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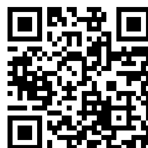

PRICE EIGHTEEN-PENCE

ECHOES FROM OLD CRICKET FIELDS

CRICKET IN 1743

BY

FREDERICK GALE.

LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.

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CRICKET AND CRICKETERS.

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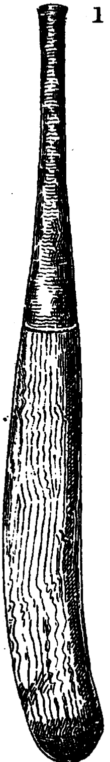

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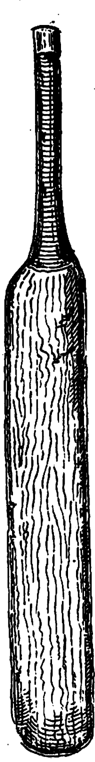

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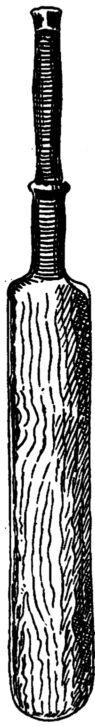

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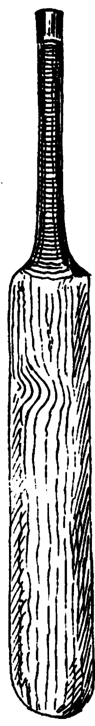

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Page XII

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ECHOES

FROM

OLD CRICKET FIELDS

OR

SKETCHES OF CRICKET AND CRICKETERS FROM
THE EARLIEST HISTORY OF THE GAME
TO THE PRESENT TIME

INCLUDING

TWENTY GOLDEN RULES FOR YOUNG CRICKETERS,
ACCOUNT OF THE GREAT MATCH BETWEEN GENTLEMEN AND
PLAYERS IN 1869, LAWS OF CRICKET, ETC. ETC.

BY

FREDERICK GALE

Author of

'Ups and Downs of Public Schools,' 'Public School Matches,' &c.

LONDON
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, AND CO.
1871

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DEDICATION.

This Little Work is Dedicated

(WITH ALL MODESTY)

TO THE

UNIVERSITIES AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

BY

A WYKEHAMIST.

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PREFACE.

I CLAIM no literary merit for this little work on Cricket, which is for the most part a reproduction of six articles which appeared in the 'Sporting Magazine' of last year, under the title of 'A Long Story about Cricket.' I have the temerity to express an opinion,—which I know is shared by many great cricketers of the past,—pretty freely; on the simple ground that I believe what my eyes have seen for thirty years and upwards. Of course, I am now fair game for those modern Critics who hold up both hands in horror at the idea that cricket, in the time of Mr. Budd, Mr. Ward, Pilch, Lillywhite, Guy, Box, and men of days past, was worth looking at, or to be compared with the play in the present days of billiard-table grounds, pads, and gloves. As a proof that I am not stone blind to good cricket when I see it, I publish, in the Appendix, an article which I sent anonymously to 'Bell's Life,' after the great match between Gentlemen *v.* Players in 1869.

When I was a boy at school,—many years ago now,—on the commemoration-day of our founder,

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William of Wykeham, the first lesson which was read at the service in the College chapel at Winchester commences with, 'Let us now praise famous men and our fathers who begat us.' This sentiment does not seem to be over-fashionable with many of the Young Englands of the present day, but I warn them of their fate, which will be this, viz.—that when we, the fogeys of this year 1871, are under the turf instead of on it, and the present Young England has become middle-aged and stout, there will be just as much difficulty in persuading Young England of the twentieth century, that the Graces, Walkers, Bullers, Freemans, Emmetts, Jupps, Pooleys, and others, who are preeminently good now, could play first-rate cricket in 1871, as there is now in getting a hearing in support of the excellence of cricketers of the past.

Some short time since a writer in a magazine took exception to the veracity of an account of some extraordinary shooting of the celebrated Captain Ross. Unfortunately for the writer, Captain Ross happened to be alive and well, and, with the modesty of a true sportsman, proved that the discredited tale had been *understated*, and that instead of his having killed seventy-six out of eighty pigeons—which Young England could not believe—he had actually killed seventy-nine out of eighty at thirty yards (though three fell out of bounds), and his gun *once* missed fire, and deprived him of his eighty shots. Remembering that Mr.

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E. H. Budd, the contemporary and friend of Captain Ross, was equally notorious for shooting feats, and extraordinary performances in running, walking, and enduring fatigue as Captain Ross was, is it not fair to infer that he was a very superior cricketer too? And is it not fair also to infer that the many great players whose names figure conspicuously between the years 1810 and 1845, had as much quickness of hand and eye as men of the present generation?

In the year 1845 a well-known frequenter of cricket-grounds and patron of the game (who is alive and well now, and never looks a day older), had backed England at Canterbury, and finding that he was on the wrong side, remarked to old Lillywhite, 'You players have no gumption, Lillywhite.' 'Ah! Mr. —,' said old Lilly, 'if you gentlemen have *all* the gumption, how can you expect us poor players to have any?' So I suppose all the cricket gumption was bottled up for a long period antecedent to the last few years, and like the '34 port, has come in for use by the present generation.

Well, after all, cricket notions are a matter of opinion, though I hope some of my Critics will be more fortunate than a gentleman was who took a run at me in a weekly sporting paper some few years back, for daring to express some opinions in 'Once a Week,' somewhat similar to the opinions expressed in this little work; and the only point he

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conceded in my favour was, that 'Wenman was a fine player, but *too forward* to our mind.' Need I say that I was *not* surprised to find that my Critic was a boy at school after Wenman had almost entirely retired from active service, and had thereby deprived the public of the pleasure of witnessing the finest *back player* of his day?

As I claim to be a harmless lunatic about cricket, I say to those who differ with me, 'hit me fair above the belt, and in good temper.'

WYKEHAM COTTAGE, MITCHAM:
April 1871.

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Errata

Pooley stumped and caught twelve men in the Sussex Match, *not* the Nottingham.

10 Nottingham fell for 58 runs, *not* 48.

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EXPLANATION *of* FRONTISPIECE.

No. 1. A bat of about the same date as Cricket represented on Frontispiece.

No. 2. Probably 100 years old; weight 5 lbs.

No. 3. Marked on back 1792, and named 'Little Joey;' belonged to Ring of Dartford, one of the old Hambledon men, to whose style of play is attributed the origin of the law of Leg B. W.

No. 4. About 1790; double-handed bat; belonged to Robinson, a man with a crippled hand, who wore an iron strapped on to his wrist.

No. 5. About 1800; weight about $2\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.; comes up well in the hand.

No. 6. Marked on back with brass brads 1827; weight about $2\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.; belonged to John Bowyer.

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CHAPTER I.

PROVES THE AUTHOR TO BE A FOGEY.

LET us begin *à la* G. P. R. James. Forty-one years ago last August a small curly-headed boy might have been seen sound asleep in a pretty country vicarage in Kent, and in the early sunshine a bee might also have been seen bumping himself in an insane manner against the glass, as if his honey had got into his head, and he was knocking at the wrong house after spending a dissipated night. The small curly-headed boy did not see the bee, but the noise of the buzzing fell upon his ear, and, although he had been carefully instructed about the little busy bee, he could not understand how that small insect could be improving each shining hour by making a clear, ringing noise, which echoed against the corner of the house, in addition to his buzzing; and whilst the small boy was trying to solve a problem in entomology, he was awakened by the cheerful voice of the village parson who owned him. I was that small boy.

'Jump up, Fred; there is going to be a cricket match, and the men are putting up the booth.' The carpenter's hammer made the ringing noise.

'What is cricket, papa?' I asked.

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Please bear in mind that, having been transplanted at the age of six from a little village in the midst of the Wiltshire Downs into Kent, I had never even heard of the game. There is a railway station in that Wiltshire village now, and also a cricket club; but in the year of grace 1829, when I left Wiltshire, we were a little behind the time, perhaps, and no such thing as a cricket-bat existed in the parish, and I very much doubt if the parishioners had ever heard of the game. During my early childhood our little village was brought into temporary notice by having two parishioners hung for setting fire to a farmhouse; the account of whose execution my nurse read, in pure Wiltshire dialect, to the cook, who had not acquired the art of reading, but we soon dropped back into our primitive torpid state.*

At all events, three great national events occurred in the year 1829. 1. The Catholic Bill passed. 2. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Winchelsea fought a duel. 3. Your humble servant first heard of cricket, and saw a match from a stand erected by the gardener against the garden hedge.

There was plenty of sport at my first match, and the day's amusements included a good match, some Kentish running between two villages, and a fight; and I remember the gardener got a wigging

* There was much sympathy for the wife of one of the convicts, who had been recently married. After 12 o'clock struck on the day of the execution, and she knew it was all over, she sent the following message to the vicarage by a child of her husband's former marriage:—

'Mother's duty, and now father is turned off mother will fancy an egg.'

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for letting me see the latter performance. the details and points of which he explained. So you see that in one long summer's day I learnt a smattering of cricket and a little of the rules of the ring; and I fear the gardener sadly neglected his work.

So much for the writer hereof. Assuming that I have told the truth, I have proved myself a middle-aged fogey, and as such I shall talk as I go along. Some people think I am mad about cricket; some think that I know nothing about it; some are kind enough to misquote everything which I have said, and to attribute to me things which I have never said, done, or thought about, and upon such data to put me wholly in the wrong, and to prove themselves wholly in the right (to their own entire satisfaction) through the medium of some cheap sporting paper, shielding themselves under a *nom de plume*, according to the custom of penny-a-liners. Be this as it may one fact is certain: I have passed a considerable portion of my leisure amongst cricketers of all classes, amateur and professional, and for the last thirty years and upwards, at any rate, have seen most of the very best players in England, without I hope, being an idle observer; so with this preface let us ring the bell and call 'Play.'

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CHAPTER II.

WHAT IS CRICKET? AND WHAT DR. JOHNSON MIGHT HAVE SAID.

THAT'S the question. I have searched old and modern dictionaries, from Dr. Johnson downwards, and find little or nothing to speak of about the game. In one old dictionary it is described as 'a game or pastime with bats and balls,' in another as 'a game at which the contenders drive a ball with sticks,' and I find this is copied from Dr. Johnson.

Why did not the great lexicographer give us a definition of the sport as he might have done? If I had been a member of the firm which undertook the republication of Boswell's 'Life of Johnson,' I should have added something about cricket, and half the world would have taken it as genuine. Here it is, and they may put it into their next edition:—

Boswell: 'I was walking with Dr. Johnson this morning by the Star and Garter in Pall Mall, where my Duke of Dorset, Sir Horace Mann, and others were wont to assemble to discuss the rules of a pastime called cricket, and I remarked that I thought cricket a frivolous and idle game. The Doctor was angry at my remark and answered sharply:

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'" Sir, you know nothing about it, and you have no business to give opinions about dukes and men of high birth, who have as much right to choose their own pastime as you and I have to dine at the Mitre or walk down Fleet-street. Sir, cricket is a manly game, demanding exercise of patience and temper, combined with some danger, and therefore requiring courage. The two men at the wickets are viceroys, who alternately rule each other's kingdom, and the space between the batsman's wicket and the popping crease, though it be but four feet in extent, is as much the batsman's kingdom, so long as he can hold his fortress, which is called a wicket, as Ireland is the Lord Lieutenant's. The laws of the game are just and reasonable as the laws of chivalry were, and it is a sport which interests rich and poor, old and young, and promotes 'good will towards men,' and one which ought to be supported by the bishops and clergy, who can mix sociably with their parishioners on the village green without losing their dignity and self-respect. Sir, if I had been a bishop I should have played cricket."'

Boswell: 'But sir, how should you describe the game?'

Johnson: 'Sir, I should describe it as a contest on even terms at a game played between contending parties of equal numbers, the implements being a leather ball of a determined width and weight, and a club with a stringed handle of a given width and length called a bat; the object of the game being for two of either party, when besieged, to maintain intact or unforfeited, according to the rules of warfare, two fortresses, each consisting of

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three parallel and perpendicular pieces of slight timber surmounted by a bisected coronal of the same material, the height and space covered by the aforesaid fortresses being determined and ascertained by certain international laws; the victory to be awarded to the army who, according to the reckoning ascertained and agreed on, shall have made the greatest number of successful sallies when besieged, added to which number additional sallies may be accredited to them for breach on the part of the besiegers of before agreed-on laws of warfare.'

Now, joking apart and sifting the wheat from the chaff in the imaginary definition of cricket by Dr. Johnson, as far as can be learnt the game of cricket in its main features has never been altered since it was invented. Like a new bat it has been rehandled from time to time, but the pod is the same. Let us put cricket down in round numbers at 125 years old at any rate, and let us take the game represented in an old engraving dated 1743 —a sketch of which is drawn on the cover of this opusculum—as a specimen of the earliest cricket. In this picture the wicket consists of a skeleton hurdle of about two feet wide and one foot high. The wicket-keeper has divested himself of his wig for the sake of coolness,* and is stooping down close behind the wicket, evidently on the look-out for a chance of stumping. The batsman has a curved club, like an old-fashioned dinner-knife in shape, and judging from his attitude and the position of scorer (notching the runs on a stick),

* Why don't ladies do the same at croquet?

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who sits on the ground and occupies Point's place, on-hitting must have been the only thing known.

Although the skeleton hurdle-wicket of some two feet wide and a foot high was the fortress, and although the weight and size of the ball cannot be now accurately ascertained, still we may repeat the fact that in the main features the game was the same then as now. The batsman was obliged to keep to a given space, out of which he moved at his peril; the wicket-keeper kept his eye on him then as now, and although the laws of that date do not exist, the earliest scores (published in 1746) show us that a batsman could be bowled out, caught, run out, stumped out, and have forfeited his innings for the same sins of omission or commission then as now, except perhaps for being 'leg before wicket,' which was provided for by later laws.

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CHAPTER III.

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF CRICKET?

I HOPE none of my readers are going to be hyper-critical about dates. This opusculum of mine is intended as a pleasant chit-chat between myself and many a man—and many a lady too, I hope—whom I have never seen ; and between myself and many an old cricketing friend at home and abroad, whom, perhaps, I may never see again. I think it not improbable that I may be pretty accurate on the whole, but this is not intended as a text-book; and I must refer people who want exact dates and times of particular events and grand diagrams of scientific cricket to 'Felix on the Bat,' 'Lillywhite's Cricketer's Guide,' Mr. Pyecroft's or Mr. Bolland's cricket writings; but I claim to be an amiable lunatic riding my hobby, and riding where I please.

Mr. Bolland's sentiments are my sentiments as regards the origin of cricket, and I say ditto to Mr. B. Mr. Bolland claims tip-cat, which street children now play, as the acorn from which the mighty cricket oak sprung; not that Mr. Bolland ever said anything about an acorn or an oak; that is my own bit of a penny-a-line.

Whether tip-cat was an offshoot of a Scotch game, called cat-and-dog, known in Scotland in

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the early days of the last century, is not very material; probably it was.

In Jamieson's dictionary (1722) cat-and-dog is thus described: 'This is a game for three players at least, who are furnished with clubs. They cut out two holes each about a foot in diameter, seven inches in depth, and twenty-six feet apart; one man guards each hole with his club, and the 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 is to prevent the cat from getting into the hole. If it pitches in the hole, the party who threw it takes his turn with the club. If the cat be struck, the club-bearers change places.'

The materials for tip-cat are much the same as for cat-and-dog: a stick for a bat, and a piece of wood notched at each end for the ball. A circle, about eighteen inches in diameter, is marked on the ground, which tallies with a crease at cricket.

From these two games, and possibly rounders, anyone can sketch out the scheme from which cricket was modelled. Mr. Bolland records a match at double wicket tip-cat, played at the commencement of the last century, between the cat-players of Lincoln's-inn-fields and the cat-players of Westminster. The numbers were eleven on a side and a notcher, and Mr. Bolland's argument is that as words were corrupted by syncope, sometimes probably through ignorance, sometimes from other causes, tip-cat at 'cross-wicket' became 'cricket,' just as 'Bag o' Nails' is a corruption of

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'Bacchanals,' 'Goat and Compasses' a corruption of 'God encompasseth us,' and the like.

It is recorded in the life of Bishop Ken, who was one of our noblest Wykehamists, and who withstood the persecution of James II., that he played cricket at Winchester College in 1650, but as no runs are placed against his name, which he cut on the chapel-cloister wall (no doubt to the great joy of the then Puritanical warden Harris), and which is now to be seen, we know not what the game was.

Cricket is also mentioned in the diary of a ship's chaplain in the time of Charles II. as 'Kricket,' and is recorded to have been played at Antioch, accompanied with much drinking of wine-punch and lemonade, but no particulars of the sport are given.

Assuming that there was an interregnum between the days of tip-cat and cricket, and that club-ball intervened, no one can well doubt but that cat-and-dog, tip-cat, rounders, club-ball, and cricket are all, so to say, blood relations.

Referring again to the old picture in the time at which cricket was played as there represented, there was a popping-hole cut close to the wicket in which the batsman grounded his bat after running; and, probably owing to some savage play by the batsman dropping the soft end of the bat on the knuckles of the man who was popping the ball into the hole, the popping crease was established and the distance fixed, the same as now, within two inches.

Now, as regards the bats, balls, and wickets. Through the kindness of secretaries of clubs, some

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friends of mine and several well-known bat makers, I was enabled, some time since, to collect specimens of every kind of cricket-bat from the year 1740 down to the present time, the most remarkable of which are represented in the frontispiece.

Sevenoaks seems to have been the place from which most of them came. I had nearly twenty match bats of various dates, and with one exception they were all well weighted, and came up well in the hand.

The exception was an awful weapon of oak, probably 100 years old, weighing nearly five pounds, with a pod which was bent outwards. One very peculiar bat with a double handle is preserved at Lord's. It belonged to Robinson, a player with a crippled hand, who had an iron fitted to his wrist with which he grasped the upper handle.

The bat of a hundred and thirty years ago weighed rather more than two pounds, with a handle which was almost as broad as the pod at the bottom, but a bat handled according to that pattern would not be a bad thing now for punishing slow bowling.

No doubt bats generally used in country villages were very clumsy, as probably many of them were made by the village carpenter or wheelwright; but as regards workmanship, the first-class match-bats were very creditably turned out.

The earliest date at which I could find a bat of the present shape is 1827, and it belonged to an old player who will be introduced to the reader hereafter; though I can speak from my own knowledge, that bats of the present style became com-

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mon in 1838, though they were a little heavier. When I was a boy, bats generally used in the country and in schools were pretty much the same thickness from the shoulder to the end; but from the evidence of my own eyes, and from the actual handling of the bats, it is clear that the Sevenoaks and London makers for a century past knew how to choose good wood, and how to turn out neat work, though the bats were thick in the pod.

It is difficult to find out what the balls were in early cricket. Mr. Duke, of Penshurst, was kind enough to write to me, in answer to enquiries, as follows:—'We have no record of the earliest date at which the present style of cricket balls was first made. Our great-grandfather, we believe, made and presented the first treble-sewn ball to the Prince of Wales, and our family have been in the tráde considerably over a 100 years. The balls were not at that time nearly so good or well made as now, as we have made considerable improvement in the material and manufacture of our balls within the last few years.' The weight has been the same as now, 5½ to 5¾ ozs., for about a century past, and in the early rules our forefathers styled the ball 'she' and 'her' as we do now.

Now for the wickets. The hurdle wicket, as represented in the old picture as being about two feet broad by one foot high, was narrowed and heightened from time to time, and a middle stump added in 1775. It was heightened to twenty-four inches, and widened to seven inches, about the year 1798, and in 1817, or thereabouts, was increased to the present standard size.

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As we have learnt something about bats, balls, and stumps used by our forefathers, I suppose oft-trodden ground must be re-travelled, and the old patrons of the game introduced, and the sayings and doings recorded, for the benefit of those who have not studied the history of the game.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE OLD CRICKET CLUBS.

Broad-Halfpenny Down, which is situate between Winchester and Portsmouth, will be remembered as long as the game of cricket exists, as the place where the grand old English sport was first nurtured and regulated by a club under the auspices of a few noblemen and gentlemen in the middle of the last century. The club was formed in 1750, and was dissolved in 1791.

Doubtless this out-of-the-way place was selected on account of cricket not being popular in the neighbourhood of large towns; as the system of collecting crowds of idle people to witness matches made by members of both branches of the Legislature for large sums of money, was condemned by writers of the period.

The first noted players were drawn from the hop-growing districts of Hants and Surrey, though the game was well-known in Kent, as the first recorded match is one which was played between Kent and England in 1746. I have a theory of my own that the spreading of the game in the southern counties may be attributed to the meeting of the hop growers at the annual fairs. The great writers tell us that before the days of good roads and canals, fairs were the principal

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places of meeting for distant neighbours; and taking into consideration that the old Hambledon Club grew up and flourished in Hampshire, and that Wey-hill Fair (which even now is one of the most important fairs in England) was held annually near Andover in that county, and was a great hop fair, at which, from time immemorial down to this day, there has been and is the Kentish row, the Sussex row, the Hampshire row, and the Surrey row, and it is by no means a wild speculation to assume that great matches were made at Wey-hill Fair, looking at the fact that the players came from the hop country.

Richard Nyren was one of the great players of the old Hambledon Club, and as his son, John Nyren, published an admirable little book (which I knew by heart as a boy at school) on cricket, I cannot do better than put old Nyren into the box and let him tell the story of the old Hambledon Club, and reproduce a list of players of whom he had the highest opinion, and also a song written by the Rev. Mr. Cotton of Winchester, in 1772 (quoted in Nyren's book), which proves beyond doubt that the cricketers of that day knew the principles of the game as well as we do now. We must bear in mind that in Nyren's days, matches were played for £500 a side, and the players were generally retainers of the great patrons of the game, much the same as trainers are in the present day:—

'There was high feasting on Broad-Halfpenny during the solemnity of one of our grand matches. Oh, it was a heart-stirring sight to witness the multitude forming a complete circle round that

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noble green. Half the county would be present, and all their hearts with us. Little Hambledon pitted against all England was a proud thought for the Hampshire men. Defeat was glory in such a struggle: victory indeed made us little lower than angels. How those fine brawn-faced fellows of farmers would drink to our success; and then what stuff they had to drink! Punch! not your *ponche à la Groseille*, or your modern cat-lap milk punch, punch be-devilled; but good unsophisticated John Bull stuff stark—that would stand on end—punch that would make a cat speak—sixpence a bottle. We had not sixty millions of interest to pay in those days. The ale, too! Not the modern horror under that name that drives so many men melancholy mad, as the hypocrites do; not the beastliness of these days which will make a fellow's inside like a shaking bog, and as rotten—but barley-corn, such as would put the soul of three butchers into one weaver. Ale that would flare like turpentine—genuine Boniface. This immortal viand, for it was more than liquor, was vended at twopence per pint. The immeasurable villainy of our vintners would, with their march of intellect (if ever they could get such a brewing) drive a pint of it out into a gallon. Then the quantity the fellows would eat! Two of them would strike dismay into a round of beef. They could no more have pecked in that style than they could have flown, had the infernal black stream (that type of Acheron) which soddens the carcass of a Londoner been the fertiliser of their clay. Then would this company, consisting most likely of some thousands, remain patiently and anxiously watching every

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turn of fall in the game, as if the event had been the meeting of two armies to decide their liberty. And whenever a Hambledon man made a good hit worth four or five runs, you would hear the whole multitude baying away in pure Hampshire, "Go hard! go hard! tich and turn, tich and turn." To the honour of my countrymen let me bear testimony on this occasion also, as I have done upon others. Although their provinciality in general and personal partialities individually were naturally interested on behalf of the Hampshire men, I cannot call to recollection an instance of their wilfully stopping a ball that had been hit out among them by their opponents. Like true Englishmen they would give an enemy fair play. How strongly are these scenes, fifty years gone by, painted in my memory! and the smell of that ale comes upon me as forcibly as the new May flowers.'

The list of memorable players whom Nyren most admired is as follows:—David Harris, John Wells, Purchase, William Beldham, John Small, jun., Harry Walker, Tom Walker, Robinson (the owner of the double-handled bat), Noah Mann, Scott and Taylor; and, he adds, 'No eleven in England could have had a chance with these men, and I think they might have beaten any twenty-two.'

And now for a few extracts from the Rev. Mr. Cotton's poem; and I think the reader will agree that the rev. gentleman's precepts are well worthy of attention by the present generation, some of whom, in these days of newspaper sensation and average, think only of their own little dignity and of their innings.

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'The wickets are pitched now, and measured the ground,
Then they form a large ring, and stand gazing around;
Since Ajax fought Hector, in sight of all Troy,
No contest was seen with such fear and such joy.

'Ye bowlers, take heed, to my precepts attend;
On you the whole fate of the game must depend;
Spare your vigour at first, now exert your strength,
But measure each step, and be sure pitch a length.

'Ye fieldsmen, look sharp, lest your pains ye beguile,
Move close, like an army, in rank and in file;
When the ball is returned, back it sure, for I trow
Whole states have been ruined by one over-throw.

'Ye strikers, observe when the foe shall draw nigh;
Mark the bowler advancing, with vigilant eye;
Your skill all depends upon distance and sight,
Stand firm to your scratch, let your bat be upright.'

The principal supporters of early cricket were the Duke of Dorset, Lord Tankerville, Sir Horace Mann, the Earl of Winchelsea, Sir Wm. Draper, and others; and in 1774 they met at the Star and Garter in Pall Mall, and inaugurated a Central Metropolitan Club, and drew up a code of rules which, practically, embrace all the principal rules of the present day. Their place of playing was in the Artillery-fields, Finsbury. They subsequently migrated to White Conduit-fields and became the White Conduit Club, and afterwards were established in Marylebone and had their ground on the present site of Dorset Square, under the management of Lord—an old retainer of the White Conduit Club. They were styled the Marylebone Club, and the ground was called 'Lord's.' In 1824 they were turned out by the builders, and occupied for three years a ground in South Bank, Regent's Park, which was also called 'Lord's.' They were

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again expelled, to make way for the Regent's Canal, and they eventually located themselves in the ground which is now their freehold, and from which it is hoped they may never be removed again so long as the game lasts.

We have to thank the noblemen and gentlemen of England for the honest zeal which they have displayed as trustees of the noblest of all English sports—a sport equally dear to rich and poor, in which peer and peasant meet on equal terms, and in which the nobleman cheerfully submits to the captaincy of the village carpenter or blacksmith, if he happens to be the best judge of the game, and sits down with his eleven at the cricket dinner in the tent in social harmony and good fellowship. These are the real ties which bind all classes together, and they are the stronger now because the great patrons of the game have divested it of gambling, the only blot which originally dimmed the lustre of its fair fame.

Perhaps as we go along we shall discover some imperfections still which want remedying ; but we may safely leave the interests of the game in the hands of the Marylebone Club and the gentlemen of England, without any fear of the sport itself retrograding—during our lifetimes, at any rate—as it may be said with truth that, with the exception of Sundays, there is not a day in the year in which cricket is not being played, either in England or in one of her colonies ; and even in spite of the howling of little Bethel, village cricket is creeping in again on Sunday afternoons in some of the best regulated parishes in England.

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CHAPTER V.

JOHN BOWYER, OF MITCHAM, SMOKES A PIPE WITH ME.

If the most ardent explorer was to search England through, it would puzzle him to find a more hale and hearty old man than John Bowyer, of Mitcham, who will complete his 81st year on the 18th of June, in this present year 1871. He has resided in his native parish all his life, where he now lives much respected; and, possibly, no one has passed through life with fewer ill-natured remarks being made about him. He played his first match on the village green sixty-six years ago, and twice thirty years have passed over his head since he came out as a professional player in the match, 'Surrey against England,' in which the celebrated Mr. William Ward appeared for the first time at Lord's, on the All England side, in 1810.

Directly the spring comes on, old John is to be seen on the cricket ground, sometimes as umpire in a village match—for with the exception of a trifling defect of sight and hearing, his knowledge of the game and his intellects are as good as ever—sometimes as a spectator, sitting in a chair under one of the trees, with his accustomed pipe in his mouth, and a glass of ale by his side.

Anyone can imagine what a delight it must have

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been to me in the dead of winter, when the cricket spark is extinguished in the minds of most men (except amiable lunatics like myself) to get old John up to my house, and place him in an easy chair in front of the fire, give him his pipe, and his glass of beer—in the drinking whereof he is very moderate—and listen to his account of cricket, played sixty years ago; and especially is it a delight when that account comes from a man who played against six of the old Hambledon Club, viz., W. Beldham, Walker, Lambert (the little farmer), Fennex, Wells, and Robinson. He played also in six matches of B's. *v.* England, and his career opened in the days of Mr. E. H. Budd, Mr. W. Ward, Mr. Assheton Smith, Lord Frederick Beauclerk, Mr. George Osbaldeston, and others of their time, and continued down to 1838.

An hour or two with old John is like talking to a man from the dead, and his account of cricketers of his time exactly tallies with what I frequently heard from the late Mr. William Ward five-and-twenty years ago and upwards.

As I am beginning to preach, and shall quote much from the ancient fathers of cricket, I may as well declare my own creed, which is simply this: That, fully admitting the excellence of the cricket of the present day, and believing most strongly that the play in the match between the Gentleman and Players, at the Oval in 1869, when the Gentlemen won by seventeen runs, *was never* surpassed, and probably never will be, I cannot disabuse my mind of the idea that there have always been exceptional men, who at any point of the game were as good as any men of the pre-

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sent day, allowing for the difference of cricket-grounds.

Admitting willingly that a hundred men can play now where one could play in times past, I think it is against common sense to suppose that those who in days gone by made it the business of their life to send a ball of the same weight as our ball of to-day the same distance as we do, against a wicket similar to ours (though at one time smaller), all failed in acquiring the same excellence as any named man of 1871; and this remark will apply also to fielding and batting.

On the common sense theory, I think due weight ought to be given to the evidence of such men as Mr. William Ward and John Bowyer; and Young England may choose to put his glass in his eye, and puff out a mouthful of smoke drawn from that unpleasant combination of whitey-brown paper and chopped hay, called a cigarette,* and say 'bosh;' but, nevertheless I shall put old John into the box, and take his evidence for what it is worth.

The old man says that the players' dress was generally nankeen breeches, silk stockings (which were often provided by noblemen or gentlemen who supported the game), with a pair of socks pulled on over them, and rolled over the ankle, laced boots, with sparrowbills (small rough nails), white shirts, and hats; gentlemen wore white hats. The bats used by the players were much superior to those specimens of old bats which are occasionally now found in country villages; but though they were heavier and thicker than those now in

* Observe my bitter Tory feeling.

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use, the weight and balance were carefully considered.

At Lord's, Sevenoaks, Sheffield, and other places where grand matches were frequently played for large stakes, the wicket was fairly prepared, but the outfield and long-stopping ground were not much thought of. Many matches of importance were played on open downs and commons, such as Epsom Down, Twyford Down in Hampshire, Pennenden Heath in Kent, and similar places; and beyond a little beating down of lumps between the wickets, the players took the ground as they found it.

The bowling was mostly of a good pace, and some of it so fast as to require two long-stops. The wicket-keeper class were not numerous, and unless the man behind the wicket happened to be very good, he stood back two or three yards watching the pitch, and shifting on or off according to circumstances for a catch from a slip hit or draw. The sharp catches were held as frequently then as now, as catching was one of the principal requirements for a cricketer. If slow bowling was put on, which was not frequently done, the wicket-keeper would stand right up, but he prided himself on not stumping unless there was a fair chance of putting the batsman out, as the public did not like to see frequent useless appeals to the umpire, a practice which Nyren condemned as being what we now call 'gallery play.'

The field were placed differently to our present system. Leg-hitting was almost unknown in first-rate matches, owing to the straightness of the bowling. If the bowling was middle-paced and

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the bowler was apt to over-pitch, a field was placed square with the wicket and called 'hip,' in the place where square-leg stands now, on the look-out for a catch from a full pitch to the body.

The long-fields, three in number, one being behind the bowler, stood very deep ; middle on and middle off stood about twelve or fifteen yards off at right angles with the wickets; long-leg and long-slip stood deep and played very fine, and were expected to cover the long-stop in case of a bye, and point would sometimes stand almost close enough to take the ball off the bat.

'It was no joke,' said the old man, 'to play without pads and gloves on a bumpy down against quick bowling. We had first to look after our wickets, for many men would bowl (which word he pronounces as "owl") thirty-nine balls out of forty straight to the wicket; and then you must remember that there were as many kinds of under-hand bowling as there now are of round. One man would turn his wrist with his thumb right out; another would do precisely the reverse. One would run with his right hand up in the air and bring it down with a swing, like the fan of a wind-mill; and another—Lambert, the little farmer, for instance—would send them in with his hand almost on the ground, and yet pitch a good length. Some bowlers turned the elbow out, like old Clarke, of Nottingham, and bowled four balls of a different pitch and spin, all pretty lengths, one just out of your reach, another a regular tice.

'Then, sir, you must remember the rough ground which made the long hops so difficult. First you had to mind the shooter, and if the ball

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pitched short and rose she would be on your knuckles, and if you played her back, point had a rare chance of taking her almost off the bat, if she popped up. And what was a man to do with a ball full pitch, all the way straight from the bowler's hand to the bails? One did not like to block it, and if you hit her you could only do it with a cross bat, and the chances were that she went up, and if she did, it wasn't often that she would be missed; for don't you see, sir, men practised catching then as much as they do batting now, and when a match was over they stood round and tried how far they could throw and catch.

'We used to get our runs mostly by draws, little tips in the slips, and hard driving on or off.

'If the ground was hard and the ball not likely to shoot, every over-pitched ball was hit right away—a ball which might or might not take the inner stump, if only half-wicket high, would be met with a straight bat, with the pod slanted a little from the wicket and drawn behind, or if to the off, dropped in the slips; and with a good partner backing up either of those hits would generally be worth one run—as the watches were placed deep—and if not within the fieldsman's reach they might be worth four or five; for, remember, sir, we played mostly on large unenclosed grounds.'

Bowyer says, as a rule, there was not much cutting or hitting to cover-point in the days of under-hand bowling, though he bears witness to the hard cutting of Beldham, Lord Frederick Beauclerk, and Tom Shearman. Mr. Ward and Mr. E. H. Budd were tremendous hard hitters, and used to knock Lord Frederick Beauclerk's slows to

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pieces, which made him very angry. Lord Frederick, he says, liked everything his own way, and was very cross with the players if anything went wrong; but he was a fine cricketer, and a good judge of the game.

Osbaldeston he describes as a very fair player, never so good as he thought himself. His bowling was very quick, and he did not like being taken off, and would often bowl a match away on that account. Once he challenged Bowyer and the two Shearmans at single wicket at Lord's, he having Mr. Budd to field, 'but he were no good,' said the old man. 'Lord Ponsonby backed us for the twenty pounds, and we won by 31 runs, and got three pounds each.'

Bowyer claims Beldham of the old Hambledon Club as the best all-round player he ever saw in the days of underhand. He could do anything in the field or with the bat. Fennex he describes as a fine forward player, and the pioneer of the school to which Fuller Pilch belonged; but of all the old Hambledon men he says the same. 'They were backbone players, ready to go till they dropped, and never sick or sorry in a match.'

There is one thing on his mind as regards Fennex, which is, that fifty-eight years ago when Mitcham played Blackheath, Fennex, who played for the latter, backed his side for a glass of brandy-and-water, and, says old John, '*he has never paid me to this day.*' He attributes the gigantic scores of the present day to the grounds being so wonderfully level, the sameness of the round-arm bowling as to pitch and break, as, however excellent the bowling may be, the ball generally rises bail high;

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added to which the great players play every day, and before the season is half over there is hardly a bowler of eminence whom they have not met once or twice.. 'How is it,' he says, 'that Mr. Ward five times scored over 200 runs—once 278 not out—in one hands (for John talks old-fashioned) if he could not play real fine cricket? Why, he must have received three hundred balls at least in some of his hands, and no matter what they say now about the underhand, a man must have been a rare good'un to have done it; and so were Lord Frederick, Mr. Budd, Beagley, Marsden, Dearman, and lots of others who were all run-getters. Fashions alter, sir, and there is a different fashion now, and hundreds play good cricket now to tens who played in my day, and what is more they learn it well when they are young; but they fancy they know all about it when they are twenty or so, and if they can bat and bowl a bit and have their own place in the field, they are satisfied: but very few of them are what I call all-round players. What I call an all-round player is a man who will go to any watch he is told, long or short, except wicket-keeper, which perhaps few men only can learn. It don't require any magic to go in with pads and gloves, on a ground like a lawn, and to be taught to stop and hit. It is all easy enough when it's straight forward work, but if the ground is a little bumpy, or if any new system of bowling comes up, where are they then?

'How was it that Southerton and Pooley together once put all the Nottingham eleven out for 48 runs? Why, because Southerton was new to them, and he bowls with his head. He is much

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higher and more wristy than old Lillywhite was, but the break of the ball is just like the old man's used to be. If Lillywhite, Cobbett, Hillyer, Clarke, and Mr. Mynn were back, and came new to the present players, 'twould be just the same.

'Clarke's was nothing more than the old under-hand trundle, no more was Mr. V. E. Walker's; but see the number of good men who fell to them, and the number that Mr. Walker caught and bowled; and why? Because the batsmen never knew where the ball was going to pitch, and they were teazed out of their innings. Then Lillywhite and Cobbett and Hillyer knew when it was no good bowling on a man's wicket any longer, and they expected the ten men in the field to help them out, and they would close some of the field round the wicket and keep on dropping the ball longer and shorter, sometimes a little slower, till they drove a man to hit it.'

'Then,' said the old man, 'put away my own times altogether, and look at some of the best men about the time I left off cricket, and for a while after; Pilch, who scored over a hundred ten times in great matches; Box, Marsden, Mr. Mynn, Mr. Taylor, George Parr, Guy, Wenman, Mr. Felix, Sam Redgate, and a host of others. Why it's nonsense to tell me that an eleven could not be picked from men of that time as good as any eleven we see now. There's Jupp, Daft, and the Mr. Graces, Pooley, Freeman, Emmett, and others, as good as ever were, but no better than others have been; but just because money and railways help clubs to get more good players together than could be done in my day, and because the papers are so full of the

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matches, people think they have better talent now than ever was.'

Bowyer confirms what Beldham told Mr. Pyecroft, viz., that matches were often bought and sold, especially single-wicket matches, which were always played for some considerable stake, and excited great interest. He said that they never tried it on with him, and the only arrangements which he was ever party to were when matches were played in which the winners received six guineas, and the losers four guineas, players on both sides agreed to divide, and receive five guineas each, win or lose; and this was done before the match commenced, without any dishonest purpose.

Bowyer says that players were well paid in his time, and he once received ten pounds and all expenses out and home to go to Sheffield, and the match lasted four days, and the gate-money amounted to 1,200*l.*, after paying all expenses. The length of the match was attributable to the stumps having to be drawn each day at a quarter to six, before the factories closed, as they were afraid of the roughs. So 'dear old Sheffield,' as Mr. Broadhead called it, had its roughs then pretty much as now.

And now I have imparted as faithfully as I can all that John Bowyer told me over the last pipe which he smoked with me—and all his evidence was given without any prompting whatever on my part.

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CHAPTER VI.

I TAKE A BAD SPECIMEN OF CRICKETING, 'YOUNG ENGLAND,' BY THE BUTTON-HOLE.

Come here, young gentleman; if you are short-sighted wear spectacles, or, at any rate, a double eye-glass of a magnifying power, recommended by an oculist, and take that glass out of your eye, for it is only put there for effect; and if you want to smoke, put aside the combination of hay and brown paper before mentioned—for the calcining of the paper makes my eyes smart—and smoke either a cigar or a pipe with genuine tobacco.

Now, my boy, you are not a bad fellow in your way, and, thanks to the fact of your parents and guardians having had the sense to approve of able tutorage in cricket at the school which you have apparently very recently left, you have had advantages which your parents and guardians never had, for probably you have been taught the real principles of cricket, as regards the A B C of the game, better than they were. For instance, instead of trying to play the random shots of your school-fellows, probably a professional bowler took you in hand, and you have some knowledge of playing with a straight bat on a very trim ground, like a lawn, and are not unlikely, with everything in

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your favour, to get a few runs in a good match, provided you do not run yourself or someone else out; but unless you amend your ways at once you will grow up what Homer describes as a ὁυλινγ καὁ or a βιγφοολ.

The charge against you is this. Instead of regarding cricket as a magnificent English sport, to be learnt and improved on day by day, from the first day of your taking a bat in hand down to the last match you will ever play, you are fond of making yourself the centre of attraction on the cricket-ground, of studying only the convenience of yourself, of thinking only of your own innings and your own average, and making yourself a position and a name in some cheap sporting paper; you care no more for your side of the match than the man in the moon, and if you can only see your name in the score for a decent number of runs you will be flattered by some reporter who, the following week, will perhaps say in some newspaper, the circulation of which embraces most of the fifth-rate skittle-grounds in England, 'that Bill or Tom was well on the spot, but Mr. A. or B. (whatever your name may be) was *all there*, and twice crumped her for five, and snicked a tidy half-dozen in the slips, and so rapid was the scoring that the first half century was written up for the Blues.'

Now, my dear young friend, I will give you one fact in. Although I have declared my belief to be that the best men of the past were as good as the best now, I think the case is different as regards boys. The exceptionally excellent players as boys were very rare indeed, though the rough and

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tough material which was in them was very easily made into very good cricket afterwards, but before boys were taught by professionals, as now, they knew as a rule little *well*, beyond fielding, in which many of them were excellent, and hard hitting. The byes and wides in some old score books are shocking, to look at even, now. Now, the cricket in one large school seems to be pretty nearly as good as in another, and in meeting young players of superior excellence in country matches, I just as frequently find that the expert comes from some school the name of which is only locally known, as from any of the large public schools the names of which are known in every quarter of the globe.

Now, having given this fact in, you ought to have heard the modest way in which men like old John Bowyer, Wenman the old Kentish wicket-keeper, the late Fuller Pilch, and men of that class, used to speak of their cricket. They all worshipped the game for the glory of it, and they didn't talk of what *they* did, but what *their county* did. They didn't talk about *their* innings. Look here, my boy; where would the Duke of Wellington have been at the Battle of Waterloo if he had thought of his average—which, mind you, was a very good one—and had only thought of his *own* name in the *Gazette*, instead of the victory of his army? of course naturally hoping under the circumstances to be 'not out.'

Now the rocks on which you are likely to split are as follows :—

1. Love of notoriety—which means (if you play in a public ground) exhibiting yourself as much as possible to the crowd, and taking every

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opportunity of getting a ring round you, whether under the guise of practice or otherwise.

2. Intense selfishness—which means going to a match or not, regardless of any promise, just as it suits you, arriving at any hour you please, regardless of the interests of the match, thinking of your innings as the most important part of the day's proceedings, and going away on some excuse as soon as your innings is over; running your own runs and not your partner's, and running your partner out instead of yourself, even though you alone may have brought him into danger; and sulking about the ground if you are put in last.

3. Intense conceit—which means bragging of your average, in total forgetfulness of catches you have missed, or runs you have given by not backing up in the field, or lost by running good men out; under-rating every one in the eleven except yourself, and over-rating yourself, and generally proving your want of breeding, and deficiency in cricket.

Now, Master Young England, I am afraid I have been rather angry with you, but you have brought it somewhat on yourself. Trading on a very small smattering of cockney-bred cricket, you have bored me so often by expressing your opinion about men whom you either never saw, or perhaps saw the last flicker only of their performances, and also by your ready adaptation of the thieves' Latin of the bad style of some cheap sporting press to the noble game of cricket, and by other obtrusive evidences of an ill-regulated and half-educated cricketing mind, that I am obliged to let off the steam a little.

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Now let us reason together. You are by no means the worst kind of young fellow out, and you are young enough to get out of bad ways. You have learned the rudiments of cricket, and by carefully following them under able tuition, with the humility of a pupil, you may acquire great excellence in it. Try for once to play a match with one object in view, and let that object be to work incessantly for the interests of your side, and do all you can to promote the happiness of those playing with you; and you will find that, by throwing over the dead-weight of jealousy and love of vulgar notoriety, you will make cricket the most delightful sport in the world.

Have no more to do with thieves' Latin in talking about this great sport. Leave the use of it to those who write for the tap-room, and let the tap-room company enjoy it if they please; but you are a gentleman, and don't want to sit in the tap-room. The thieves' Latin was invented for the purpose of conveying to minds of a rough cast the details of dog-fighting, bull-baiting, and low sports of the past, and ought never to have crept into cricket at all. But it *has* crept into cricket and into boat-racing too; otherwise, how could a reporter the other day have talked about a celebrated stroke, as one who had 'thrice stroked his crew to victory.'

Come, let us shake hands now, and you may put your glass in your eye again, and smoke a cigarette, if you please. I would sooner you did both these things than hear you talk slang and play for the gallery, as the two former acts are eccentricities, but the two latter do a positive harm to cricket, as

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many first-rate amateurs rarely, if ever, appear on a public ground, owing to the new state of things which has sprung up of late years at gate-money sensation matches.

So the balls are over for the present; but I am now going to fly at much higher game, and to attack the noblest in the land, and probably shall bring down on my head the wrath of all the most beautiful women in England, and shall expect to be thrashed to death by dark and light blue parasols, and perhaps be hung from the ladies' gallery at Lord's, with a rope of blue ribbons of various hues.

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CHAPTER VII.

I CHARGE THE ROYAL FAMILY AND THE BRITISH ARISTOCRACY, AND OTHERS, WITH SEDITION.

The indictment runs as follows :—

1. For that you, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, and Alexandra, Princess of Wales, aided and abetted by various dukes, earls, viscounts, barons, members of Parliament, bishops, priests, deacons, country gentlemen, officers in her Majesty's Army and Navy, lawyers, merchants, tradesmen, and others, have, in conjunction with their wives, sons, daughters, sisters, cousins, and others, from time to time past assembled, and intend during this month of July instant, against the true interests of the peace and prosperity of a royal game—to wit, cricket—to assemble yourselves together in tens of thousands in and about a public cricket-ground called 'Lord's,' in the parish of Marylebone, and then and there, with four-in-hands, chariots, wagonettes, britzkas, broughams, and pedestrians, have conspired, and are about to conspire, with intent to crush, squeeze each other, and to monopolise, as spectators, the said cricket-ground, and to compel the Elevens of two public schools—to wit, Eton and Harrow—to play within a roped ring, to the detriment of the said noble game of cricket.

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2. And for that you, the aforesaid, or all or some of you, have displayed, and intend in the month aforesaid, to display party colours—to wit, dark-blue and light-blue dresses, parasols, ribbons, rosettes, and gloves; and that you and all or some of you, the female portion of those included in this indictment, have disturbed, and intend in the month aforesaid to disturb, with your pretty faces and fascinating ways, the equanimity of the Elevens then and there assembled, as well as of all and several her Majesty's loyal subjects who care about the royal sport of cricket.

3. And for that you and every or some of you have created, and intend as aforesaid to create a sensation in respect to the match between the Elevens of the two public schools aforesaid, such sensation being detrimental to testing the real cricketing qualities of the Elevens aforesaid.

I have foretold my fate, and that I shall be thrashed to death with dark and light blue parasols, or be hung with a parti-coloured rope of dark and light blue ribbon, on the balcony of the ladies' gallery, I have no doubt. But, joking apart, I do believe that it is the opinion of very many ardent cricketers that it is a misfortune that the old school-matches were ever discontinued, and that one match only should be substituted, in the middle of the London season, for the three matches between Eton, Harrow, and Winchester, in August, and that that match should be made *the* sensation match every year.

The present system is bad for cricket; for every cricketer knows that a roped ground never fairly tests the powers of two elevens, and the fact of

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being hedged in by a wall of people all round cramps the players. It is all very well saying that the crowded ground is the same for all men; but it is not so. A fine hard-hitter gets no more runs for a hit which deserves five than the man who is fortunate enough to dribble a ball through the ropes, which would have been fielded in an open ground. And be it remembered that only three years since there was a very nasty ebullition of feeling on the question of a ball being stopped in front of the ropes.

Again, those who have seen many great matches must be able to call to mind instances when brilliant fielding, and throwing in the long field, have been one of the main features in a match. Assuming that there is promise of equal excellence in the long field in either the Harrow or Eton Eleven in any year, it cannot be seen on a roped ground, or, at any rate, it cannot be seen so well. The under-the-rope business must be bad for cricket; and the overwhelming crowd and excitement must unsteady many a promising player.

There is another question—which perhaps is one of good taste—and that is, whether it is the mission of heads of great public schools to exhibit their elevens, at sensation prices, for the benefit of the treasury of the first club in the world? Under the old system, the sixpenny admission was enough to keep out the mob. If it is not a question of money, the Marylebone club might close the ground, and make Harrow and Eton a private match, and admit the schools and a given number of their own friends and the friends of the two Elevens, or give the proceeds of the match to the cricketers' fund.

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But if the cry is made against sensation gate-money matches generally, the answer throughout England will be, 'We follow the Marylebone Club.'

Under the old system Eton, Harrow, and Winchester met at the end of the London season for a week's cricket. There were plenty of people to see them—perhaps two or three thousand—quite enough to teach the boys the great secret of acquiring confidence on a public ground, but not so many as to interfere with the game. The Marylebone Club were most of them off for the holidays ; and they kindly lent the Pavilion to the players and old public-school men, the result of which was, that members of the different schools, past and present, met in friendly rivalry, and the matches were played without hurry and undue excitement. The great cricket power of each eleven was fairly tested. A little temper might be shown occasionally ; but on the whole it was a very friendly affair, in proof whereof I may mention that an old Wykehamist always invited a lot of old Eton and Harrow men to meet the Winchester Eleven, and by no means unfrequently a celebrated old Harrovian gave a bat to a Winchester boy who made a good score.

Perhaps the perpetuity of these matches made the University Elevens rather cliquy, and members of the three schools preponderated in the Oxford or Cambridge Eleven, but this would not occur again, as in these days of railways and newspapers the merits of public school players are known, and anyone analysing the names of a University Eleven now will find that all schools are represented from time to time.

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The discontinuance of the three matches, which had been played off and on from 1825 to 1854, was settled and arranged by the heads of Eton and Winchester without consulting anyone, and the announcement came upon the public who were interested in cricket like a thunderclap. The authorities of Harrow wisely stood aloof and refused to interfere.

I know not what was done at Eton, but Peers, Judges, and eminent men of all classes, who had been educated at Winchester, appealed again and again without success to the authorities of Winchester, and offered to receive the Eleven, or the whole school if necessary, as their guests, pending the matches, but in vain. The London Wykehamists feel very strongly on this question, especially as they are always called on to take the lead in all matters where subscriptions are wanted for testimonials, and the like, and they think the authorities ought not to have interfered with a question of so much importance.

Reverting now to boys' cricket generally, I admit most fully, as I did to Young England in the last chapter, that boys' cricket has improved a hundred per cent. if he likes, since I was a boy. The byes and wides in some old score-books were terrible to look at; but then it must be remembered that 30 years ago round-arm bowling was only just becoming general in schools, and long-stopping at schools was looked on as a kind of drudgery without much honour attached to it. Long-stop got all the blame if there were byes, and little or no credit if there were none. Now if anyone will go and see Eton and Harrow

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play this year, and will take the trouble to go to Blackheath or any place of the kind where there are large schools at which the boys are well taught by a professional, and will without prejudice watch the best Eleven playing a match, he will see as much excellence very often in some of the players at 'T'other' school (which we in our folly laughed at and despised at Winchester) as in any of the large public schools.

It is true that players from private schools seldom come before the public in after life as celebrated cricketers so often as those who learn their cricket at the great public schools; but that is simply because the majority of those who finish their education at private schools disappear in the commercial world or in professions at an early age, and do not appear in the University Elevens or in Elevens of the Marylebone Club.

Now, to jump once more on my old hobby of past and present, I believe that when I was a boy there was as hard hitting and fine catching as ever is seen now; but the question 'Can we afford to put on the slows?' never was dreamed of thirty years ago. We were then living in the days of hard hitters, and underhand bowling was as commonly met with as roundhand; but catches in the long field, both in boys' matches and men's matches, were very seldom missed, and the reason probably was that good fielding was the first thing thought of.

In a county match, three years ago, I saw one man missed in the long-field three times in one innings off the slows; but I am bound to say the fieldsman's hands drove wonderfully well, and the

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ball bounded off with a bang like a ball off a racket-wall.

Looking at these facts through the spectacles of experience, I begin to believe old John Bowyer's evidence as to all-round men and backbone players of his time, when an eleven relied on the excellence of the field as their sheet-anchor.

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CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT IS GOOD BOWLING?

THIS is the hardest nut to crack of all. There are slang writers who will tell me that the Lions' or the Nonpareils' average will be over a quarter of a century, and that is the test of excellence; or, if speaking of a bowler, will give the palm to the man who bowled most maiden overs.

Some people think the matches at Lord's uninteresting because the great scorers come short home sometimes owing to the turf being rougher than many other grounds; some, on the other hand, complain that cricket at Kennington Oval is a farce because the ground is like a lawn, and bowlers have no chance.

It is too late now to talk of grounds being *too* good. There is and has been a general desire throughout England to make all cricket-grounds as level and perfect as possible; and very properly so, as there is no fun in being cut over; and to professional players, a bad accident means a loss of so much money, while to an amateur, be he who he may, it is at any rate a great inconvenience.

Going back again to my model match, Gentlemen and Players, at the Oval, 1869, which I shall always quote as the best seen by the present generation

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(for there really was hardly a mistake made during its progress), the great charm of that match was that, comparatively speaking, the Gentlemen had no bowlers at all—testing the excellence of bowlers by the dashing round-hand bowling of the Players. On the other hand, the Players had some of the finest and quickest bowlers; whereas the Gentlemen relied on Messrs. Buchanan, Gilbert Grace, and Absolom—three middle-paced head bowlers. To my mind, I would prefer a match with those three gentlemen to bowl, as I believe in medium pace and head rather than in the greased lightning.

And the great admiration for the very quick round-arm bowling raises the great question of good bowling—what is it, and how long has it existed?

Nyren claims David Harris, of the old Hambledon, as the best bowler he ever saw. Lord Frederick Beauclerk was of the same opinion; and in the year 1843, when Lillywhite, Redgate, Hillyer, and Mr. Alfred Mynn were at their best, and Cobbett had only just died, the late Mr. William Ward (who was the walking dictionary of the Marylebone Club for reference on points connected with past cricket) told me that he had never seen any one who surpassed David Harris. Nyren says of him: 'By continued practice and following the advice of the old Hambledon players, he became as steady as could be wished, and in the prime of his playing very rarely gave a toss. In bowling he never stooped the least in his delivery, but kept himself upright all the time. His balls were very little beholden to the ground when pitched, it was but touch and up again; and woe be to the man who did not get in to block them, for they had such a

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peculiar curl that they would grind his fingers against the bat.'

Now the account of this reads like good bowling, and, adding Mr. William Ward's testimony to Nyren's account, I cannot see that we have any reason to doubt the fact of Harris having been as good as any man of the present day.

Test the excellence of the best men of the present day by this description, can anything more be said about it—can it have more than pace, spin, and break? True, the accuracy and pace of the present round-arm bowlers is marvellous; but my old friend John Bowyer, admitting all this, says '*that* kind of bowling won't finish a match, for when a man is well set and his eye is in, it is no good giving him over after over of balls of great pace, which pitch pretty much near the same spot, and all come about bail-high. You want to bowl for catches when a batsman's eye is in.' Now turn we to Mr. Buchanan's bowling in the Gentlemen and Players' match, 1869. To all appearance it was a high round-arm left-hand trundle, without any particular object except to pitch the ball wide of the wicket. Anyone who did not understand cricket would say, 'If that is your best gentleman bowler take him away.' But anyone who did understand the game would at once see the good policy of putting on such a bowler as Mr. Buchanan, instead of one of the greased lightning, round-arm bowlers, who would have pitched ball after ball dead on the wicket. The Players would have played the latter on a true ground all day with a straight bat, but they could not stand all day without being tempted to hit what appeared

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to be such easy stuff as Mr. Buchanan's, and Mr. Buchanan, with the aid of his field, who worked for him as if their lives depended on the issue of the game, secured eight wickets; and Mr. Absolom did the same, in addition to the glory of bowling the last man. The Gentlemen never expected to get wickets without sacrificing a number of runs.

Now comes the question whether an enormous number of maiden overs proves cricket to be good or bad? Undeniably, as an exhibition of wonderful accuracy in bowling, and as a test of straight batting, it is a great sight. But it is attributed to the players that in these days of averages many are more anxious to have maiden overs accredited to them than to win a match, and it is stated that the reason why Gentlemen's matches are more frequently finished than Players' matches is because the former care more about the result of the match than about themselves and their average.

Regarding cricket as the siege of the wicket, it was a much more interesting sight to see good head bowlers—such as old Lillywhite, Clarke, Cobbett, Mr. V. E. Walker, and others—working for a wicket, and depending on their field for success, than to see a bowler, however excellent, sending down ball after ball almost on the same spot, which rises as if mechanically to meet the bails. Mr. Felix, writing to me in October, 1869, says:—'It is not difficult to get a sight of the ball when you have to contend against a bowler, who, bowling ever so well, knows not how to use his head as well as his arm. This it was that made it so difficult to meet the bowling of the late W. Clarke, for he could bowl four distinct balls in one over,

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each ball demanding the batsman's best skill and patience.

Putting together past experience of grand matches, and weighing the evidence of great players of the past, including my old friend John Bowyer, it does seem common sense to say, that the perfection of cricket is when there is good head bowling and a fine field to help the bowler.

I am sorry to fall back upon my Tory notions, and to button-hole Young England again; but when he exclaims, as he does to me sometimes, 'Oh bosh! Lillywhite and Sam Redgate, and Mynn and Hillyer would be no good now,' I cannot help thinking if Alfred Mynn and Hillyer were to drop in as strangers on one side now, and old Lillywhite and Redgate on the other, there would be a terrible accident (as old Lillywhite used to say) before or behind the wicket before long.

Perhaps past recollections bias one's mind a little, just as the prayers which one learnt at one's mother's knee come back with more force than some of the highly-spiced sentiments of modern Theology; but I must see another man who stands six feet two, of gigantic but symmetrical figure, standing up his full height, taking six stately steps to the wicket, and bringing his arm round well below the shoulder, and sending the ball down like a flash of lightning dead on the wicket, before I can ever believe that there is or has been a greater cricketer than Alfred Mynn.

I must also see another little square man, with cotton braces and big hat, trying his hardest to outwit Mr. Charles Taylor or Mr. Felix (Gentlemen and Players) with his tempting pitched-up

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ball, and succeeding at last in getting the batsman to hit at an apparently loose leg ball, or long hop; the result of which was that the ball went far away into the field straight into the hands of some man who had been moved up by a wave of the old man's hand, which the field knew, and the spectators could not recognise, before I believe that a better head bowler ever lived than Lillywhite. It was a treat to hear his remarks when the innings was over. He, like old Bowyer, used to pronounce the word 'bowl' as 'owl.' 'Ne'er a man in England could have bowled Muster Felix or Muster Taylor, as the case might be, when he was caught. Why the ball must have looked to him as big as a church door. So I drawed him at last, for I was determined to give him ball after ball to hit, until he tried one.'

I must stop, for I am off again on my hobby. Come here, Young England, I am doubly angry with you; first, for telling me that my pet players of the past would be of no good now; and, secondly, because unfortunately you have the advantage of me by five-and-twenty years in age, and you are ten stone, whereas I am thirteen, the difference being that my additional weight is all fat, and you have plenty of wind, whereas I am doubtful about mine, and that is the only reason why I don't box your ears. So go away, young man, and consider your ears as boxed within the meaning of the Act of Parliament for abating the dog nuisance.

There is one difficulty in deciding what is good cricket, and that is proved by the sudden collapse of a great eleven, or a celebrated school of players, owing to a novelty being introduced. Leaving

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alone the question whether the over-arm or over-head style ought ever to have been allowed, one thing is certain, that three years ago as fine an eleven as ever came from Nottingham went all to pieces before Southerton's bowling, and ten wickets fell for 48 runs, on as good a wicket as was ever made. On this memorable occasion Pooley caught and stumped twelve men in the two innings, a feat probably without parallel. In the second innings, Daft—whom every one must admit to be one of the most brilliant cricketers who ever trod a cricket-field—contrived to get fifty runs, but they were got in the most cramped, ugly, schoolboy way, and from first to last it was clear to the spectators that he was never at his ease for a moment, and his play was no more the play of the great Daft than it was the play of some unknown man.

Again, about 1845, old Clarke, with his slows, crippled the play of some of the best professionals of the day, and he contributed more than anyone else to knock up the old Kent eleven.

Then Mr. Fellowes came out with his terrific semi-round bowling, and many of the players were absolutely afraid to face him ; and it is recorded of old Lillywhite who was put down to go in last, that he said to the scorer, ' No, put down Lillywhite *absent.*'

It was during the last season that Mr. Thornton went on with the quick daisy-cutters, and down fell the players' wickets, some of the players complaining that it was not fair cricket.

When so many instances of this kind crop up from time to time, the fair inference is that cricket gets into a groove, and the same kind of cricket is

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played everywhere for a time, until a sudden novelty puts everyone out. True it is, that masters of the art very soon find out the difficulty, and overcome it; but if we are so much better now than we ever were, nothing ought to take us by surprise.

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CHAPTER IX.

WHAT IS GOOD BATTING?

TURNING now to excellence of batting, it would be ridiculous for anyone to deny that, taking the batting of a whole eleven through in a grand match in these days, we do not see more good batting on the average now than formerly. It is only fair to state that now the principal players play six days a week, generally on grounds like billiard tables, and frequently meet the same bowling many times in the season; but still the batting is very fine, whatever may be the cause, and there is seldom a tail to the eleven.

Reverting again to my pet match of Gentlemen and Players, 1869, it was an extraordinary feat for Wootton to go in last against 62 runs, and by indomitable patience and defence to help his partner to wipe the lot off within 17; and it is to the eternal glory of the Players that, with only thirteen minutes to spare, they did not try to play for a draw, but went in to finish the match; for, no doubt, if their orders had been to stick, and not try for the runs, they might probably have succeeded in drawing the game.

Fuller Pilch, whom I knew from boyhood, and with whom I often talked over the matters which

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form the subject of this book from time to time, told me in March, 1869, that Daft, Jupp, and Mr. Grace were three of the most extraordinary players he ever saw in his life; and as I suppose that evidence is worth having, Young England may score it to his side.

The greatest feat I ever witnessed in cricket was Mr. Gilbert Grace's innings in Gentlemen and Players at Lord's, three years ago, when he scored 124, not out. The wicket was, from some cause, very bad, insomuch so that some of the Players complained to me that it was not fair to ask men to run the risk of being crippled for the season for five pounds; but, in spite of the ground, Mr. Grace got all his runs without giving a single chance against some of the most terrific bowling in England, the ball sometimes flying by his head.

The great change in the game now is the disappearance of forward play to a great extent. When wickets were not so true as now, back players were rather the exception than otherwise, as the batsman had to kill the ball before the crease, before his knuckles or his wickets were smashed.

When the round-arm bowling was thoroughly established, the draw was obliged to be discontinued, and Fuller Pilch, who had been one of the most resolute opponents to the 'throwing' bowling, established a wonderful defence by his forward play. Those who claim superior excellence for the players of this day say Pilch had only one hit, and that that was a poke. They may call it Pilch's 'poke' if they please, but I rather fancy Pilch's 'poke' would puzzle some of the present bowlers.

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If a 'poke' means smothering the ball before it has time to rise and break, and placing it to the 'off' or the 'on' with the greatest apparent ease, I should much like to see it done again in these days; but from my recollections of Pilch, which extend from 1837 to the end of his career, I hardly ever saw him let off an off ball which was wide of the wicket, and he had a terrific hit in front of point, between middle off and cover, which gained him many a four or five runs.

There was in past cricket a greater variety of style than we see now amongst professional players. Take a few instances: Any one who saw Pilch, Wenman, Mr. Felix, Mr. Mynn, Mr. Charles Taylor, Guy of Nottingham, George Parr, W. Dorrinton, and Mr. W. Nicholson, saw nine men, each playing in a style of his own; and if you, my friend Young England, had seen them at their best, I think you would agree with me that there was some leg hitting and cover-point hitting which would be very refreshing to your eyes now if you are a real lover of cricket. Perhaps you might even give me credit for a lucid interval when I say that if those nine cricketers, whose names I picked out at random, had added to their number Hillyer and old Lillywhite, it would require all the strength of the present day to beat them; and I think George Parr, as George Parr was, would open your eyes a little by leg-hitting, such as never was and never can be surpassed.

The present style of cutting-in the slips is most brilliant. It is as fine cricket as can be seen, but it strikes me that the cover-point hitting between point and middle off does not come off so fre-

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quently now as it once did, and that leg balls pass by unheeded or unhit more frequently than formerly.

The cover-point hitting probably had its origin, or at any rate became common, with the introduction of round hand. The fact of the law of wide ball being introduced in 1828 proves that the irregularity of the bowling required a change in the rules of cricket; and if John Bowyer's testimony is correct, about the straightness of the underhand, it can easily be imagined how the players who were puzzled and cramped by the breaking of balls from round arm bowling from the on side, and who were accustomed to let fly at off balls wide of the wicket, exercised all their hitting powers, and took advantage of the new opening which was afforded to them by making a sweeping hit at the off balls, *vice* the off half volley disestablished. Another thing which made the cover-point hit so valuable was that in the days of single wicket matches, when they played one on a side, and no fieldsman allowed, the most telling hit was in front of the boundary stump on the off, and for this reason: if the ball was hit only so far as the distance stump even, the bowler had to run thirty yards at least to get to it; and when he picked up the ball, could only see one stump to throw at, and if he happened to throw behind the stumps, the batsman might keep on running until the bowler fetched the ball, and threw it across between the bowling-stump and the wicket. The cover-point hit was a fine hit for run-stealing. When Mr. A. Mynn and Dearman played their first single wicket match, which I saw in 1838 (the only

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match I ever saw played for money, and that was 100*l.* a side), a great portion of Mr. Mynn's runs were got by cover-point hits, though he lifted two balls apparently into some adjoining county. He scored, in two innings, 123 runs; and, if I mistake not, all Dearman's runs, eleven in number, were cover-point hits. There were only three wides in the four innings. Dearman was a little man, and Alfred Mynn looked like a giant beside him. I can see him now in a close-fitting Jersey bound with red ribbon, a red belt round his waist, and a straw hat with broad red ribbon. Dearman, who had never been beaten, and was heavily backed by the Yorkshiremen, had not the smallest chance with his opponent, and I verily believe that Alfred Mynn, out of sheer kindness of heart, gave him a few off-balls in the second innings, as Dearman was 120 to the bad. The little man made some beautiful off-hits before the boundary stump, and was much cheered; but when it got near six o'clock, shouts of '*Time's short, Alfred, finish him off*,' were heard from the throats of lusty Kentish yeomen, and I have a vision in my mind of a middle stump flying up in the air and spinning like a wheel, and perhaps if anyone will go and look for it on the Town Malling ground, it will be found spinning still.

No wonder, when Alfred Mynn played his single wicket match with Mr. Felix (which I also saw) at Lord's in 1846, that a foreigner who came to see cricket said to a friend, with all a Frenchman's excitability, '*Voilà le Grand Mynn.*' In that great match, which was a certainty for Alfred Mynn, as Mr. Felix was no bowler, Mynn bowled

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over 240 balls, and Felix made 187 hits for 3 runs, and only one wide was bowled.

We must go back to the text—What is good cricket? I give you in, Young England, the fact that as a rule, money being plentiful and railways accommodating, better elevens are got together than formerly. I admit that round-arm bowling has been reduced to a mechanical certainty, and that the defence of batsmen is very perfect. But pardon my saying that a great deal of professional cricket has a strong family likeness, and looks to me as if it was made to order and paid for, and is more cramped than the older style. It was a great treat to see a forward player and a backward player in together; to see men without pads and gloves keeping wicket, like Box and Wenman, and Mr. William Ridding* and Mr. Anson did (I never saw Mr. Jenner). In fact—I find I am beginning to boil again—give me the match of Kent and Sussex, or Kent and England, as it was in the days of Wenman and Box, for the enjoyment of the *sport* of the grand old English game of cricket, for all the sensation matches of the present day.

Yonng England makes one great mistake as to grounds on which matches were played 25 or 30 years ago. The wickets were pretty good at starting, though very little of the out-field was generally well prepared, but the turf would not wear like a well-kept cricket-ground does now, and as a rule the wickets were not rolled between the innings. Sometimes matches with great names were played

* Mr. William Ridding, in the match of Gentlemen v. Players at Lord's, took the wicket against Mr. Fellowes and Sir Frederick Bathurst's bowling, without gloves or pads, and stumped two men.

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late in the season at out-of-the-way places, on very poor grounds; but, speaking from practical experience, since 1840 I only once remember a match being commenced on a really bad ground, and that was at Bromley in 1842, and the match was called Kent and England, but the sides were not good enough throughout to justify the title.

In the next chapter Young England will give me the pleasure of his company at a great county match played 30 years ago.

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CHAPTER X.

A COUNTY MATCH THIRTY YEARS AGO.

I WILL honestly confess why I would see a great county match of the past, in preference to one of the present day. It is for this simple reason, that we were not satiated with cricket in those days, and the players, or at any rate the majority of them, were men who lived amongst us the summer through, following their trades; and when a grand match was played they were as much out for a holiday as we were.

Although by residence a Kentish man during a great portion of my life, I cannot be accused of partiality in depicting a match at Town Malling, in the days when Fuller Pilch had the ground, as in those days Kent was the only county which could contend against England. For fear of boring the reader, I shall mention few, if any names; as I have in a former chapter enumerated some of my heroes of the past.

Now, Young England, I will anticipate your first objection about the grand old Kent Eleven, and will admit that Pilch was a Norfolk man, and that Martingell and Mr. Felix were Surrey men by birth; though I must crave, in aid of their appear-

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ing for Kent, that Pilch resided and brought Martingell out in Kent, and that Mr. Felix had resided all his cricketing life on Blackheath, and had identified himself with the county of Kent throughout his brilliant career. It matters not where they were born; they became denizens of and were heart and soul in the success of the county of Kent, and for many years the old county motto of 'Invicta,' which appears on the Corporation Arms, was worthily sustained by the cricketers.

Now, in imagination, you must come with me to a grand match at Town Malling, the description of which town, if put on paper, would so strongly resemble Muggleton in 'Pickwick,' that I have an idea that the real scene of the match between Muggleton and Dingley Dell may have been drawn from Town Malling.

It is five o'clock in the morning, and after a restless night, from an iety and excitement, we are off in a trap of some kind for a twenty miles' drive to the match; and, as we leave Rochester and get into the Malling road, we find no dearth of company, and the road is much like a Derby-day at an early hour, as the old hands know very well that if they mean to get any stabling they must be early. Nor are the pedestrians less numerous than the riders. We pass many a poor fellow on the tramp, who has started over-night, perhaps, to be on the ground in time to see the first over, and to witness with his own eyes the feats of the mighty men of whom he has heard so much.

And what a sight it is in the town! All the inns are full of customers; and though it is only nine o'clock in the morning the horses are obliged to be

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stabled outside, with a canvas awning over them. And then, what a babel of voices we hear, interspersed with the north country dialect; as in an all-England match, the north countrymen who played, had their followers, just as the Kentish yeomen assembled to support their eleven. Let us go to the ground, for it is ten o'clock, and the match will begin at eleven to a moment, and we must get a seat in a hop-waggon early, or stand in the sun all day. Here come a lot of the players with a crowd of friends following them, in the hopes of seeing a little practice before the match begins. Those two tall men are Alfred Mynn and Wenman, and the short man who has already begun to chaff Lillywhite is Mr. Felix. Fuller Pilch and Joseph Guy of Nottingham, who are rivals for the honour of being the best batsmen in England, are walking side by side; and you can tell Pilch by his hands being crossed behind his back and a slight stoop in his gait. The man with a bit of straw in his mouth, who is criticising the wicket and suggesting a 'little more roller,' is Tom Adams, one of the finest long fields ever seen; and the good-looking fellow with black ringlets is Hawkins, the barber, the celebrated Sussex point; and Mr. Charles Taylor—the only man who would run in and drive Alfred Mynn's bowling—is easily recognisable by his tall white hat, in which he always played.

And so, as I said before, here we are in a hop-waggon outside the ropes—for I must confess we had the disadvantage in playing in a roped ground—and, Young England, you must imagine that the clock has just struck eleven and the first ball is

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bowled, and I will tell you another reason why I like the match better than the matches now.

In the days of which I am speaking county cricket was supported, as in the days of the past, by a few noblemen and gentlemen of position, and the making of a great match was left in the hands of such men as Pilch, Wenman, or some other well-known player; and it was expected of the player to whom the formation of an eleven was entrusted that he should get the very best eleven in the county, without fear or favour; and if the noblemen or gentlemen who found the money had not expected the best eleven to be in the field, the Kentish yeomen would have asked the *reason why*, if great players had been absent. The excellence of the players was tested by village matches in the cricketing districts, and especially on the borders of Kent and Sussex, local matches would be played which attracted as much notice as many county matches do now. I saw a match at Penshurst in 1839, between Benenden and Penshurst, which drew an enormous company, and in which Martingell was brought out preparatory to taking his place in the county; and so good was the bowling in that match, that it is recorded in Lillywhite's 'Cricketers' Guide' that Duke of Penshurst received 102 balls without a run.

Cricket not being so universal then as now, the great players were cricketing missionaries, so to speak, and two of them perhaps would be on different sides in a good village match; and every youngster who aspired to a place in the county eleven some day, was tried before a jury of the people of his county several times before he attained

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the object of his ambition. And there is no doubt about the fact that, in the old time, the honour was the first thing and the money the second.

Pilch was very fond of keeping a couple of places in the Kent Eleven for young amateurs from the public schools or universities; and, Young England of 1871, you would be surprised to see with what humility Young England of thirty years ago would accept the honour and responsibility put upon them when requested to play for their county. Neither money nor position could obtain a place in a county eleven in those days, as the only recommendation was excellence of play.

Fuller Pilch used to say, 'We players must show the public the game, and cannot go in and hit her; but I like a young gentleman who is active as a cat in the field, and as mischievous as a ship's monkey when he is in—who don't care for anybody, and who will hit her all over the shop.'

An extract from a letter written to me by Mr. Felix, in October last, gives one a little idea of the spirit of the past. In alluding to the policy of a player in a match, who thinks he has been unjustly treated, complaining quietly to the captain, Mr. Felix says: 'This must be done with proper respect, and not loud enough to appear to the field as if the inferior were usurping authority. This reminds me of the glorious days of the Kent Eleven. Many and many a match have we played *sub silentio*, when we were under the superior generalship of Wenman. He had only to look, and we moved, like the stars obeying the dictates of a great centre.'

There was another great charm in the old county

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matches, which was the novelty occasioned by matches being played against distant counties. If Kent played Nottingham in the olden time, the Kentish men would only see the Nottingham men once in the year; and before all parts of England were brought together by railways, a Nottingham Eleven seemed to us the same as a foreign army, and the excitement was intense; and although, like the Hambledon men of old, the Kentish men gave their foes fair play, the party feeling was very strong.

The stage-coachman who had picked up the last news of a grand match as he came through Rochester, was a man of no small importance as he shouted out his information to enquirers who resided in the villages through which the Dover coaches passed. Great was the rejoicing if we, who stayed at home, heard good news of the Old Kent Eleven, and long were the faces if the intelligence was against our hopes. We resembled the people who were shut up at Brussels, hearing the distant bombardment at Waterloo.

So much for the past; and now a few words about the present.

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CHAPTER XI.

GATE-MONEY MATCHES AND THE AVERAGE SYSTEM.

''Tis true, 'tis pity—pity 'tis, 'tis true'—but true it is that public cricket in the year 1870 was and for some years has been, and, as far as I can see, cannot help being, conducted on the same principles as a theatre, and there seems no remedy for it.

The old patriotic feeling of the past is to a great extent dead and gone. It would be a hard thing to find anyone now who would draw a cheque for a hundred pounds, for the sake of seeing two counties fight a match out, regardless of gate-money. But such men have been; and, when such men were to be found, two-day matches were as common as three-day matches now. There was nothing to be gained by spinning a match out; for, though there was a charge at the gate, the main purpose in most matches was to exclude the mob and to pay the expenses of preparing and enclosing the ground.

The gate-money business is now past remedy. Cricket has become as regular a business as any trade; and hundreds of men support their wives and families by cricket during six months of the year, and many of them have no certain means of getting a living during the other six. Hence it arises that a considerable inducement must be

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offered to men to give up a regular calling and to adopt cricket as a profession, as county players are expected to be at the beck and call of the managers of matches, as trainers or jockeys are in racing.

The ruling price of a professional player in the great metropolitan grounds is five pounds a match; and, as good cricket requires a great number of professional players, some one must pay for them, and that 'some one' is the public. Now as the public, with the exception of a few ardent cricketers and idle men, do not come to the metropolitan grounds until the afternoon, the fashion in these grounds has been to commence at twelve, or sometimes nearer one o'clock, and to assign three days to each grand match. Nor is the late beginning the only cause of the matches being spun out; for any one who witnessed matches thirty years ago, and compares them with those of the present time, cannot help being surprised at seeing how time is cut to waste in these days. Is it not worth trying the experiment in a gentlemen and players' match *once*—of playing the match with five-ball overs, and commencing sharp at 11, and playing till 7.30, with an hour's rest from 2 o'clock till 3, and finishing it in two days? It is a great question whether the public would not come in greater numbers to witness a match which promises to be quickly played than to witness a match which is dragging on three days. If the experiment succeeded, the players would enjoy a day's rest.

As regards the players themselves, taking them as a class, they are capital fellows. There may, here and there, be a quarrelsome or disagreeable

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man, but quarrelsome and disagreeable men are not confined to the cricket-field. You may sit next one at dinner, or at church even, just as likely as anywhere else. The old stigma of buying and selling matches has passed away for so many years, that Mr. Pyecroft's statement of that charge—on the evidence of old Beldham, which he took from the old man's lips some ten years ago—took people by surprise; and I have never heard the slightest hint even of foul play in my time. No doubt Beldham told Mr. Pyecroft the truth about matches in his day; but the buying and selling took place when matches were played for large sums, and the betting men attended the matches and made their books openly.

Now, confessing my own creed once more, of the two evils I should much prefer, in the interest of the game of cricket, the old system of notching on a stick to the present average system and slang reports of matches, in which some newspapers indulge. The grand old principle of an eleven being an united army, ready to stand by each other like soldiers in a regiment, is a thing of the past, except in a few good county elevens. The component parts of the army are different. The eleven are regiments drawn from the depôts. The players now are not the men who are proud, and justly proud, of the cheers of their fellow-countrymen to-day, and who are carpentering, or gamekeeping, or tailoring to-morrow, with a feeling of indifference to some extent whether, as regards money, they play for the county again or not; but they are men who look to their success as the means of procuring them another engagement. Their object is

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to play as many matches as possible for pounds, shillings, and pence; and although they do their duty honestly and well, you cannot expect any more enthusiasm from those whose daily work from Monday morning till Saturday night is to play cricket, than you can expect from a lawyer who makes your will, a doctor who looks at your tongue and punches you in the ribs, or a dentist who takes out your tooth. All the above acts are done by professional men who do their daily work to the best of their power, and as soon as their work is done they are glad to see your back and to go home to dinner and forget about the business. The reward of lawyers, doctors and dentists is money and the good-will of their clients or patients, as the case may be, added to which is the hope that if their work is well done, the client or patient, as the case may be, will send some one else to solicit their services.

How easy it is to pick out a novice in a moment, either in business or pleasure. Go to any theatre, and watch the shilling men who line the battlements, or the chorus, who are joining each other in vows of undying hatred or friendship, or in prayer, as the case may be. You can pick out the fresh man in a moment. If on the ramparts, he shoulders his musket and tries to make a part of it; whereas his neighbour, who is sentry on the opposite battlement, a regular old stager, paces up and down, and takes no pains to conceal the fact that he is suffering from corns, and is utterly uninterested in the performance. Look again at the chorus. The majority of the brigands on the stage, who are vowing eternal friendship or revenge, just touch

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each other's hand and point the left to heaven, and have done with the business, possibly thinking of the beer which they ordered before coming on, and speculating on the possibility of the chorus of virtuous peasants who are coming on presently drinking it in their absence; whilst the new chorus singer wrings his neighbour's hand like a vice, and with uplifted hands looks like a Bishop, or Holy Willie of Germany, invoking a blessing, and makes a good long prayer for his money. Just so with many of the players. The colt, who plays for the first time in his eleven, steps briskly across at the word 'Over,' and is ready in his place at once; whereas some of the old stagers walk quietly across, simply performing a portion of the day's business. That they do their work honestly and well (as I said before) no one can deny; but human nature is human nature, and players are not exempt from feeling sick and sorry sometimes, and are as much subject to fits of lassitude as men in other callings. The grand matches are public exhibitions of cricket, and as a man's engagements depend on his known skill, the average system has crept in, and players must naturally think more of their individual performances than the result of the game, though they all mean to win if they can.

Now, as regards the best average being a test of excellence, as a general rule it may be said to be a fair test of wicket-keeping and bowling. When Pooley stumped and caught twelve men in one match, the fact alone proves that he must be a great wicket-keeper; and when we see a large number of wickets accredited to a bowler with no unreasonable number of runs, we are bound to give him credit

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for good play. But do maiden overs prove excellence? I rather think *not necessarily*. I have seen four leg balls bowled in one over to a batsman, who never even attempted to hit or play one of them; whereas had George Parr at his best received the same over, there would have been a large increase of the score. In such a maiden over as this there is really no credit to the bowler, except on paper in the average-sheet at the end of the season. Again, I have frequently seen a bowler bowl four balls running dead on the middle stump, and apparently pitching ball after ball on the same spot, to a batsman who had been in half the day, and I have seen this done for four or five overs in succession. To my simple mind the process is tedious and only wastes time. Old Bowyer's theory appears to be the right one: 'When you can't get a man's wicket with straight bowling, close some of the field round him, and pitch them almost into his block-hole, and make him hit.' Many an indifferent bowler, with a good head on his shoulders, with the aid of his field, has put an end to a long innings, when the wicket seemed impregnable, by feeding the batsman with pitched-up bowling, which seemed utter rubbish. Nothing puts fresh blood into the field like a change of bowling, which is tried for the purpose of drawing the batsman out. Long-leg and cover-point wake up as lively as kittens; short-slip and point are all on their feet. It is like a fresh game. The spectators get enthusiastic, and the glorious uncertainty of cricket is once more to be seen.

What shall we say about the batsman's average? A large average at the end of the season of course

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is direct evidence of a man being a good run-getter. But, query: If averages are worth keeping, is it not possible in every match of importance to define to some extent how much each player has contributed towards the result, and how much his score ought to be discounted?

Let us test it fairly. A and B on different sides get 50 runs each; on paper this looks as if A and B had contributed equally to the success of their side. But supposing A has run out C, as good a batsman as himself, badly, from his own clumsiness, and when in the field has missed an easy catch from D, who has scored 55 runs, what has A done for his side? Why, he has lost five runs by missing D (giving A credit for his 50), *plus* the loss arising from C's run out.

Now, reverting to the amount which each of the eleven contributes towards success, and going back once more to my pattern match of Gentlemen v. Players of 1869, at the Oval, the Players lost by 17 runs; and anyone who witnessed that match cannot doubt for a moment that the extraordinary performances of Mr. Lubbock and Mr. Green, alternately at long-leg, saved the 17 runs twice over; and if those two gentlemen had each scored nothing in their innings, and the runs which they actually did get had been obtained by other members of their eleven, so that the total was the same, Young England, testing the excellency of play by average, would have said, 'Lubbock and Green each a pair of spectacles—don't think much of them—oughtn't to have played.'

No doubt other gentlemen in the field contributed in the same match their full share towards

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the general success by their fielding, but I select Messrs. Lubbock and Green because their throwing was most extraordinary throughout the match, and it is not often that such great excellence in one point of the game is shown by two men in one eleven.

So you see I fall back upon my old Tory principles, and believe that a good working cricketer who perseveres for his side throughout, instead of playing for his own glory, is after all a more useful man than a man who is playing for his average, and makes it.

If players are sometimes at fault by thinking about their average as the great end and object of cricket, are they different from other men? Does not the Rev. Boanerges Stump care quite as much about his own oratory at Exeter Hall as he does for the soul of Brother Sambo, for whom he so earnestly pleads at a missionary meeting? and would he not be displeased if his speech was not fully reported in the *Record?* Does not Mr. Silvertongue, Q.C., like to read his speech in the House of Commons in the *Times*, whether the division has been against him or not; and does not he hope that he may be Attorney-General some day? Does not the Prima Donna look round for applause, and for a good report of her proceedings in the theatrical press; and would there not be a row if her name did not appear in bigger letters than that of anyone else in the playbill?

We are all pretty much the same, and William W. Shakespear (as poor Artemus Ward called him) was not far out when he said 'All the world's a stage, and all the men and women only players.'

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But pardon me if I don't accept the excellence of the players wholly from the average-list, any more than I accept the excellence of the Rev. Boanerges Stump, and Mr. Silvertongue, and the Prima Donna, from a newspaper critique.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE OLD PLAYER AT HOME AGAIN.

WHEN I speak of an old player I mean a man of middle age who has done with public cricket for his county and who has laid his bat aside, as far as gate-money matches are concerned, and comes quietly back to his native village and settles down for life, always ready and willing to play for a small gratuity with a village club.

If such a man is of a genial nature, what a splendid fellow he is! no matter how great a radical he was when he was in active service or how much he abused any person for daring to think that in their time cricket was as good as in his. He is a staunch Tory now, and firmly believes that the youngsters who succeeded him and whose praises the sporting papers are daily singing, are nothing better, if so good, as Bill, or Tom, or Harry, who fought alongside him *in his prime.* We all believe more or less in the excellence of men of our time. I was rather amused in reading some extracts from the 'Sporting Magazine' of 1827, when the round-arm bowling controversy was at its height. Mr. George Knight, of Godmersham, in Kent, was the advocate for round-arm bowling (though probably no great performer); and

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the success of Lillywhite and Broadbridge in establishing the system against the protest of Pilch, Marsden, and other players, must be attributed to Mr. George Knight's letters in the 'Sporting Magazine,' and his influence at Marylebone. The paper war waxed long and strong in the pages of the 'Sporting Magizine,' and an enthusiast, who takes up the cudgels against Mr. Knight, boldly advocates the superior play of Lord Thanet, Beldham, Lord F. Beauclerk, Fennex, and the men of the old Hambledon Club. So I believe that twenty years hence, Young England, who quarrels so with me now, will be an ardent Tory, clamouring for the excellences of the men of the present time, 1871; and being very angry with the Young England of 1891 (who may, for aught I know, be steam men with India-rubber springs and no religion or mind, but patent men of the people), for insisting on the superior play of that age, and disbelieving in Dafts, Jupps, Graces, Walkers, and great men, amateur and professional, of this era.

Now let us take the old professional as we find him. Perhaps he has no particular occupation, and is on the look-out for something to turn up; perhaps he has a small business which he has never wholly deserted, or probably he keeps a cricket inn. Be what he may, no sooner does the village captain open negotiations for his services for a village match than the old player's eye brightens up, his pulse quickens, and all the fire of cricket, which was in his veins when he was a colt, breaks out again. True it is that he is going to be paid, but the pay is only to be just enough to enable him to get his ordinary day's work done by someone else. That

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fire to a certain extent had been dormant as soon as the novelty of his first public match had worn off. For many years, perhaps, he had been a professional player, but in accepting the dignity of the position he had also accepted the yoke inseparable from performing certain obligations. Many a time has he been in the same position as those above him in rank and birth, who though not absolutely in want of money, have felt it a duty to toil along at some business which they undertook, whilst all the time their hearts were yearning after the rest and quiet which their family are enjoying at the seaside or on the Continent.

Once more the professional player begins to really enjoy cricket. He is king of the position. There is no press to bully him, no monied autocrat to snub him on the cricket-ground; he is looked up to as *the* man who knows most of the game, and though nominally he is not captain, yet he is practically so to all intents and purposes, assuming that he lives in a real cricketing place, where the amateurs are really anxious to keep up the repute of the village. No captain who is worth his salt ever makes a move without asking an old player's advice, and if the amateur captain is a good cricketer and acts against such advice occasionally with success, for stated reasons, no one is more ready than the old player to give him credit for his superior judgment. Then see how the old player's style changes when he is a free man; his battles have been fought long ago, and he is certain to get as many day engagements as he pleases for the sake of his actual worth. There is no longer any dread of public criticism for making blind hits,

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nor has he the dreadful average-book before his eyes. He feels quite at home with straight bowling, for it has been the study of his life to play that; but woe be to the bowler who tries him with four leg balls running in hopes of a maiden over. Although his display of cricket now may not be quite so scientific or safe as his public play, the principle of which seems to be 'hit at nothing but a certainty,' the old player draws himself out, and does what he might have done years ago during his public career, and punishes, or tries to punish, every loose ball. He plays good heart and soul cricket with a good defence, and, at the same time, with much more freedom than he ever exercised before. He makes the proper use of the quickness of hand and eye, and for the sole reason that if he happens to make a mistake it will not be recorded in every town in England, and written down against him in that *bugbear* his average, before dinner-time the next day.

These old players are the men who make good county cricket at home and bring out youthful talent; the great clubs ought to employ them as cricket missionaries and send them round the country to recruit for the county eleven. They have everything, as a rule, in their favour: knowledge of the game, revived love of cricket, easy manners acquired from constantly mixing with noblemen and gentlemen in the cricket-ground, and a well-known character, the honesty of which has been proved on a hundred cricket-grounds; and they are equally at home at a gentleman's house as at the village inn.

This status of old players is the haven to which

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all professional players ought to come, and if they are too fond of themselves and their average, and too much in awe of the sporting press during their public career, it matters not much so long as they get safe home at last. It is not the fault of the players so much as the fault of the times that professional players to a great extent become public property. Only look at our respected member Mr. Brown, M.P., on the hustings, and read his speeches and his addresses, and compare them with his ordinary mode of speaking and writing in his private and political life. Why, we all know, if we judge the man by his electioneering manners and customs, that we are bound *now* to write him down as a humbug. His hustings' speech is just like the bell over the inn where the Farmers' Ordinary is held opposite to another inn, where there is another Farmers' Ordinary, and the bell which sounds the loudest gets the most customers. Just so with the players; they are on the look-out for customers; the public follow their averages and bet upon them, and clamour about maiden overs and believe in them; and if the players' performance pleases the public and the public find the money, let the players by all means supply them with the material which they require. But, if I am asked to believe that players' matches of the year 1871 are the perfection of cricket, looking at cricket as our great national *sport* and not our great national *business*, I say most decidedly, No.

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CHAPTER XIII.

AMATEUR CRICKETERS.

Now, Young England, I will make one more admission as regards present *v.* past cricket. Reserving to myself every article of my creed, that there were exceptionally good men thirty years ago who were quite as good as any named amateur player of the present day, I do believe that, taken as a whole, an amateur eleven of 1871 is far superior to most amateur elevens of the past. I think to a great extent we have to thank public opinion for this. Cricket has become cosmopolitan, and old prejudices have died out. As I before said, when the public school matches were played at Lord's between Winchester, Harrow, and Eton, the majority, if not all, of the members of the Oxford and Cambridge elevens were drawn from those schools, and were drafted into the gentlemen's eleven in the match of Gentlemen *v.* Players. But now times are changed, and any undergraduate, no matter what school he comes from, has a fair chance of a place in the eleven of his university, if he is a really good player. The captain of a university eleven now is a public man, and men must be put into the eleven according to their merit. The result is, that an Oxford or Cambridge eleven draws as large a company as any eleven in England, because the

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spectators know that they will see one of the finest exhibitions of fielding that can be seen.

And in honesty one word must be said in favour of gate-money matches, and it is this: The managers of public grounds know very well that the names of well-known gentlemen players are quite as attractive as those of the professionals, so that when a Gentlemen and Players' match is fixed, no efforts are spared to get together the very best eleven in England; and what is more, the gentlemen have a fair chance of winning now which they seldom had before. There is one little grievance about amateur players which might very well be abolished *in toto*. People say 'Oh, Jones (or Brown, or Robinson, as the case may be) is not an amateur, he's paid;' the fact being that the so-called paid amateur receives the amount of his expenses on the quiet. Looking to the fact that the University Boat Clubs bear the expense of the Oxford and Cambridge crews, there does not seem to be any reason why amateur players should not receive their railway expenses, at any rate, from the Metropolitan Clubs in whose grounds they play. If all men were tarred with the same brush nothing would be thought of this practice; and should an amateur be a wealthy man he can ease his conscience by giving the amount of his railway ticket to the Cricketers' Fund, or, if he pleases, giving it back as a donation to the club for which he plays. It always used to happen at school that one of our best bowlers or batsmen, whom we particularly wanted at Lord's in days gone by, was the son of some poor country parson, who lived a couple of hundred miles from London; and as the youngster

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was too proud to accept his expenses—which act would have been a heinous crime in those days—he was lost to the eleven. No doubt the same thing occurs now in the case of many good amateur players, and if a system was established of paying the bare travelling expenses of all amateurs who resided a long way from the place at which they were wanted in grand matches, a great difficulty would be overcome. There should be a strict definition of the terms 'professional' and 'amateur' cricketers, and when the rule is once made it ought to be impartially adhered to.

The great charm about most amateur players is that they look as if they were playing for pleasure, and there is the absence of that lassitude which some professionals cannot help showing occasionally. The reason is obvious. A gentleman player, with plenty of money, steps into a first-class carriage, and runs up by express, and reads his paper, and smokes his cigar, and feels little or no fatigue. On the contrary, the player, who is trying to save some money for the winter, must travel as cheap as he can, and live as cheap as he can, and the many days and nights spent on the railway must tell on him during a long season.

It seems to me now that the gentlemen, as a rule, trust more to the middle-paced head-bowling and to their field than to bowling wickets. This was not so thirty years ago, when round-arm bowling was getting into perfection. A great number of first-rate amateur bowlers cropped up, who dealt destruction to the players' wickets. There were Alfred Mynn and Alfred Lowth, called 'Alfred the Great' and 'Alfred the Little.' The last-named

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gentleman bowled in Gentlemen *v.* Players when he was a boy at Winchester, and took nine wickets, and bowled for many years for Oxford and Hants. He is specially mentioned in Mr. Felix's book on the bat, and was declared by Caldecourt up to the day of his death to have been the best gentleman bowler he ever saw. I cannot be mistaken as to the excellence of Mr. Lowth's bowling, and also of his contemporary, Mr. Nicholas Darnell, as I was at the time a fag at Winchester, and was constantly long stop to both. Mr. Darnell's bowling was very fast round arm, somewhat higher, but in the style of Mr. Hervey Fellowes' bowling. Mr. Lowth's was left arm round with a tremendous break. These two gentlemen bowled eighteen wickets in the Winchester and Harrow Match, 1836, and the Harrow Eleven scored twelve off the bat in one innings and fourteen in the other, the rest being extras. I have seen Mr. Darnell send a bail six and thirty yards, measured from the wicket. Mr. Lowth's bowling would frequently pitch two feet wide of the off stump, and break right across to the inner stump, and the fact of his bowling seven men in Gentlemen *v.* Players in 1836, and having two caught off him, is pretty clear evidence of his excellence. Mr. Darnell also bowled in Gentlemen *v.* Players; but probably not much, as one wicket only appears to his name. There were Sir Frederick Bathurst, Messrs. George Young, Marcon, Cyril Randolph, Fellowes, Willes, and many others, who all bowled well below the shoulder, and went straight for the wicket, and the score-books will show that they did so with much success.

The only painful exhibition I ever saw in amateur

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cricket was when Dr. Grace tried to pitch a ball right up in the air so as to drop on the bails, leaving the batsman powerless. It *was* within the *law* of cricket, but that was all, and fortunately there seems no probability of the revival of the practice. There is no doubt but that during the last few years some of the gentlemen's batting has been and is now equal to any of the players. Mr. Gilbert Grace, The Hon. C. G. Lyttleton, Mr. Maitland, Mr. B. B. Cooper, Mr. Mitchell and Mr. C. Buller; the Messrs. V. E. and I. D. Walker, and others too numerous to name, have played as fine innings as ever were seen, and some of Mr. Mitchell's leg hits were as good as George Parr's used to be.

There is one style of amateur whose example is not worthy of imitation, and that is the amateur gallery player. When once an amateur player tries to make himself *the* conspicuous man on a public ground, and is inordinately anxious for applause and to create sensation, he ceases to be a *gentleman* player. The bad points crop out by his taking advantage of a little brief authority when he happens to be made captain, by his having on the tip of his tongue the thieves' Latin of the low newspapers; and, meet him where you will, he is sure to bore you about his average.

Mark the difference of the real gentleman player when he is playing for his county, and happens to be captain. See how earnestly he sits down with the best professional player on the side, and arranges his match. You can tell in a moment that he is playing for his side only, and not thinking about himself; and the confidence which his brother members of his eleven have in him is unmistakable

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to anyone who watches the match, as the dead silence in the field and the ready movements of the men at a motion of his hand prove the fact beyond doubt. There is no jealousy about Tom or Bill being put in first or last, or being put on to bowl early or kept back till late.

Amateurs of this stamp are worthy to play the game, and the game is worthy of them. May there always be many such, and may they have plenty of money, time, health, and happiness to promote the noble game of cricket.

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CHAPTER XIV.

THE VILLAGE GREEN.

Painters of the past delighted to picture our forefathers and great-grandmothers sitting under a broad spreading tree, whilst the lads and lasses danced on the village green to the sound of pipe and tabor. Pictures of this kind are intended to represent 'Merrie England' a century and more ago, but I strongly doubt the truth of them; and from records of the past, especially records gleaned from the old novels of Fielding and Smollett, I much doubt whether the men and women of the period to which these old pictures point did not more frequently dance on the gallows than under the greenwood tree.

Probably many of these pictures were painted from the description in Goldsmith's 'Deserted Village;' but it must be remembered that the real scene of the 'Deserted Village' was in Ireland, where from time immemorial down to the present day there has never been wanting in that country, a brave boy 'to take the *flooor*' and a pretty girl to *fut* it with him; but there does not seem to be much authentic information about the existence of the mazy dance in the times to which the pictures allude, and the chances are that the double cut and

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shuffle in a public-house was much more likely to have been the dance of the period than the graceful dance on the village green. The real sport in many an old village, for a century past at least, has been cricket, and it seems now as if the village green is *par excellence* the proper home for cricket.

The first requirement for good village green cricket is that the village itself should be a *bonâ fide* village, not an outlying colony full of cockney villas inhabited by stuck-up people. There ought to be at least two or three old fogeys who attend every match and declare there never were such days as when Squire A or Squire B, as the case may be, was alive; there must be an inn where the cricketers have met within the memory of all the oldest inhabitants; I prefer a green where the stocks are still standing, and I would rather not play at all if there is no parish beadle. I think a village more perfect where a feud is always going on in the vestry about the roads, or a pump, or an organ (for parishioners hate one another more about a church question than anything), or some other bone of contention which draws out the eloquence of stump orators at the vestry.

The great charm of a good village green is that it belongs to everybody, from the lord of the manor down to the raggedest little boy in the parish, and the consequence is that cricket grows like mushrooms. Little urchins of six years old try their mimic round-arm bowling, sometimes with a stone; and when this is the case, every true cricketer, after satisfying himself that the stone has not been used for the purpose of getting a new ball, ought at once to buy a good tennis ball

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for the rising generation. A tennis ball to children is as large as a cricket ball is to a man, and it is not hard enough to frighten them. I have known cases where a small boy, on catching sight of a good natured fool, has pocketed the ball and substituted a stone, in hopes of getting sixpence for a new ball. It is well in all cases to examine the stone, and see if it is clean or dirty. If it is clean, be sure that the boy is trying to do you, and has the ball in his pocket; so refuse the coin, and write the boy down in your mind as a future prosperous Director in some Joint Stock Company (Limited).

There is probably no county in England with so many commons, open heaths, and village greens as Surrey, and most of the good county players come from them. When one or two good men have been taken away for the county, there is a mania amongst the young players to come out too, and by offering their services as bowlers to amateurs in the neighbourhood, and by playing in village matchcs, their talent is soon discovered if it exists.

To my mind a really good match against a strong eleven, on a village green, is the perfection of cricket, especially when the rival eleven come early, and are ready to commence at eleven o'clock.

We have all the excitement of preparing the wicket the night before, and seeing the tents and flags put up the next morning. The schoolboys reluctantly obey the summons of the nine o'clock bell, and the butcher and baker and newspaper lads are an unconscionably long time in executing their early messages. But after dinner is the time. The ladies' tent is full, and the business men have come

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back from London, and all the villagers are out, and the scene is just like that described so graphically by Nyren, in the days of the Hambledon Club. I never think the ring is perfect until at least a couple of butchers, in professional blue, are in the balcony of the inn, and a stout gentleman's coachman or two, with top-boots and a long yard of clay in his mouth, amongst the crowd. They light up the scene to my eye. No doubt we cheer our own side pretty much, but that is only human nature. What a glorious thing it is to make a left-handed catch at short slip then, or to get well hold of an old cover-point hit, or a leg half volley clear of the field. Don't they 'give a man his name,' then? as they used to say in the days of the ring: and remember, that we may fairly glory in applause so obtained, as we are fighting before our own villagers against invaders. Depend upon it that the real spirit of cricket is best seen in good village matches, especially when there is good professional bowling on each side, five-ball overs, and no time wasted. Many a time have I seen a good match finished on a village green after a side had won on the first innings, owing to a good fellow, who was captain, having his men ready dressed, and sending them in one after another as the wickets fell, preferring to play the match out and lose it sooner than snatch half a victory by claiming it on the first innings. Men of this stamp lose nothing by acting in the true spirit of cricket, and when they come back again in the following year the welcome they receive from all, rich and poor, proves how their conduct is appreciated. And if the strangers, captained by men of this class, pull

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a good match off, the villagers all say the same thing: 'Ah, we don't mind being beaten by them, for they are gentlemen, everyone of them.'

But when it unfortunately happens that a slang sharp-practice captain brings an eleven on to a village green, his position is not an enviable one. How the lads of the village chaff him if he misses a ball, and cheer if he gets out with a cypher to his name? There is generally a substratum of rough justice in a crowd, but a quiet modest cricketer who does his best has nothing to fear go where he will.

There was a bad time when a village cricket match was an occasion for hard drinking, and boisterous evenings afterwards; but that was in the days when village holidays were few and far between. There is now no need to shut the windows at a cricket supper for fear ribald songs should be heard on the green. If morals are not better than they were, manners are more decent.

A glorious old cricketer, who used to bowl in matches on a lovely village green in Surrey, composed a cricketing song, and dedicated it to me, years ago, and gave me the MS. I shall reproduce it verbatim; for though, as appears by the spelling, it is the production of an illiterate man, I never read anything which more graphically describes a villagers' holiday. The poet was a man over fifty years of age, and was a rare good underhand bowler or trundler, and when he played a match he put on his Sunday trousers, which were of drab cloth, with a square piece of black in the seat of them, and part of the back view of him represented the stern windows of a frigate:—

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CRICKETERS.

Of all sports and pastimes
That happens in the year,
To cricketing I'm shure theare's
None can compare;
Then to cricketing we'll go,
Then to cricketing we'll go,
Then to cricketing we'll go, my boys,
To cricketing we'll go.

Straightway into the field,
In hast we do repair,
All for some sweet amusement
To breath some holsome air,
Then to cricketing, &c.

The bats and ball they whear brought forth,
Likewise the humpiers to,
And when the game it does begin,
The score begins to grow,
Then to cricketing, &c.

Then when our game is over,
Our supper then we'll get,
With good roast beef, some ham, and veal,
Likewise some heavy wet,
Then to stuffing we will go, &c.*

Then when our supper is over,
The cloth it shall be cleared,
We drink a health unto our frends,
And drink a joavell cheer,
Then a drinking we will go, &c.

The pipes upon the tabell,
They looks so nice and white,
The tobacco follows after,
It is our art's delight,
Then to smoaking we will go, &c.

* It is a positive truth that a clergyman of his own views of religion objected to this as being in praise of *gluttony!* This reminds one of the objection raised by the Exeter Hall party to 'Sally in our Alley' being sung, as one verse alluded to the pleasure of the two lovers taking a Sunday walk.

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At last we take a bottell,
We prattell, laugh and sing,
We drink a health unto our frends,
And so God bless the Queen,
With a hip hip, hip, hur raw, &c.

In village matches, and in other matches too, there is great difficulty in making men run well, and in avoiding feelings of disappointment and jealousy about the arrangement of the order of going in. A captain must have plenty of moral courage, or he is no good; but some years of experience have convinced me that if a captain is a fogey (like your humble servant), it is not a bad plan to get some cheerful fellow, who is a good bat, to go in No. 10, and go in himself last, in the first innings; at any rate, one thing is gained, which is that, if the last man but one keeps his wicket up, and is joined last by the captain, there is no chance of the wicket going wrong owing to indifference or sulkiness on the part of a batsman; and it not unfrequently happens that the field get rather careless, as 'there is only one more wicket to go,' and the last man gets well set before they dream of it, and a lot of runs are added to the score.

I shall never forget, in a Winchester and Harrow match some years ago, ninety-nine runs were got after the last man went in. Mr. Shipley, on the Winchester side, was picked up on the ground at Lord's as an 'emergency' eleventh, not being in the eleven, and he went in last, and joined Mr. Attfield, and between them ninety-nine runs were scored; or as a slang penny-a-liner would say, 'the two last gents wrote up a century bar one.'

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CHAPTER XV.

CAPTAINCY OF MATCHES.

THE first duty of a captain is to set an example of good temper and perseverance, and to keep up the pluck of his eleven.

The two worst styles of captains I have ever known are the noisy captains and the silent captains; the least nuisance of the two is the silent captain.

The noisy captain is always 'jawing,' and whenever he opens his mouth no one attends much to him; 'Will you go deeper, Brown, when I tell you?' 'Robinson, come nearer,' and remarks of this kind, are always on the noisy captain's lips. It never enters into his imagination to move his field quietly, or to send a message to any particular man by another of the eleven, whilst the men are going over, but his tongue is like the clapper of a bell.

The silent captain is almost as bad; he has not the sense to speak, if he sees two men running for a catch, by shouting to one man to stop and to let another take the ball, or to call to a wicket-keeper to pull a stump out if he sees the bails are off, or to tell a man to back up behind the bowler's wicket if a fiver is hit and the batsmen are not running regularly.

Amongst the best cricketers I have always remarked that the captain's voice is never heard

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except to give some word of command on an emergency, and with such a captain the field are always on the listen and ready to obey.

In order to get over some of the difficulties of captaincy of a village team I drew up a rough code of rules, specially with reference to the weak points in elevens. I should not reproduce them here had not Mr. Felix—whom I claim to have been one of the greatest cricketers who ever lived, and to be *now* the greatest living authority on the science of the game—kindly given great attention to my rough draft. He wrote to me eight sides of note paper of amendments and suggestions, by the aid of which I remodelled the original; and I may here thank him for the kind advice which he has given to me from time to time, pending the writing of this little work. I know the rules are open to much criticism, but I am sure that those portions of them which Mr. Felix has approved must be good; so to him be all the glory of what is good, and all the blame of what is bad must rest with me. In reproducing them I must tell the reader that after thirty-three years off and on in the cricket-field I feel myself now in all humility a modest learner of the great and noble science of cricket, so I anticipate Young England's 'pooh-poohing' by this remark.

TWENTY GOLDEN RULES FOR YOUNG CRICKETERS.

Compiled from instructions received from time to time from celebrated Cricketers, and from books of well-known writers, as well as from a personal experience of thirty-three years in the cricket-field.

I. Go in when you are told by your captain cheerfully, whether first or last on the list; it is his fault, and not yours, if you are put in in the wrong place.

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II. Think only of winning the match, and not of your own innings or average; sink self and play for your side.

III. Make up your mind that every ball may take your wicket, and play very steady for the first over or two, even if the bowling is not first-rate; if prepared for defence, you are doubly prepared to hit a loose ball.

IV. Except under *special* circumstances (Vide Rule XIV.), never run a sharp run, or run one instead of two; or two instead of three, for the sake of getting the next hit.

V. Be equally anxious to run your partner's runs, and every bye you safely can (although the byes do not appear to your name in the score), as you are to run for your own hits.

VI. When the bowling is very quick, and long stop is a long way behind, arrange with your partner, if possible, to run a bye for every ball, until you drive your opponent to take a man from the field to back up behind the bowler.

VII. If the field get wild, take every advantage you can, by drawing for over-throws; if the field once begin throwing at the wickets, their discipline is gone. In carrying out this and Rule VI. great judgment is required, as you are backing your steadiness against your enemy's anxiety.

VIII. Remember the batsman has five things to trust to, viz., his brains, his eyes, his arms, his legs, and his tongue, and he *must* use them *all*.

IX. The striker ought to be stone-blind to every ball which passes his wicket, or is hit behind his wicket; he is a blind man, and the non-striker is the blind man's dog, and ought to lead him straight. The same rule applies to the non-striker in respect to balls driven past him or out of his sight.

X. The man who has the ball in sight ought to keep his partner informed of his movements. *Ex. grat.*, the non-striker (who ought to back up directly the ball is out of the bowler's hand) should cry 'not yet,' if the run for a hit behind the wicket or bye is not certain; and then cry 'hold' if there is no run; or 'one,' 'two,' or 'three,' as the case may be, if there is a bye, or a hit past the field. So for a hit to deep middle off or middle on out of non-striker's sight, the striker ought to cry 'go back,' if there is no run, or 'one,' &c., as the case may be, if there is a run. After the first run made the player whose wicket is most in danger has the call.

XI. In the case of a hit within view of both batsmen, such as a ball hit slowly to deep cover point, either batsman has the right to say 'no,' if called, for both wickets are in equal danger.

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XII. After drawing your partner past re-call, you are bound to go, and run yourself out if necessary, be you who you may.

XIII. No matter what you think of the umpire's decision, if he gives you out go away and make the best of it.

XIV. If the batsman is well set, and is making a score, and a few runs are wanted, and there is a weak tail to the eleven, he is right when a fresh man comes in, in trying to 'jockey the over,' and get the ball; this is not selfishness, as he is throwing away a chance of a 'not out,' and may pull the match out of the fire.

XV. If the bowling is very slow and the batsman makes up his mind to go in at it, he should not give the bowler a hint by any movement what he is after, but stand like a statue till the ball is out of the bowler's hand.

XVI. If the batsman *does* go in and means hitting, let him go far enough, and right in towards the pitch of the ball, so as to catch it at full pitch or half volley, and hit with all his might and main; if stumped, he may just as well be for four yards off his ground as four inches.

XVII. If a batsman either does not know, or will not practise the rules of running, his partner is quite at liberty to use his own judgment, and to turn round and look after the byes, hits behind wickets, &c., and if a bad runner insists on running himself out, his partner may let him commit suicide as soon as he pleases.

XVIII. Never keep your partner in doubt by prowling about outside your wicket, mooning backwards and forwards over the crease like a dancing bear, or a mute outside a gin-shop, doubtful whether he is going in or out; a silent 'wanderer' is even more dangerous than a noisy bad runner.

XIX. Remember, cricket is an amusement and manly sport intended for good fellowship, and not as a vehicle for envy, hatred, malice, or uncharitableness. If you have any complaint against your captain, tell him to his face *quietly* what you think; but do not form conspiracies against him behind his back. The grumblers and mischief makers are *always* the greatest muffs, and the worst enemies of cricket.

THE ONE GOLDEN RULE FOR FIELDING.

XX. Take the place assigned to you (assuming it is within your capacity), and give your whole mind to the game, from the delivery of the first ball to the fall of the last wicket. If

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you make a mistake, try and mend it; many a good field has dropped an easy catch and picked up the ball, and thrown it in and run a man out. Remember the backing-up. A fieldsman is not a sentry on duty, but is always a fighting soldier, and if a fiver is hit to the off, long leg *even* can go into the battle and render his aid by backing up. Every hit which is made is the business of the whole eleven in the field, until the ball is dead. A man who will not attend unless a ball comes near him, had much better be in the tent smoking his pipe.

I cannot resist publishing a cricket bill, which would have rejoiced the heart of old Nyren and made the old Hambledon Club sing with joy. We thought for some time that the fairies must have come out of a night, for we found our cricket ground cut up in the middle, and could not imagine who could have done it until the following bill was circulated. It is a fact that not only do the shop-boys play matches at 4 A.M., but they play real good cricket, too, with a fair promise of bringing out county colts. The nicknames remind one of cricket 150 years ago.

'NOVEL MATCH.—A Cricket Match between the Upper Mitcham Early Rising Association *versus* Lower Mitcham Peep O'Day Club, will be played on Lower Mitcham Green on Wednesday Mornings, July 6th and 13th, 1870. The Players will be selected from the following:—

UPPER MITCHAM.	LOWER MITCHAM.
W. Hotspur	F. Bubb
W. Eighty-two	A. J. Brown
H. Bourne	H. Sugar
A. Tinneley	Doctor Nicholls
W. Ironside	W. Poyner
The Dwarf	C. Newell
J. Arthur	H. Hendon
W. Gardener	C. Russell
F. Nicholls	H. Langridge
Chippendale	J. Seymour
The Early Bird	A. Knapp

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Wickets to be Pitched at 3.30 A.M. Play to commence at 4 *precisely*. Stumps to be drawn at 7 o'clock each Morning.'

I have kept clear of anecdotes hitherto, but I must relate two or three little incidents which occurred in clubs with which I used to play twenty years ago and more. We used to delight in going thirty miles out for a match, especially if we had a dozen miles by road. On one of these happy holidays a member of our club, who was called the 'wet blanket,' to our surprise volunteered to accompany us. He was a very strictly religious and sincere man, and was suspected of preaching on a Sunday at Little Bethel. We all liked him, for we knew he was honest; but he kept us in strict order. One of our eleven, X. was notorious for getting into a row wherever he went, and someone had to keep watch over him at dinner to see that he did not over-sherry himself. The landlord of the village inn who supplied our dinners was an enterprising fellow, and laid in a stock of very fine sparling cyder at 1s. 6d. a bottle, and our moral man, old J., complimented him highly on it, and took occasion to remark that cyder *purified the blood*, and he was always vexed to see young fellows swilling beer and sherry. When the match was over, as usual, we had to look for X., who came staggering up the village over-sherried, with a black eye and cut lip, having fought a gipsy who kept some knock-'em downs.

Whilst we were looking after X. the landlord came up with a long face, informing us that old J. was seriously ill in his bar-parlour. It was true; the poor old boy had purified his blood with the bottled cyder, and being unaccustomed to drinking,

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was as drunk as 'a boiled owl on corn whiskey,' as Artemus Ward used to say. He sat in a chair with a woeful expression, and kept on saying, 'Gentlemen, I am ashamed of my disgraceful position. Am I man?'

We really were sorry for him, and put him inside the coach, when up came X., who of course wanted to drive. What was to be done? X. was not fit to go outside, and we tried to put him inside. 'No,' said X., '*I'm blessed if I go with old J.; I am not of the same religion as he is.*'

Poor old J. seldom appeared amongst us again on the cricket-ground, but we never chaffed him about an incident which he took so much to heart.

All the way home, on that memorable day, whenever we stopped, he kept on asking the idlers about the coach, '*Am I a man? I am ashamed of my disgraceful position.*'

A boy at Winchester was an invaluable assistant to those who were going in for examinations, by getting up difficult points in some ludicrous way, either in the shape of a comic song, mock heroic verse, or some other attractive form. One question was always asked in the divinity examinations, and that was, 'Give the names and ages of the Patriarchs.' H—— was equal to the occasion, and as we were all mad about cricket at school and used to read the scores in *Bell's Life* carefully, H—— made out the list of the Patriarchs as a cricket eleven, putting down their ages as the number of runs, and adapting the game to the then present time. Thus, he commenced with—

Methuseleh, b. Mynn	967
Noah, st. Box	950

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In this way he made out an entire list, and put down Enoch as '*not out.*'

One more story and I have done.

On starting for a match a note came from one of our members, who was our best bowler, stating that he had a pressing engagement in the City with the Lord Mayor, which he must keep, but he hoped to come down by the 12 o'clock train. Poor R. never came, as the Lord Mayor pressed him to pass a few weeks with Mr. Cope, the then Governor of Newgate, from whose custody he was shown the way to the dock at the Old Bailey, and subsequently transferred to a convict ship, and left his native land for life. He had committed a series of very bad forgeries. Let us hope that he has long since obtained his freedom, and is now a liberal supporter of cricket in Australia, for he was a rare fine bowler, and a merry fellow as ever went in a cricket-ground.

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CHAPTER XV. (AND LAST).

'THE BALLS ARE OVER.'

Some of the umpires of the present day corrupt the four words which are written at the beginning of the chapter into '*Ver*,' just as the butcher-boy announces his arrival by saying '*Cher*.'

I introduced myself to the reader as a curly-headed little boy about six, who was aroused by a bee bumping against a window-pane; and I fancy that anyone who has travelled along with me through this book, must have come to the conclusion that I have now what is called in Scotland 'a bee in my bonnet.'

There is more hope of my getting over my insanity than there was, as I feel that I have said all that I had to say; I have talked about every kind of cricketer, I believe, except the universally surly man, and the man who tries to make for himself a local position by cricket. To say much about them is waste of good ink. The game is too good for them. In writing these chapters on cricket I have had one feeling throughout, which has been to stand boldly up for the excellence of the past without disparaging the cricket of the present. In proof of this, the reader is referred to the Appendix. The great anxiety to decry the per-

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formances of men of the past and to claim all excellence for men of the present, always savours to me of ingratitude towards the noblemen and gentlemen and professionals who added so many storeys to the house in which we live. We might just as well say that the Duke of Wellington was no general, and that Nelson was no sailor, because they did not live in the days of breech-loading guns, minie rifles, and steam navy; but I rather fancy that the general who turned quietly to his staff in the middle of the Battle of Waterloo, and said, 'This is hard pounding gentlemen;' and the little one-armed sailor who put his glass to his blind eye, and said to his flag lieutenant, 'Damn it Foley, I can't see the signal to retreat,' were not unlikely men to prove useful in any age.

Why, then, I ask once more, are we to believe that Englishmen, made of as good stuff as ourselves at any rate, who for a hundred years past played with a ball similar to ours, at a game also similar to ours, and with a bat of the same kind though of a somewhat different shape, all failed in attaining as great excellence in any point of the game, as certain men of the present day?

A writer in the Sporting Magazine, of 1827, when the round-arm bowling controversy was at its height, writes: '*the more talk the less conversion.*' Perhaps this is so in my case; and at any rate, brother cricketers, amateurs, and professionals, whatever our difference of opinion may be, let us shake hands now, and if we agree to differ, let us also agree in one common creed, and let our creed be this:

Cricket is only worthy of the name when it is

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played by two elevens consisting of true and honest fellows, who without fear, favour, or jealousy, are ready to make a long day's fight for the victory of their side.

I am not sure that I should not claim any cricket brother as most orthodox if he had courage to add to the creed after the word 'side,' 'especially if they burned the score-book and notched on a stick.'

And now my friend, Mr. Penny-a-liner, whose accounts of matches are fairly accurate, but whose slang I protest against, my anger is over, and let us good-humouredly shake hands too.

So let us bring out the tents and flags, and take down our bats once more. If the reader puts down this book with a groan of disappointment, he has a whole season of cricket before him to put him in good humour again.

'BROTHER CRICKETERS, FAREWELL.'

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APPENDIX.

RETROSPECT OF THE GENTLEMEN *v.* PLAYERS MATCH.

REPRINTED FROM 'BELL'S LIFE,' 1869.

WHILST the All-England Eleven were earning their cheap laurels in the North against Twenty-Two of Staveley, where 44 wickets fell for three and under, 26 men going out for a round 0 each—eight of those round 0's being scored to the Players—it is not inopportune to look back to a display of cricket in the South, which, if ever equalled, has never been surpassed since the game of cricket was known. We are happy to say that the four North men, Summers,* Rowbottom, Emmett, and Wootton, contributed, in their different capacities, their full share towards the wonderful lesson in cricket which was given in the Gentlemen and Players' match at Kennington Oval to an enormous crowd of spectators; and we shall be surprised if they do not tell their friends at home that they never played before a more impartial ring. When we call to mind that 2,145 balls were bowled for two wides, and that 245 overs were maiden, that out of 44 wickets that fell 27 cricketers had double figures after their names; that there were eleven innings of 10 and under 20, six of 20 and under 40, seven of 40 and under 50, two of 52 each, and one of 83; and bearing in mind that the aggregate number of runs scored was 915, in about 16 or 17 hours' play, against magnificent fielding and bowling on both both sides, we think

* Poor Summers was killed at Lord's in the summer of 1870.

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that we are right in saying that we second the opinion of many of the best judges of the game, who declared that the Gentlemen and Players' match was the finest ever witnessed. It was a game in which men of all ages shone conspicuously. Mr. Buchanan, quite a veteran in a cricket point of view, with his slow head-bowling, disposed of eight players; and Mr. Absolom, a Cambridge undergraduate, was answerable for the death of nine of his foes, independently of other aid rendered by his brilliant fielding. Young Mr. Thornton, who was a boy at Eton last year, and who, perhaps, displayed slightly the fault of a very young player in his over anxiety for hitting and running, literally electrified the spectators by his dash, and the certainty of his fielding in the long field; and Mr. A. Lubbock seemed to consider it an ordinary matter of business to throw up from the palings behind the scorers' booth to the middle of the wickets time after time. Mr. Green, who was his opposite neigh bour in the field, was equally conspicuous; in fact, these two gentlemen, when not intercepted by the crowd, practically 'disestablished' fivers on the Oval, and many a hit only earned three for which five have been hitherto constantly scored. We pause for a moment—not in anger or reproach, but in love—to ask the Surrey Club to remember that what a young 'Gentleman' can do a young 'Player' can do, and to remind the celebrated old county that the time has come for a very large infusion of young blood in the Surrey Eleven. Mr. W. Grace was not fortunate in the number of his wickets, but his maiden overs show how good his bowling was. Mr. B. B. Cooper worked hard at the wicket, and when we bear in mind that Mr. V. E. Walker was point, and Mr. I. D. Walker mid-wicket, our readers may take it for granted that all that could be shown in fielding was shown. To say that the Gentlemen never missed a catch would not be true, for once or twice the ball came to the ground, through whose hands it does not much matter; but it may fairly be said that, with the exception of one very bad over-throw for five at a critical time

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(by whom we do not say), there was hardly a bit of really bad cricket in the field on the Gentlemen's side; and as the Gentleman who was guilty of the over-throw showed a fine and patient defence in his second innings, under the disadvantage of little or no practice this year, let us not mark him by name. Now turn we to the Players. Their bowling was literally superb, and Pooley stood behind the wicket like Tom Lockyer of old. Wootton, Emmett, Silcock (Essex), and Willsher were never straighter in their pitch; and considering that they only got three wickets on Friday, from after dinner-time till seven, at a cost of 193 runs, our readers must imagine how great was the batting of Messrs. Cooper, Grace, Lubbock, and Walker, who made up most of the figures. Mr. Pauncefote contributed 11 of the number, and remembering what he had against him, double figures were well earned. One player must be specially singled out for fielding, and that player is Summers. He was in the long-field, and it was a case of Daft over again when Daft was at his best, and most deservedly he was frequently applauded. Summer's batting also was very fine, but we affectionately request him, should he visit Canterbury during the cricket week, to go to the Saracen's Head and smoke a pipe with old Fuller Pilch,* and ask him to tell him the golden rules of running, for certainly he undid some of the great good which he did for his side by running Hearne out very badly, nearly doing the same for Humphrey, and fairly funking his partners by bad judgment in running. Fuller Pilch taught the writer of this article this homely maxim between 20 and 30 years ago:—'The man who can't see the ball after the hit is a blind man; and the man who can see it is a blind man's dog, and must lead him straight.' The man who sees the ball (*ex. gr.*: the non-hitter in case of a leg hit to slip or bye) should call loud, 'Easy one,' 'Sharp two, three, or four,' as the case may be; and having called his partner, and having possibly got him into

* Alas! poor Fuller Pilch is dead too.

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trouble, the caller is bound to *lose his own wicket, and not sacrifice his partner's* if he can. The pluck which the Players showed under the terrible disadvantage of losing three wickets for 19 runs in the second innings was beyond all praise. The fall of Jupp, Humphrey, and Stephenson's wickets for small scores was a damper on the Surrey party; and if Humphrey could only have stood with Pooley, and made one of his brilliant scores as of yore, the spectators in the pavilion would probably have been carted off to Bedlam. When Willsher and Pooley got fairly to work, and the score began to grow, the excitement became painful. When Wootton went last against 62 runs, the general remark was, 'It is all over but the cheering;' but as the telegraph was altered from time to time to 180, 190, 200, and 210, had there been such a thing as universal suffrage, and had Pooley and Wootton put up for a seat in Parliament on any principle or no principle at all, they would have been returned for the county without a poll being demanded. At 6·47 by the pavilion clock 17 runs were wanted in 12 minutes, and two men were in two different minds—Pooley was determined to hit a sixer, Mr. Absolom was bent on having Pooley's wicket. Pooley hit out like a giant of old, but Mr. Absolom pitched him up one a *little* slower than the ball before, and as it happened that the ball did not rise much, Pooley hit over it, and a yell from the Gentlemen's eleven proclaimed their victory, almost before the crowd could see the broken wicket. Too much praise cannot be given to Wootton for the patience which he exhibited, and to Pooley for his desperate efforts to win. Now return we to our text. Can it possibly be hinted to the All-England Eleven, without offence, that they are prostituting cricket in the North by playing, in the middle of the season, gate-matches against pigmies; and that although they cannot add a fresh lustre to the game in excess of that which was shed upon it by the Players at the Oval last week, yet they cannot hope to leave the name of great cricketers behind them subsequent to the date at which they left the South,

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unless they appear on the metropolitan grounds, and win their spurs, as other Northmen do, by pitting themselves against the great gentlemen players of England? No doubt, hard words have been said against some of them by indiscreet persons in public, and no doubt the compliment has been returned in the North; but there is such a maxim as 'Forget and Forgive.' There is only *one* game of cricket, the popularity of which depends on honest, manly conduct; and the most honest and most manly conduct can only be shown by all parties shaking hands, and opposing each other only at the wickets.

THE LAWS OF CRICKET IN 1870.

I. The Ball must weigh not less than five ounces and a half, nor more than five ounces and three-quarters. It must measure not less than nine inches, nor more than nine inches and one-quarter in circumference. At the beginning of each innings, either party may call for a new ball.

II. The Bat must not exceed four inches and one-quarter in the widest part; it must not be more than thirty-eight inches in length.

III. The Stumps must be three in number; twenty-seven inches out of the ground; the Bails eight inches in length; the Stumps of equal and of sufficient thickness to prevent the ball from passing through.

IV. The Bowling Crease must be in a line with the Stumps; six feet eight inches in length; the Stumps in the centre; with a return crease at each end towards the Bowler at right angles.

V. The Popping Crease must be four feet from the Wicket, and parallel to it; unlimited in length, but not shorter than the Bowling Crease.

VI. The Wickets must be pitched opposite to each other by the Umpires, at the distance of twenty-two yards.

VII. It shall not be lawful for either party during a match, without the consent of the other, to alter the ground by rolling, watering, covering, mowing, or beating, except at the commencement of each innings, when the ground shall be swept and rolled

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unless the next side going in object to it. This rule is not meant to prevent the striker from beating the ground with his bat near to the spot where he stands during the innings, nor to prevent the bowler from filling up holes with sawdust, &c., when the ground shall be wet

VIII. After rain the Wickets may be changed with the consent of both parties.

IX. The Bowler shall deliver the ball with one foot on the ground behind the bowling crease, and within the return crease, and shall bowl one over before he change Wickets, which he shall be permitted to do twice in the same innings, and no bowler shall bowl more than two overs in succession.

X. The ball must be bowled. If thrown or jerked the Umpire shall call 'No Ball.'

XI. He may require the Striker at the wicket from which he is bowling to stand on that side of it which he may direct.

XII. If the Bowler shall toss the ball over the Striker's head, or bowl it so wide that in the opinion of the Umpire it shall not be fairly within the reach of the batsman, he shall adjudge one run to the party receiving the innings, either with or without an appeal, which shall be put down to the score of Wide Balls; such ball shall not be reckoned as one of the four balls; but if the Batsman shall by any means bring himself within reach of the ball, the run shall not be adjudged.

XIII. If the Bowler shall deliver a 'No Ball' or a 'Wide Ball,' the Striker shall be allowed as many runs as he can get, and he shall not be put out except by running out. In the event of no run being obtained by any other means, then one run shall be added to score of 'No Balls' or 'Wide Balls,' as the case may be. All runs obtained for 'Wide Balls' to be scored to 'Wide Balls.' The names of the Bowlers who bowl 'Wide Balls' or 'No Balls,' in future to be placed on the score, to show the parties by whom either score is made. If the ball shall first touch any part of Striker's dress or person (except his hands), the Umpire shall call 'Leg Bye.'

XIV. At the beginning of each innings the Umpire shall call 'Play.' From that time to the end of each innings no trial ball shall be allowed to any Bowler.

XV. The Striker is out if either of the bails be bowled off, or if a stump be bowled out of the ground;

XVI. Or, if the ball from the stroke of the bat, or hand, but not the wrist, be held before it touched the ground, although it be hugged to the body of the catcher;

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XVII. Or, if in striking, or at any other time while the ball shall be in play, both his feet shall be over the popping crease, and his wicket put down, except his bat be grounded within it;

XVIII. Or, if in striking at the ball he hit down his wicket;

XIX. Or, if under pretence of running, or otherwise, either of the Strikers prevent a ball from being caught, the Striker of the ball is out;

XX. Or, if the ball be struck, and he wilfully strike it again;

XXI. Or, if in running, the wicket be struck down by a throw, or by the hand or arm (with ball in hand) before his bat (in hand) or some part of his person be grounded over the popping crease. But if both the bails be off, a stump must be struck out of the ground.

XXII. Or, if any part of the Striker's dress knock down the wicket;

XXIII. Or, if the Striker touch or take up the ball while in play, unless at the request of the opposite party;

XXIV. Or, if with any part of his person he stop the ball, which in the opinion of the Umpire at the Bowler's wicket, shall have been pitched in a straight line from it to Striker's wicket, and would have hit it.

XXV. If the players have crossed each other, he that runs for the wicket which is put down is out.

XXVI. A ball being caught, no run shall be reckoned.

XXVII. A Striker being run out, that run which he and his partner were attempting shall not be reckoned.

XXVIII. If a lost ball be called, the Striker shall be allowed six runs; but if more than six shall have been run before lost ball shall have been called, then the Striker shall have all which have been run.

XXIX. After the ball shall have been finally settled in the Wicket-keeper's or Bowler's hand, it shall be considered dead; but when the Bowler is about to deliver the ball, if the Striker at the wicket go outside the popping crease before such actual delivery, the said Bowler may put him out, unless (with reference to the 21st law) his bat in hand, or some part of his person be within the popping crease.

XXX. The Striker shall not retire from his wicket and return to it to complete his innings after another has been in, without the consent of the opposite party.

XXXI. No substitute shall in any case be allowed to stand out or run between wickets for another person without the consent of the opposite party; and in case any person shall be

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allowed to run for another, the Striker shall be out if either he or his substitute be off the ground in manner mentioned in laws 17 and 21, while the ball is in play.

XXXII. In all cases where a substitute shall be allowed, the consent of the opposite party shall also be obtained as to the person to act as substitute, and the place in the field which he shall take.

XXXIII. If any Fieldsman stop the ball with his hat, the ball shall be considered dead, and the opposite party shall add five runs to their score; if any be run they shall have five in all.

XXXIV. The ball having been hit, the Striker may guard his wicket with his bat, or with any part of his body except his hands; that the 23rd law may not be disobeyed.

XXXV. The Wicket-keeper shall not take the ball for the purpose of stumping until it have passed the wicket; he shall not move until the ball be out of the Bowler's hand; he shall not by any noise incommode the Striker; and if any part of his person be over or before the wicket, although the ball hit it, the Striker shall not be out.

XXXVI. The Umpires are the sole judges of fair or unfair play; and all disputes shall be determined by them, each at his own wicket; but in case of a catch which the Umpire at the wicket bowled from cannot see sufficiently to decide upon, he may apply to the other Umpire, whose opinion shall be conclusive.

XXXVII. The Umpires in all matches shall pitch fair wickets; and the parties shall toss up for choice of innings. The Umpires shall change wickets, after each party has had one innings.

XXXVIII. They shall allow two minutes for each Striker to come in, and ten minutes between each innings. When the Umpire shall call 'Play,' the party refusing to play shall lose the match.

XXXIX. They are not to order a Striker out unless appealed to by the adversaries;

XL. But if one of the Bowler's feet be not on the ground behind the bowling crease and within the return crease when he shall deliver the ball, the Umpire at his wicket, unasked, must call 'No Ball.

XLI. If either of the Strikers run a short run, the Umpire must call 'One Short.'

XLII. No Umpire shall be allowed to bet.

XLIII. No Umpire is to be changed during a match, unless with the consent of both parties, except in the case of violation of 42nd law; than either party may dismiss the transgressor.

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XLIV. After the delivery of four balls the Umpire must call 'Over,' but not until the ball shall be finally settled in the Wicket-keeper's or Bowler's hand; the ball shall then be considered dead; nevertheless, if an idea be entertained that either of the Strikers is out, a question may be put previously to, but not after, the delivery of the next ball.

XLV. The Umpire must take especial care to call 'No Ball' instantly upon delivery; 'Wide Ball' as soon as it shall pass the Striker.

XLVI. The Players who go in second shall follow their innings, if they have obtained eighty runs less than their antagonists, except in all matches limited to only one day's play, when the number shall be limited to sixty instead of eighty.

XLVII. When one of the Strikers shall have been put out, the use of the bat shall not be allowed to any person until the next Striker shall come in.

THE LAWS OF SINGLE WICKET.

I. When there shall be less than five Players on a side, bounds shall be placed twenty-two yards each in a line from the off and leg-stump.

II. The ball must be hit before the bounds to entitle the Striker to run, which run cannot be obtained unless he touch the bowling stump or crease in a line with his bat, or some part of his person, or go beyond them, returning to the popping crease as at Double Wicket, according to the 21st law.

III. When the Striker shall hit the ball, one of his feet must be on the ground, and behind the popping crease, otherwise the Umpire shall call 'No Hit.'

IV. When there shall be less than five Players on a side, neither Byes nor Overthrows shall be allowed, nor shall the Striker be caught out behind the wicket, nor stumped out.

V. The Fieldsman must return the ball so that it shall cross the play between the wicket and the bowling stump, or between the bowling stump and the bounds; the Striker may run till the ball be so returned.

VI. After the Striker shall have made one run, if he start again he must touch the bowling stump, and turn before the ball cross the play to entitle him to another.

VII. The Striker shall be entitled to three runs for lost ball,

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and the same number for ball stopped with hat, with reference to the 28th and 33rd laws of Double Wicket.

VIII. When there shall be more than four Players on a side there shall be no bounds. All Hits, Byes, and Overthrows, shall then be allowed.

IX. The Bowler is subject to the same laws as at Double Wicket.

X. No more than one minute shall be allowed between each ball.

BETS.

I. No bet upon any match is payable unless it be played out or given up.

II. If the runs of one player be betted against those of another, the bet depends on the first innings unless otherwise specified.

III. If the bet be made on both innings, and one party beat the other in one innings, the runs of the first shall determine it.

IV. If the other party go in a second time, then the bet must be determined by the number on the score.

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