

**CROQUET.
A TREATISE**

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Croquet. A Treatise by Mayne Reid

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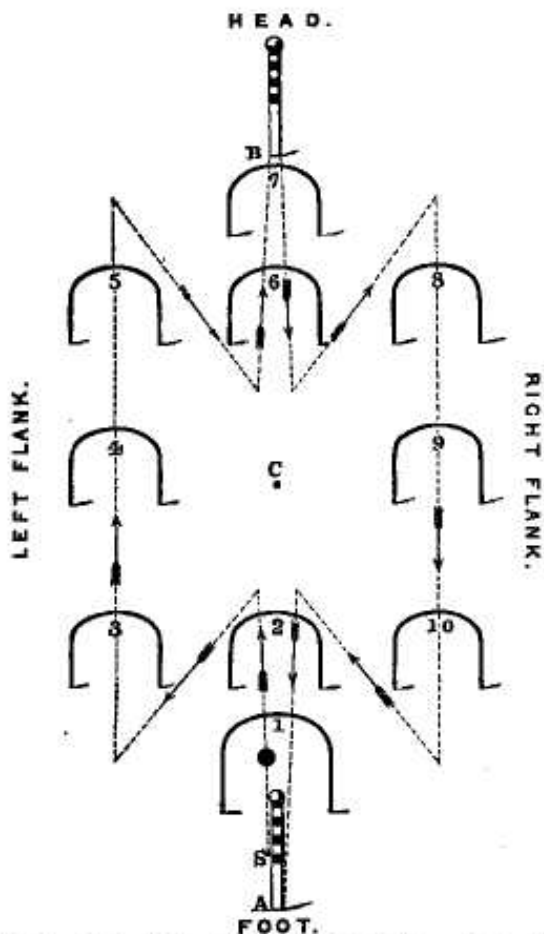
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MAYNE REID

**CROQUET.
A TREATISE**



A, Starting Stake. B, Turning Stake. C, The Centre. S, The Spot.
 1, 2, Lower Central Bridges. 3, 4, 5, Left Flank Bridges.
 6, 7, Upper Central Bridges. 8, 9, 10, Right Flank Bridges.

The Dotted Lines and Arrows indicate the course of a Ball in making the Grand Round of the Game.

CROQUET.

A Treatise.

BY

CAPTAIN MAYNE REID.

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P R E F A C E.

It is not more than truth to say, that CROQUET is the most attractive pastime of the age ; while, in point of *intellectuality*, it will dispute the palm with billiards or whist—even with that selfish duality, chess.

No doubt, the zealous devotee of any of the above-mentioned games, will question the sincerity of this assertion ; but he must be indeed strongly wedded to the habits of his own *spécialité*, if, after being brought within reach of its influence, he do not surrender to the seductions of the charmer—Croquet.

In sober earnest, there are many points in which this game stands pre-eminent. The quick growth of its popularity—still constantly

increasing—is proof of its superior attractiveness; and may justify the special prediction: that it is destined, at no distant day, to become, not only the national sport of England, but the *pastime of the age*.

Unlike the games already mentioned, it is a sport of the open air, and therefore highly conducive to health; while it has the advantage of most other out-door amusements—in affording an easy exercise to the body, without requiring the violent muscular exertion which renders many of these objectionable to persons of delicate frame.

Neither is the mind neglected in the play of this accommodating pastime. Its rules are so varied, yet so rational, that the intellect is constantly kept on the alert,—never summoned to a painful stretch, and never allowed to subside into an equally painful inaction.

It is adapted to people of all ages, and every

condition. The child just entering upon the walk of life, and the old man tottering towards its end, may play a "round" of Croquet with equally childish delight.

Nor is its skill exclusive to either sex. The pretty *mignon* foot, piquantly encased in kid, may exhibit as much power in the play, as the thick-soled *chaussure* of calfskin. Ah! we might name more than one fair owner of such provoking feet, who could send you—*per croquet*—to "Hong Kong," or "up the country" with as much velocity, as if you had been projected *ex pede Herculis*.

Though hitherto restricted to the lawn of the lordly mansion, and confined within the palings of the park, "Croquet" will ere long escape from aristocratic keeping; and become equally the property of the paddock and the village green.

Let us hope that no class jealousy will arise to prevent its spread, or lessen its attractiveness

—to those who were the first to introduce and enjoy it. Croquet is an innocent amusement—a game of true civilizing influences. While deserving every epithet of praise—worthy of being designated the “king of games,” the “queen of sports,” or the “prince of pastimes”—let us hope that it may also become a *pastime of the people*.

Rejoicing in this hope, I neither feel reluctance, nor make apology, for putting myself forward as its advocate and expounder.

MAYNE REID.

THE RANCHE,
GERRARD'S CROSS, BUCKS,
1863.