

**THE CRICKET-BAT AND HOW TO USE IT:
A TREATISE ON THE GAME OF CRICKET.
WITH PRACTICAL AND SCIENTIFIC
INSTRUCTIONS IN BATTING, BOWLING,
AND FIELDING: THE LAWS OF CRICKET,
MATCH-PLAYING, SINGLE-WICKET**

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The Cricket-Bat and How to Use It: A Treatise on the Game of Cricket. With Practical and Scientific Instructions in Batting, Bowling, and Fielding: The Laws of Cricket, Match-Playing, Single-Wicket by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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The Laws of Cricket,

MATCH-PLAYING, SINGLE-WICKET, &c.

BY

AN OLD CRICKETER.

LONDON:
BAILY BROTHERS, CORNHILL.

1861.

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P R E F A C E.

THOUGH Cricketing is one of the most popular games of the present age, there are fewer works of authority upon the subject than upon any other of our English recreations. The Author, therefore, ventures to hope, that in sending forth this little volume (the result of long and devoted experience), it may be found worthy of a place in the ranks of approved treatises on the National Sports and Pastimes of England.

London, 1861.

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THE CRICKET-BAT;

AND HOW TO USE IT.

THE HISTORY OF THE GAME OF CRICKET.

"Lo! cricketing its fame extends like raylines from the sun,
If the round world has claim to ends, thither its courses run;
The stumps are raised far off and wide, the sound from bat
and ball

Is heard where runs the lava tide and roaring waters fall."

Song of the Cricketer.

THE origin of the game, with the derivation of the word "Cricket," cannot be satisfactorily traced; and the name of the originator has hitherto remained undiscovered; which is the more extraordinary when considered that cricket is by no means an ancient game. No allusion is made to it by ancient writers, nor do any of the early poets make use of the word. Shakespeare is also silent upon the subject, though, as

every reader knows, there are constant references in the works of the immortal bard to all the then known diversions of man. Other dramatists of the same age being also silent on the subject, and the result of other researches tending to the same conclusion, we are induced to believe there is no authentic trace of the game until the year 1702 ; about which date it is supposed to have been first known and practised. Strutt and Junius have both attempted to trace the word to the Saxon tongue, but upon very meagre and unsatisfactory authority ; and, as is believed, erroneously endeavouring to give the ancients the credit of inventing the game.

The Rev. J. Pycroft, in a modern work called "The Cricket Field," attempts to make out that the ancient game of *club-ball* was the original and identical game of cricket ; and that *club-ball* was the old name for cricket. But the evidence adduced in support of his argument, is by no means clear or satisfactory. *Club-ball* is well known as a very ancient game, and totally distinct from that of cricket. And there is no trace of any alteration in the game of "*club-ball*," nor of any substitution to that of "cricket."

Antiquarians one and all have been unable to

trace it beyond the date above quoted. One fact, however, is pretty certain—its birth is purely English. If the game had been known to the ancients, it is impossible to imagine that no record or mention of it would have been found. The athlete of old delighted and excelled in manly games, and even encouraged them with almost equal ardour to the pursuits of study. It may therefore be fairly supposed that this game (if known to them) would have been highly popular; and there would be found traces of it among those of other games.

Strutt, in his "Sports and Pastimes," says, he can find no record of the game, under its present appellation, beyond the period of the commencement of the last century. Nyren* has a strong opinion that the game originated with the Saxons, and thinks the derivation of the word is probably from the Saxon "cpyce," a stick. He also adds in support of his opinion, that "those who are acquainted with some of the remote and unfrequented villages of England, where the primitive manners, customs, and games of our ancestors survive in the perfection

* One of the earliest and most celebrated cricketers, and author of "*The Cricketer's Tutor*."

of rude and unadulterated simplicity, must have remarked the lads playing at a game, which is the same in its outline and principal features as the consummate piece of perfection that at this day is the glory of Lords, and the pride of English athletes. I mean the one in which a single stick is appointed for a cricket; ditto for a bat; and the same repeated of about three inches in length for a ball. If this be not the original of the game of cricket, it is a plebeian imitation of it."

It is not disputed that the game alluded to by Nyren is one which in its outline bears some resemblance to cricket: but is not this the game of "club-ball," or "cat," or some such game, still played under its original name? What trace is there to connect it with cricket? And if, on the other hand, it is neither "club-ball," nor "cat," then, it may be said there is nothing to shew that the game alluded to by Nyren as played by "the lads of the village" is of more ancient origin than the game of cricket: on the contrary, it may be of subsequent origin to that of cricket.

Upon reference to the best standard works upon the subject, the results of researches by