

CRICKET

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Cricket by R. H. Lyttelton

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R. H. LYTTTELTON

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C R I C K E T

BY

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AUTHOR OF

"CRICKET" IN THE BADMINTON LIBRARY



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DUCKWORTH & CO.

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CONTENTS

NO.	PAGE
I. BATTING	7
II. BOWLING	23
III. FIELDING	37
IV. GENTLEMEN AND PLAYERS	51
V. THE AUSTRALIANS	66
VI. CAPTAINCY — UMPIRING — CRICKET REFORM	81
VII. GIANTS OF THE GAME	94
VIII. UNIVERSITY CRICKET MATCHES	110

CRICKET

I

BATTING

CRICKET may for descriptive purposes be divided into two separate classes: (1) Batting, (2) Bowling and Fielding. There are certain conditions of wicket when the attacking party may be said to be the batsmen and the defending party the bowlers; on other conditions of wicket exactly the contrary state of things is brought about. In a hot summer, when the wicket is true and fast, English bowlers can bowl a good length, but few can turn the ball or cause it to come at different speeds from the ground when delivered at the same pace before reaching the ground. The batsman has, therefore, comparatively an easy task, and

instead of devoting his mind to merely keeping his wicket from falling, *i.e.* to defensive purposes, he attacks, and makes run-getting his primary object; but on a soft, caking wicket the bowler has a good time of it, and becomes the attacking party, while the ordinary run of batsmen have to defend. In the present chapter, therefore, I propose to treat of batting under two distinct heads: first, when the wicket is true and hard, and against the bowlers; and second, when the wicket is soft and tricky, and in favour of the bowlers.

Thirty years ago wickets generally were more in favour of bowlers than they are now, for the mowing machine and the heavy roller make modern wickets like billiard tables. Whereas on the old grounds you had to prepare your mind for an occasional bumping ball as well as a dead shooter, now, in years like 1896, for instance, you can assume that the ball will come true and of a certain altitude, and may play accordingly.

A batsman can generally tell what the