and old of both sexes used to meet at the well beside St. Anthony's Chapel, to hail the first rays of the May sun; then, when its beams lighted up the sparkling dew-drops, cheeks, pale or blooming, were bathed in the moist grass, while the elders of the party went to St. Anthony's crystal spring and drank of its waters. Poor Ferguson, writing when the annual meeting was in full vigour, tells us that—

> On May-day in a fairy ring
> We've seen them round St. Anthon's spring
> Frae grass the caller dew-draps wring,
> To wet their ein;
> And water clear as crystal spring,
> To synd them clean.

Besides these observances ot Beltane which had once been of a religious character, there were others entirely of a festive nature. Scott's allusion, in the "Lady of the Lake," to the dancing at the Beltane games, but especially the opening stanza of the poem, "Peblis to the Play," ascribed to the first King James of Scotland, will sufficiently show how the nation, high and low, amused itself at Beltane time. The little town of Peebles was especially gay on this day during the reigns of

the early Jameses, who fostered in every way the annual Beltane games held in the meadow by Tweedside. The old poem, describing this "play," begins thus :—

> At Beltane, quhen ilk bodie bownis
> To Peblis to the play,
> To heir the singin and the soundis,
> The solace suth to say,
> Be firth and forrest furth they found ;
> They graythit tham full gay.

In Edinburgh and some of the larger towns flourished down to the Reformation the well-known mummings called "The Abbot of Unreason," "The Queen of the May," &c. "The length to which the obstreperous follies of the Abbot and his train often proceeded," says the editor of the Scottish Lord Treasurer's Accounts, "is exemplified in a payment of £10 by King James IV. to one Gilbert Brade 'for the spoiling of his hous in Striviling be the Abbot of Unresoun.'" Scott tells us, in his "Provincial Antiquities of Scotland," a story about an Abbot at Borthwick in 1547, when an apparitor of the See of St. Andrews came to Borthwick Church during the days of the Abbot's reign with letters of excommunication against Lord Borthwick. "This frolicsome person (the Abbot) with his retinue, notwithstanding this apparitor's character, entered the church, seized on the Primate's officer without hesitation, and dragging him to the mill dam on the south side of the castle, compelled him to leap into the water. Not contented with this partial immersion, the Abbot of Unreason pronounced that Mr. William Langlands (the apparitor) was not yet sufficiently bathed, and therefore caused his assistants to lay him on his back in the stream and duck him in the most satisfactory and perfect manner. The unfortunate apparitor was then conducted back to the church where, for his refreshment after his bath, the letters of excommunication were torn to pieces and steeped in a bowl of wine : the mock abbot being probably of opinion that a tough parchment was but dry eating.

Langlands was compelled to eat the letters and swallow the wine, and dismissed by the Abbot of Unreason with the comfortable assurance that if any more such letters should arrive during the continuance of his office, 'they should a' gang the same gait'—*i.e.*, 'go the same road.'"

This boisterous Abbot carried on his disorderly pranks at Yule as well as May, to the scandal of all peace-loving folk. In 1555 the Scots Parliament passed an Act to suppress such mumming and unruly sports. Notwithstanding this measure, the common people loved their May games too much to give them up without a struggle. The attempt to enforce the Act, in May, 1561, caused a riot in the Scottish capital, and a rescue by the hammermen of one of the mummers who had been condemned to be hanged in July for disregard of the law. At length, however, public opinion became strong against Robin Hood, the Abbot, and other members of the motley band. Though, as Dr. Chambers writes, "it came to be one of the first difficulties of the men who had carried through the Reformation, how to wrestle the people out of their love of the May games," they succeeded in their attempt; the Lord of Inobedience, the Abbot, and their motley train appear never to have danced through the capital after the hammermen's riot.

Elsewhere special matches at handball and football were held on Beltane, some of which are still played on this day, though denunciations from the pulpit against the participation in these relics of paganism put down the matches in most places.

THE END.

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