

POPULAR RECREATION  
IN THE  
MIDDLE AGES



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POPULAR RECREATION

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## INTRODUCTION

History is no longer an affair of battles and politics. The last century saw the growth of the idea that local organization, economic development, and social customs, and their interrelation with political and other movements are most important in history. The field of social custom was opened up with a study of the most obvious element of society,--the upper classes. The last century also saw the study of the Middle Ages emerge from the hazy misconceptions of the Romantic school, which had followed upon the contemptuous neglect of preceding generations. Now the scientific study of the customs of the ordinary folk of the Middle Ages, the people from whom the bulk of our modern population springs, is going ahead rapidly. Unfortunately the disappearance of many sources for the period makes a really complete and accurate picture of its society very difficult of attainment.

The subject, recreation, can be taken very widely. The word mediaeval may cover other periods than that between the fall of Rome and the Renaissance. It is my intention to limit this study to the latter part of the European Middle Ages, that is the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, and to deal chiefly with Great Britain, France and Germany. These limits are entirely arbitrary, but some limits must be set for any piece of research work in the field of history.



Huizinga has said that "the failure to see the social importance of the common people, which is proper to nearly all authors of the fifteenth century, may be regarded as a kind of mental inertia which is a phenomenon of frequent occurrence, and vital in history."<sup>1</sup> This attitude was not new to the fifteenth century, and it lasted on and still exists to-day. But the attitude does not mean that the upper classes were not aware of the lower. It simply means that they did not think that the lower classes mattered in the course of events. They were an unfortunate necessity provided by God to be used at will by the powerful. The lower classes did not hate the rich so much as envy them. Their dull discontent expressed itself, usually, in imitation of their superiors. "The splendour of the life of the nobility dazzles and seduces them. The rich burghers take pains to adopt the forms and tones of the nobility."<sup>2</sup> An example of this, carried even lower in the social scale, is the story of Meier Helmbrecht,<sup>3</sup> the farmer's son who seeks court life. Occasionally envy turned to hatred, which was expressed in rebellion. Economic pressure and social discontent played their part, but the explosion only came when religion, introduced as a solvent of class differences, turned to fanaticism.

The attitude of the nobility to this imitation

1. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (p. 49).
2. Ibid. p. 115.
3. Wernherr dem Gärtner, Meier Helmbrecht.

of themselves, and to the customs of the poor in general is reflected in the Dorfpoesie of the fifteenth century, in which the villagers are ridiculed for the amusement of the rich.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand there was a romantic idealization of the simplicity of rural life. It appealed to the over sophistication of the courts, theoretically. But the literature is artificial. Phyllys tends the sheep in silks.<sup>2</sup>

These attitudes seem to indicate that the material for a study of the recreations of the lower classes would be neither abundant, nor reliable. But information comes to us from very varied sources. Statutes and other governmental measures frequently deal with recreation, in connection with the safeguarding of the realm. The church had a great deal to say officially about amusements and their effects upon the salvation of men's souls. These are two very matter of fact sources. Nor is the general literature of the times all artificial and satirical. Simple narratives, told for the tale, often contain incidental references to games and dances. Then there are theological and ethical treatises in prose and verse, including sermons, which treat of the good life. The study I have made has been by no means exhaustive, for there are many sources which I have been unable to consult. However, I

1. Kluge, p. 52.

2. Huizinga, Chapter X.



think I can offer a bibliography fairly representative of the thought of the time.

There is no difficulty in discovering when and where games and dances took place. Nor were people averse to saying what they thought about them in general. But though this sort of information and the names of various amusements occur frequently, we have to build up from fragments and analogy the play of the game and the figure of the dance. The exceptions to this generalization are the tournaments, of which the common people were always interested spectators, hunting, and stage performances. Tournaments were carried out according to very elaborate rules. Hunting was a very exact science. Treatises on both are fairly plentiful. But these two belong properly to the nobility and so receive but brief and passing comment in this study. Stage performances were a real part of the life of mediaeval man. Of these, many texts are still extant. Several studies have been made of their literary value. Here they will appear only in their character of amusements. But analogy, together with what is actually known of the games and dances of the Middle Ages will give a fairly real picture of the mediaeval holiday scene.

## Chapter I.

## The Ordinary Man's Day.

Theoretically there was no free time in the life of the ordinary man in the later Middle Ages; work continued as long as the day lasted. The articles of the spurriers in London in 1345 show clearly what was expected of the labourer. "No one of the trade of spurriers shall work longer than from the beginning of the day until curfew rung out at the Church of St. Sepulchre, without Neugate; by reason that no man can work so neatly by night as by day."<sup>1</sup> The implication is, that if it was possible to work as well by night as by day, there would be no objection. Over a century later the ordinances of the Fynners,<sup>2</sup> ask "that an ordinance forbidding all work by night and on certain days might be ammended so far as to allow every freeman of the Craft, their servants and apprentices, to work at all times from 5 A.M. from Michaelmas until 8 P.M. until Lady Day (sic) excepting Saturdays and the vigils of Double Feasts 'after none rangen' as formerly excepted."<sup>3</sup>

1. Riley, p. 226. The same sort of order, which had already appeared in 1344 in the articles of the Girdlers and of the Glovers, (Riley, pp. 217, 246.) appears again in 1348, in the articles of the Pewterers (p. 243, *ibid.*) Another instance is to be found in those of the weavers in 1362 (*Ibid.* p. 307.) Nine years later the bowyers impose a fine upon night workers (*Ibid.* p. 347.) The Founders set down similar orders in 1365 (*Cal. Let. Bk.* G. p. 195.) and 1389 (Riley, p. 513.)

2. 1356, *Cal. Letter Bk. L.* p. 64.

3. 1488, *Ibid.* p. 217.



The London Blacksmiths are more positive. Their orders state that work shall proceed from dawn until 9 P.M., except during November, December and January, when work was to begin at 6 A.M. and end at 8 P.M.<sup>1</sup> The Cappers gild at Coventry set down in their articles in 1496, that work should proceed from 6 A.M. until 6 P.M.<sup>2</sup> These say nothing at all about breaks for meals. It was probably admitted that labourers had to eat but it was implied that they should spend as little time as possible over their food.

More detailed regulations as to hours of labour are to be found in connection with the building trade. At Beverley Minster work began at four o'clock in the morning and continued until seven o'clock in the evening. At 6 A.M. there was a quarter of an hour's respite for refreshment and at 8 A.M., half an hour for breakfast. At 11 A.M. an hour and a half was granted for dinner and a sleep, and at 3 P.M., another half hour for refreshment. Winter conditions made the day shorter but heavier. Dawn and dusk were the limits. Only three breaks occurred in the day, half an hour for breakfast, an hour for dinner, no time for sleep and fifteen minutes at three o'clock for a drink.<sup>3</sup>

The conditions described at York were substantially

1. 1394, Riley, p. 538.
2. Coventry Leet Book, p. 574.
3. Salzman, p. 317, quotation from the Beverley Town Documents.

the same. The men were to work as long as they could see both winter and summer. They had brief respite for meals, and in the hottest months an extra half<sup>1</sup> hour after dinner, for sleep.

The only actual reference I have found with regard to agricultural labourers is that in the Cartularies of Ramsay abbey. "Whatsoever kind of work he have to do, except in the wood, he shall work the whole year through from dawn to evensong, with a brief eating space between."<sup>2</sup> It is, I think, safe to assume that the agricultural labourer, everywhere, in the Middle Ages worked under no more definite hours than his brother of to-day.

A statute of Henry VII, in the year 1495, summarizes the whole story. Summer work continued from 5 A.M. until between 7 and 8 P.M. Two and a half hours were allowed for meals and a short sleep at dinner time. Winter work from dawn until dark, with two hours<sup>3</sup> off for meals. Roughly speaking the working day of the labourers of almost all classes lasted about ten or twelve hours.

4

The fact that the bowyers had to impose a fine for disobedience to the rule about night work goes to show that life was not lived according to rule. The following extract from the articles of the Spurriers

1. York Fabric Rolls, pp. 171-173. For text see Appendix D. Repeated 1370, p. 181; 1409, p. 199.
2. Coulton, *Mediaeval Village*, p. 321.
3. xi Henry VII, cap. 22.
4. See page 5, note 1.

is very illuminating. "And further,--many of the said trade are wandering about all day, without working at all at their trade; and then when they have become drunk and frantic, they take to their work, to the annoyance of the sick and their neighbourhood, as well by reason of the broils that arise between them and the strange folks who are dwelling among them."<sup>1</sup>

Orders ~~that~~ no work or buying and selling is to occur on Sundays and Feast days, or their vigils, are to be found in nearly all the gild articles. As early as 1271, the Lorimers set down "qe nul mester ne oevre le Samedez apres none sonee et refreydie a sa eglise parochiale." They further order that holy days shall be observed "come le Dymayne."<sup>2</sup> In 1344 the Girdlers are of the same mind. Their articles run: "Also,--that no man of the trade shall work on Saturday or on the Eve of a Double Feast after none has been Rung. Also,--that no man of the trade shall keep his shop open on Sundays or on Double Feasts to sell his wares. But if any strange person, passing by chance through the city upon any Feast day, shall have occasion in a hurry to buy anything etc.-- but<sup>3</sup> without opening his shop."

1. Riley, p. 226., 1345.

2. Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis, p. 78, Liber Custumarum, Vol. II, Part I.

3. Riley, p. 217. The same sort of rules are to be found in the articles of: the Braelers, 1355, (ibid. p. 278): the Weavers, 1362 (ibid. p. 307.): the Haberdashers, 1371 (ibid. p. 354): the Founders of London, (Riley, p. 513), the Fullers of Lincoln, (Eng. Gilds. p. 180.) 1389. 1398, the Hurers, (Riley, p. 549.)

Even the Pymers who pleaded, in 1488, to be allowed to work at night, state that their rule of no work on vigils and Feast days, set down in 1356, shall stand.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the Bowyers who imposed a fine for night work, extended it to cover these emergencies also.<sup>2</sup>

The Coventry Leet Book gives two examples of a slight relaxation of the rule. In 1436 it is ordained that "the Smythes of this Cite shall fro thys tyme forwarde show strangers horsies as well on Sonda<sup>3</sup>yes as on othur weke days, every man a-pon the payn of xl d.: and every barbour that he shave any straunger on Sondag as well as other dais, apon the peyn aforsaid."<sup>3</sup> Apparently the barbers took advantage of this, so ten years later, it was stated that they must obtain the masters assent, which could not be given "but yf he be a seke man or wayfareing man that comethe to this Cite that hathe nede to-be shavon, fine 10 s."<sup>4</sup>

The estimates vary as to the exact number of days to be observed as holy days. The most conservative estimate is twenty seven major saints days to be observed everywhere. The reservation is made that the bishop of the diocese is to decide about the local saints.<sup>5</sup>

1. Cal. Letter Bk. L. p. 217.
2. " " " L. p. 217.
3. Coventry Leet Book, p. 185.
4. Ibid. p. 226.
5. Guido de Monte Rocherii, Cxx.



The Constitutions of William de Cantilupo, Bishop of Worcester in 1240, allow thirty nine major saint's days, with seven extra ones "praeterquam in carucis,"<sup>1</sup> and four more, especially for women. The Synod of Exeter<sup>2</sup> seventeen years later lists about forty five days, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1332, forty three.<sup>3</sup> An index in Herolt's works gives a list of forty saint's and holy days.<sup>4</sup> Meffreth preached on at least sixty four separate festival days, for the sermons themselves remain as witnesses of the fact.<sup>5</sup> Angelo de Clavasio proclaimed thirty days as holy days, on which no work was to be done.<sup>6</sup> These were the actual saint's days, and did not include extra days at special feasts, such as Easter and Christmas.<sup>7</sup>

During the year, then, were scattered six weeks holidays in days and half days. But the church

1. Wilkins, Vol. I, pp 677-678.

2. " " II, p. 46.

3. " " II, p. 560.

4. Herolt, Sermones Discipuli, Vol. II.

5. Meffreth, Sermones.

6. Angelo de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, Ferie, CLXXI seq.

7. In the same passage Angelo provides for holidays "septem dies dominice passionis." The Constitutions of the Bishop of Worcester (see note 4) provides "dies natalis Domini cum quattuor diebus sequentibus." Even secular bodies, such as the Lorimers Gild, make provision that "les semaines de Nowel, Pasque et de Pentecoste, --- soient tenuz come le Dymayne." Note 1 to page 63 of Davenport's Economic Development of a Norfolk Manor runs: Winter Works extended from Sept. 29 to June 29, a period of 39 weeks. As either 70 or 35 works of this kind were usually charged upon a tenement there would seem to have been four holiday weeks during this season. These were probably two weeks at Christmas, one week at Easter, and one week at Whitsuntide. (Cunningham (W) 3rd edition I 585, also I 583, Growth of English Industry and Commerce.)

claimed these days for the service of God and herself. On the Feast of Saint George the Martyr, Myrc opens his sermon with these words: "Good men and woymen such a day ye schull have the fest of Seynt George. The wheche day ye schull come to holy chyrch, in worschyp of God and of that holy martyr Seynt George that bogt his day full dire."<sup>1</sup> In no less than twelve of the sermons in the Festiall, he sees fit to lay similar injunctions on the people.<sup>2</sup> A sermon preached on all saints day runs: "Wherfor yn worschyppe of God and all thes seynty~~s~~ ye schull fast the even and come to the chyrch to the fyrst euensong ( i.e. on the vigil or half day preceding) and on the morow to matens, and to masse, and to the secunde euensong and worschip God and all hys halowes for oure negligence of all the ~~year~~<sup>3</sup> before." As a question to be asked by the priests at confession, he gives this,

"Hast thow holden thyn halyday,  
And spent it wel to Goddes pay?  
Hast thow I-gon to chyrche fayn  
To serue God with all thy mayn." 4

Later he sums up the situation:

"The halyday only ordeynet was,  
To here Goddes serues and the mas,  
And spene that day in holynes,  
And leue all other bysynes:  
For, apon the werke day

1. Myrc, Festiall, p. 132.
2. Myrc, Festiall, Sermones, nos. 31, 33, 34, 36, 38, 44, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51.
3. Myrc, Festiall, p. 266.
4. Myrc, Instructions, l. 875.

Men be so bysy in uche way  
 So that for here ocupat~~y~~one,  
 Therefore they schull here halyday  
 Spene only god to pay;  
 And yef they do any other thyng  
 Then serue god by there cunnynge,  
 Then they breketh goddes lay  
 And holdeth nat here halyday." 1

There is plenty of evidence, however, to show that feast days were not observed in the service of God, as outlined by the church. In 1201, the abbot of Flay, assuming the voice of God, promises the pains of hell, describing those pains very vividly, to those who, on the holy day, do any profane or secular thing,<sup>2</sup> not absolutely necessary. In 1225, the Provincial Council of Scotland threatens with excommunication anyone<sup>3</sup> who dares thus to break the holy day. Over a century later, orders come from Mayfield deploring the misuse of saint's days, "---quod vero ad devotionis parabatur compendium, in dissolutionis erigitur cumulum, dum in ipsis festiuitatibus taberna coliter potius quam ecclesia, commessationes et ebrietates uber<sup>i</sup>us abundant, quam lachrymae et orationes." On this account the council advocates a reduction in the number of saint's days<sup>4</sup> to be observed. Again thirty seven years later, in 1389, the Archbishop of Canterbury issued a "Mandatum"<sup>5</sup> prohibiting business and amusements on Sundays.

1. Myrc, Instructions, l. 889.
2. Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 510.
3. " " I, p. 617.
4. " " II, p. 560, Simon of Canterbury, at Maghfeldense Concilium.
5. Wilkins, Vol. III, p. 43.

When Jean Charlier de Gerson speaks of the reforms of the church in the Council of Constance, the use and number of saints days receives full attention.

"Ut non tot nova Festa solemnizarentur.---Ut non tot novi Sancti canonizarentur. Ut praeterquam diebus Dominicis et in majoribus Festis ab Ecclesia institutis, liceret operari post auditum Officium: cum quia in Festi saepe magis multiplicantur peccata, in tabernis, in choreis, et aliis lasciviis, quae docet otiositas." <sup>1</sup>

Gerson's pupil, Nicholas de Clemanges, who flourished between 1360 and 1440 (circa) pleads for an end to the creation of new saint's days. These are his words:

"Non puto conveniens esse (quod cum sapientiorum venia dixerim) novas his diebus celebritates, nulla praesertim necessitate cogente, in sancta Ecclesia institui. Satis enim superque multiplicatae sunt, et <sup>instantum quidem exuberant, ut rectius</sup> consultiusque minuendae videantur quam ampliandae. Rara quippe in precio sunt, in honore habentur, usu trita quotidiano, vilesunt." He amplifies this and then continues;

"Alius in villam suam pergit, alius in negotiationem, maxima ad mundinas turba proficiscitur, quae iam publico et solenni more non nisi celeberrimis aguntur diebus, quosdam histrio delectat, nonnullos theatro <sup>2</sup> occupant, plurimos pila tenet, permultos alea.

1. Gerson, Opera, Tom. III Pars, App. Col.911, (cap. III)

2. Nicholas de Clemanges, Opera, 143.



Antoninus of Florence, also, bears witness to amusements on holy days, "per totum diem festum vacavit ludis venatōnibus ancupiis choreiis et aliis vanitatibus mundi." <sup>1</sup> An anonymous poem, "On the Times," shows the same thing.

"Goddess dere halydayys ar noght  
 non observantur honeste;  
 For unthryfty pley is worght,  
 regnat in eis manifeste,  
 Unthryfty lust and yois,  
 steriles et luxuriosi  
 Gentyl, gromys, and boyys  
 socii sunt atque gulosi." <sup>2</sup>

Henry Parker and John Myrc have the same tale to tell. Myrc speaks in the beginning, Parker in the end of the fifteenth century. Here is Myrc's list of sinful pastimes engaged in on feast days and Sundays, about which the confessor should particularly ask.

"Be-thenke the wel, sone, I rede,  
 Of thy synne and thy mysdede.  
 For schotyng, for wrastlyng and other play,  
 For goyng to the ale on halyday  
 For syngyng, for roytyng and syche fare,  
 That ofte the sowle doth mych care." <sup>3</sup>

Pauper speaking with Dives describes Sunday as he sees it. "For in the sondaye reygneþ more lechery/ glotony/ manslaughter/ robbery/ backbytyng/ perjury/ and other synnes, more than reygneþ all the weke byfore. And whan men come to chyrche/ they leve byddyng of bedes and spende theyr tyme in synfull jangelyng." <sup>4</sup>

1. Antoninus of Florence, Summa Confessionale, (Fo. xlvi.
2. Political Poems and Songs, Vol. I, p. 272.
3. Myrc, Instructions, l. 881.
4. Parker, Dives et Pauper, Commandment III, cap. vi, two pages after p iiij.

Thus it appears, that though the church authorities and councils let the matter drop in the fifteenth century, the individual clerics did not. And the frequenting of taverns on holy days was a very sore point. Meffreth speaks severely "de illis qui cum dominicis et festivis dñt querere salutem animam et reconciliari deo dimissis ecclesiis. neglectis sermonibus et divinis officiis. student se in tabernis usque ad plenum ingurgitare et fortes ad miscendum ebrietatem."<sup>1</sup> But as early as 1240, it had been found necessary to forbid the clergy themselves from going into taverns.<sup>2</sup> Robert Grossteste, writing to his rectors and vicars, thought it well to make a strict prohibition.<sup>3</sup> But in spite of the warning that the company in taverns is chiefly composed of ribalds and dice players,<sup>4</sup> mediaeval man could not stay away. Robert of Brunne twice mentions the tavern as a place frequented on holy days.

"Yif thou hauntyst to make thy play  
At the tauerne on the haly day,  
..... and namely byfore the noun  
Whan goddys seruyse owyth to be down." 5

The proclamations in fifteenth century London, as well as a statute of 1461, all point to the fact that the taverners business was likely to flourish, in spite of the official attitude of the church, and the opinion

1. Meffreth, Sermones, Pars Festivalis, part LXXIII, section, V.
2. Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 622; W. de Cantilupo.
3. Grossteste, Epistles, p. 157.
4. Antoninus of Florence, Summa Conf., fo. lxxviiij
5. Robert of Brunne, Handlyng Synne, l. 1017,  
and also l. 1041.

of the stricter clergy. The statute forbids any taverner to allow play at dice or cards in his house, on pain of imprisonment.<sup>1</sup> An order of the "Common Council" in 1484 makes a sweeping prohibition of all unlawful games in taverns.<sup>2</sup> Even the secular authorities recognized the probability of man meeting in taverns for amusement and recreation.

Restrictions were placed by law even upon play in the home. No servant or artisan might play cards or dice except during the twelve days of Christmas, and then, only "in the duellyng house of his maister or wher the maister of eny of the said s<sup>3</sup>vaunt be p<sup>3</sup>sent," upon a pain of a day in the stocks.

Out of doors there were the village streets. Walther von der Vogelweide, longing for the spring, sings:

"sache ich die megde an die straze den bal  
werfen, so kaeme uns der vogeleschal." 4

The Coventry Leet Book, in 1494, records an order "at the request of the Inhabitauntes dwellyng in Gossefordstrete that the pageantes yereby frohensfurth be sette and stande at the place there of olde tyme used, lymyt and appoynted, uppon peyn of every Craft that doth to the contrary to lese at euery defalt vj s. viij d. to the use of this Cite to be levyed and paide."<sup>5</sup>

1. Letter Bk. I. p. 88. Letter Bk. L. p. 217 (Calendars.) Rotuli Parl. Vol. V, p. 488.

2. Letter Bk. L. p. 217.

3. ~~xix~~ Henry VII, Cap. 13, see also xi Henry VII, Cap. 2, 1503 and 1495.

4. Walther von der Vogelweide, p. 7, Song no. 1.

5. Coventry Leet Book, p. 558.

Apart from churches, the only public gathering places were the gild halls or the council halls. Sometimes these were the same, sometimes they were not. For instance, at York, there still survive a Guild Hall, and the hall of the Merchant Adventurers. The latter was originally founded by the York mercers, sometime between 1357 and 1368, the former was built about the middle of the fifteenth century. At Worcester, it was set down in 1467, "Also that no maner persone playe at the pame or at tenys wtyn the yeld halle of the seide cite <sup>1</sup>uppon peyne of euery persone founde in defaulte x<sup>l</sup> d." From that, one suspects that the idea was not unpopular. Reference to a spielhaus is made in various Wiesthümer. It appears in 1369 at Eifel, in 1365 at Mohstadt, and in 1366 at Selboden.<sup>2</sup> In 1412, 1446, 1459, 1468, 1498, at various places we find similar references.<sup>3</sup> Grimm's Wörterbuch gives this explanation: "im mittelalter heissen auch die rats- oder gemeindehäuser der städte die für die sitzungen des rats- und die gerichtsverhandlung gewöhnlich auch für die öffentlichen lustbarkeiten so wie für die schau- stellung und den verkauf gewisser waren (als kaufhaus) dienten." A London Proclamation of 1476 forbade the exercise of "tenys", "cloishe playing", or "cailes",<sup>4</sup> indoors or outdoors. If that was necessary, it must

1. English Gilds, p. 372.

2. Grimm, Vol. I, p. 760; Vol. III, pp. 435, 419.

3. Grimm, Vol. III, p. 777; Vol. II, 443, 429, 439; Vol. V, p. 325.

4. Calendar Letter Bk. L. p. 140



have meant that play was going on indoors. The only places large enough were such gild halls and townhalls, and the churches and holy ground. The churches of the Middle Ages were not cluttered up with pews. Apart from the funeral monuments at the sides, the church building offered a tempting sheltered space. Besides, although the earth floor of the church, particularly small parish churches, was usually not covered in any way, nevertheless, it did offer a fairly flat surface for wrestling matches and dancing.

That both the churches and holy ground were used for amusements is clear from various orders and prohibitions about it. In 1223, the Bishop of Salisbury forbade dancing and games "in coemeteriis."<sup>1</sup> Article LXVII of the Council of Scotland, which met two years later, has this: "Huic etiam prohibitionem duximus et addendum ut in aliquibus festivitatibus infra ecclesias vel coemeteria luctae vel ludi de caetero fieri non permittantur."<sup>2</sup> A similar order was issued by the Bishop of Worcester in 1240.<sup>3</sup> According to the chronicler at Burton, 1253 was a year of inquiry into the lives of the clergy and laity. Question twelve ran, "An aliqui laici mercata, vel ludos seu placita pecuniaria fieri faciant in locis sacris, et an haec fuerint prohibita ex parte episcopi."<sup>4</sup> Four years

1. Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 600.
2. " " I, p. 617.
3. " " I, p. 666.
4. Annales de Burton, p. 307.

later the statutes of the Synod of Norwich contain this order, "Omnes quoque ludi et placita secularia a locis sacris omnino arceantur."<sup>1</sup> The Synod of Exeter, in 1287, confines its objections to games "in coemetariis."<sup>2</sup> The Synod of Sodor, in 1291, is more explicit, forbidding "secularia in dominicis diebus aut festivis solemnibus ----in ecclesiis, in coemeteriis, vel aliis locis Deo deducatis."<sup>3</sup> In 1305, the Archbishop of Canterbury has to give an order forbidding the misuse of the cemeteries in his jurisdiction.<sup>4</sup> About fifty years later, the Archbishop of York is troubled by the same thing. He issued the order "Ne in locis sacris festivis diebus mercata, placita, vel spectacula teneantur." It runs as follows: "Ne quis in ecclesiis, aut earum porticis seu coemeteriis, vel aliis locis sacris nostrae diocesis diebus dominicis, et festivis forum rerum venialium teneat, vel mercatum, nec ullam in eis negotiatum exerceri praesumat, nec etiam placita secularia teneantur in eisdem nec in ipsis fiant luctationes sagittationis vel ludi, qui causam vel occasionem praestare poterunt peccati,<sup>5</sup> dissensionis, odii, sive pugnae: sed quilibet catholicus et peccatorum veniam humiliter implorandum."<sup>5</sup> In 1401,

1. Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 733.
2. " " II, p. 140.
3. " " II, p. 178.
4. " " II, p. 282-283.
5. " " III, p. 68.

another Archbishop of Canterbury prohibits the use of  
 holy places for secular affairs.<sup>1</sup> Angelus de Clavasio  
 discusses, at length, the propriety of dancing, and  
 states emphatically that the church itself and hallowed  
 ground are not the place for amusement.<sup>2</sup> Antoninus of  
 Florence also indicates that dances are an abomination<sup>3</sup>  
 "cum fiunt in ecclesiis."

The most striking testimony however, comes from  
 Nicholas de Clemanges. His treatise "De novis celebrit-  
 atibus non instituendis" is an answer alike to those  
 who wish to laud the Catholic church for the jollity  
 it brought into the life of the average man, and to  
 those who would like to claim that the church succeed-  
 ed in crushing all that jollity out of life. He deplor-  
 es the fact that amusements took place on the holy day,  
 and for that reason wants a minimum of holy days.  
 Singing and ribald music defiled the holydays and also  
 alas! even the holy places.<sup>4</sup> From this complaint, as  
 from all the others, we see that holy days and holy  
 places, while they were not supposed to offer them,  
 at least afforded the ordinary man the time and place  
 for recreation, after a strenuous week's work.

1. Wilkins, Vol. III, p. 266.

2. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, Corea,  
 (LXXXVI.

3. Antoninus of Florence, Summa Confessionale,  
 (fo. lxiij.

4. Nicholas de Clemanges, Opera Omnia, p. 145, ff.

## Chapter II.

## Animals and Amusements.

Little difficulty is encountered in picturing the mediaeval hunting scene, at least in connection with the nobility. Contemporary literature is full of the noble hunter and the chase. Besides that, however, there are the text books of the science of hunting. Such a one is "The Master of the Game" by Edward Duke of York, in which are set down all the rules of the chase. The book also includes advice on the care of horses, dogs, and hawks, on their training and on how to care for them when sick. This particular book was intended for the Prince of Wales and his friends and so tells nothing of the hunting of the commons, for hunting was theoretically reserved for the nobility. As Robert of Brunne says,

"Yif thou clerk auaunsed be  
 Swyche game ys nat graunted to the,  
 To emperourus and to kyngys  
 Ys graunted swych plaiyngs  
 Erlës, barons, also y graunte,  
 And knygtës, they mow hyt haunte  
 That they be ne tempted of outhur synne  
 For Ydulness that they ben ynnne." 1

The very tone of this suggests that he sees others usurping the privilege.

A suit between the commons of London and the Bishop shows that as early as 1292 the burghers looked upon certain classes of beasts as their rightful quarry. The suit arose by the Bishop's claim that he had the right to enclose a certain tract of land. He said

1. Robert of Brunne, Handlyng Synne, l. 3085.

he had the right by royal grant. To this the "four from each of the wards by the Commonalty elected, after holding counsel thereon make answer for themselves distinctly, that time out of mind they have been used to chase and to hunt within the woods aforesaid, and without hares<sup>1</sup>, foxes, rabbits, and other beasts, where and when they might please. And they say that they do not believe that our Lord the King has made him any grant in prejudice of the liberties which they have hitherto enjoyed." That the Commonalty of London meant the burgher class, no higher, no lower, there can be very little doubt. A statute of nearly a century later points to the same extension of hunting rights from the nobility downwards. "Forasmuch as divers Artificers, Labourers and Servants, and Grooms, keep Greyhounds and other Dogs, and on Holy days, when good Christian People be at Church hearing Divine Service, they go Hunting in Parks, Warrens, and Connigries of Lords and others, to the very great destruction of the same,-----It is ordained that no Manner of Artificer Labourer, nor any other Layman, which hath not Lands or Tenements to the Value of xl s. by year, nor any Priest nor other Clerk if he be not advanced to the Value of ~~xx~~ <sup>xl</sup> by year, shall have or keep from henceforth any Greyhound (Hound nor other Dog) to hunt;

1. Riley, p. 28.



nor shall they use (Fyrets) Heys, Nets, Harepipes nor Cords, nor other Engines for to take or destroy (Deer Hares nor Conies, nor other Gentlemen's Game) upon Pain of one Years Imprisonment.<sup>1</sup> Thus the fourteenth century sees the right to hunt put on a basis of wealth rather than birth. And it is obvious from the emphasis that Artificers and Labourers were indulging in hunting. But Fitzstephen referred, most certainly, to the burghers and not to their underlings when he said "Many of the Citizens do delight themselves in Hawks and Hounds for they have Liberty of Hunting in Middlesex."<sup>2</sup>

In support of this, we have John Myrc, speaking of Sunday observance, saying,

"Hawkyng, huntynge and dawnsynge  
Thow moste forgo for any thyng."<sup>3</sup>

As he was speaking to the parish priests, on the subject of the sins of their parishioners, it seems probable that the ordinary folk were not averse to the game. Indeed, a list of the kind of hawk pertaining to the various ranks of society carries far down in the social scale. Beginning with emperors and kings, the list continues, "There is a Goshawke/ and that hawke is for a yoman. There is a Tercell: & that is for a poore man. There is a Spare hawke: & she is an hawke for a preest. There is a Muskyte: & he is for

1. 1389, xiii Richard II, St. I, Cap. xiii.
2. Stow, Vol. I, p. 299.
3. Myrc, Instructions, l. 41.

a holy water clerke."<sup>1</sup> And if the noble classes had their elaborate treatises on the care of animals, they were not the only ones. Le Menagier de Paris gives instructions to his young wife as to the care of his<sup>2</sup> hunting birds.

The burgher class in Germany also enjoyed hunting rights. The Weisthümer of Franken and Meinungen, set down in 1450; "Item wir sind auch von alter herkommen und haben macht, das ein iglicher burger zu Meyningen hasen rephuner und fogel fahen magk in der margk zu Meyningen wann er wil und im eben ist."<sup>3</sup> The customal of Dornstetten of 1456 has these very comprehensive words: "die die inn das gericht gehörent hand recht zu jagen und zu fähen allerhand wildprectz---ohn allein rothwild, dass sind hürsch, hinden und reher, dass sollent die nit vahn denn mit eins amptmans von Dornstetten willen." The animals that anyone might hunt were, "Vogel, aichhürn, schwin, beren, fuchs oder wolff," all dangerous animals, destructive to crops and cattle.<sup>4</sup> The Rothwild, however, the gentlemen's game was reserved for the nobility.

Back in England, at Coventry in 1480, Prior Deram protested because "the people of the seid Cite huntten and hawken within the warden of the seid Priour, in

1. Juliana Berners, reverse of c.v.

2. Le Menagier de Paris, in the edition I have had to use the passage is merely indicated.

3. Grimm, Weisthümer, Vol. III, p. 599.

4. " " " I, p. 384.

Coventre, Whitmore & many other places within the shire of Coventre & withoute, & hit destroyeden ayen the lawe of his Chartour of waren."<sup>1</sup>

A statute of 1503 gives an insight into the development of the times. The longbow "is greatly decayed in this Realme, for as moche as howe of late the King's Subjects of the same gretly delyte themselfe and take pleasour in usyng of Cross bowes, wherby grett destruccion of the King's Deer as well in Forreste Chases as in Parkes dayly is hadde and doone."<sup>2</sup> A contemporary order in London forbids any person to keep a dog, "accustomed to go at large out of his own enclosure, without guard there of by day or night, within the franchise of the City, genteel dogs excepted."<sup>3</sup> These dogs "accustomed to go out at large" were probably kept as watch dogs and only incidentally used for hunting. The editor of the *Munimenta*, suggests that "genteel" dogs may be pet dogs. If genteel simply means gentle, the explanation would seem fairly adequate. The Knight de La Tour Landry tells a story of two little dogs kept by a lady as pets. Incidentally they received the best morsels of food and all the lady's attention, to the great damage of her immortal soul.<sup>4</sup>

Dogs were not the only animals kept as pets, nor did pets always receive such good care. Cats belong-

1. Coventry Leet Book, p. 446.
2. xix Henry VII, cap. iv.
3. *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, Vol. III, (p. 178.)
4. The Book of the Knight de La Tour Landry, (p. 28.)

ing to a group of Paris students, led most uncertain lives. A cat was brought out to play dice with its masters; if it won, it was rewarded with food; if it lost, it was skinned, and the skin sold.<sup>1</sup>

On this subject, we hear again from the Knight de La Tour Landry. He tells a story of a magpie, of high moral character who exposed his mistress's dishonesty to her husband. The lady was much enraged and divested the bird of all its feathers.<sup>2</sup> In 1472, John Paston, writing to his brother Sir John, adds in a postscript, "I sye the pye and herd it spek; and be God, it is not worth a crowe; it is fer wers then ye wend: be God it wer shame to kep it in a cage."<sup>3</sup>

Lydgate mentions that foxes and apes are kept by the nobles in their houses, for the sake of their antics.<sup>4</sup> If the lower classes could not afford to own such beasts themselves, yet they enjoyed watching them. They enjoyed it so much, that it was profitable for a man to move about with trained bears and apes.<sup>5</sup> A curious order appears in the Statutes of the University of Heidelberg in 1453: "Item quod nullus capere presumat aviculas, aves, seu feras quarumcunque specierum, seu capcione illarum intersit, sub pena unius floreni et confiscationis captarum."<sup>6</sup> One can only conclude

1. Jacques de Vitry, *Exempla*, p. 8.

2. The Book of the Knight de La Tour Landry, (p. 23)

3. Paston Letters, Vol. V, p. 166.

4. Lydgate, *Pilgrimage*, l. 22730.

5. Jacob's Well, p. 134. A part of the 5th inche of covetousness, was "in ledyng berys and apys or swych other unthrift.

6. Rashdall, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 670.

that they were being captured to be kept as pets or show beasts.

But the most common or all uses of animals were much more brutal. The Gild of St. Martin at Stamford yearly hunted a bull with dogs. The remains were afterwards to be sold. So it is set down in the ordinances of the gild in 1389.<sup>1</sup> In 1423, at Coventry, butchers who wished to kill a bull for its meat must announce the fact. The bull was then given over to be baited. The following year saw an elaboration of the order. The "chamburlayn" was to make a "ryng at the bullryng, to thend that bullez may be baytyd as they have byn hertofore."<sup>2</sup> The Easter Leet in 1474 stated that, according to a Statute of Winchester, no butcher may "sle no bulles fflesshe but yf hit be bayted."<sup>3</sup> Bullbaiting at Coventry and bull running at Stamford were essentially the same. In both the end was the death of the bull. In both, this end was achieved by means of dogs. The difference lay in the locality of the sport. At Stamford, the bull was at large and the spectators had to be wary as they followed through the streets. In bullbaiting a circle was formed round the bull, which was tied firmly to a stake in the centre. Sophisticated London sometimes substituted a bear as the victim.<sup>4</sup>

1. English Gilds, p. 192.

2. Coventry Leet Book, p. 58, and p. 83.

3. Ibid. p. 398. I cannot locate the particular statute in which this occurs though several make rules for the slaughter of animals. I conclude that the Leet incorporated their own order with the statute.

4. Mun. Gildhallae Lond. Vol. II, Pars I p. 13. "In hyeme,---pingues tauri cornupetae, seu ursi inimanes cum objectis depugnant canibus."

Cockfighting and cockthreshing were very similar. The former was literally cockfighting. Two cocks were pitted one against the other. Each had a chance. Cockthreshing, too, was what its name suggests. The sport was carried on in much the same way as bull baiting. The cock was tied to a stake in the centre of a circle of people. These people did it to death by means of sticks and stones. In 1363 and 1365, Edward III found it necessary to prohibit "gallorum pugnae," which he called an "unhonest" game. Moreover he prohibited it, with other dishonest games in proclamations published throughout the country.<sup>1</sup> An order for the city of London, forbade the raising of money for "cockthresshyng" because of marriages that have recently taken place in the said city, or suburbs thereof, on pain of imprisonment and of making fine at the discretion of the Mayor and Aldermen.<sup>2</sup> But at times it was allowed, "Praeterea, quotannis, die quae dicitur "Carnilevaria," ut a puerorum ludis incipiamus,--omnes enim pueri fuimus scholarum singuli pueri suos oportant magistro suo gallos gallinaceos pugnatore; et totum illud antemeridianum datur ludo puerorum, vocantium spectare in scholis suorum pugnas gallorum."<sup>3</sup> Apparently Coventry had not only a "Bullryng", but also a "cokfyghting place",<sup>4</sup> for in 1441, people are forbidden to shoot there.

1. Rymer, Foedera, Vol. II, Pt. II, pp. 704, 770.

2. Riley, p. 571.

3. Munimenta, Gildhallae Lond. Vol. II, Pt. I,

4. Coventry Leet Book, p. 196. (p. 11.)

From what Nider says, one of the chief attractions of the game may have been betting. He demands the return of gains made "ex pactis mutuis huiusmodum de cursibus equorum, gallorum et aliorum animalium morsibus belli vel duellis etiam huiusmodum--"<sup>1</sup> The words "cursibus equorum" are interesting, indicating horse racing as a possible amusement. I have found only one other reference to this. In London, "Singulis diebus Dominicis in Quadragesima, post prandium, exit in campum juvenum recens examen in equis bellicosus et in equis certamine primis," quorum quisque sit

"Aptus et in gyros currere doctus equo." <sup>2</sup> Furnivall offers the suggestion that the "karyyng" of which Damsel Idleness speaks, is derivative of the French <sup>3</sup> *carriere* meaning a race. In view of these other references, it seems a reasonable conjecture. The fact that Nider mentions it first, in connection with cockfighting and the baiting of animals, which we know to have been popular, argues that horse racing, too, enjoyed a considerable popularity, in his own district at least.

Much information about commercial fishing appears in the London Letter Books. There are there, regulations as to the size of the mesh of the nets. The seasons of various fish in the Thames are also set down in some detail, from time to time. Fishing for immediate

1. Nider, Decalogi Legem, Praec. vij, cap, vj, P.

2. Munimenta Gildhallae Lond. Vol. II, Pt. I, p. 11

3. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 11624, note.



use was probably fairly generally allowed. For instance, "Es mag auch ein iglicher burger, der in der stadt stewart und bete ist, fischen in der Werra mit einem schragen und hamen an einer iglichen mittwochen, freitag<sup>1</sup>en und sonnabendt." That is, on the days when he had to eat fish, the burgher could take a small net and get some out of the river.

Although there is very little reference to fishing as an amusement, one thing points very strongly to its evolution. A book dating from the late fifteenth century has a whole treatise on fishing. Dame Berners speaks of hawking, hunting, fowling and fishing as "good dysportes and honeste gamys.---the beste to my symple dyscrecion whyche is fyshynge: called anglynge wyth a rodde: and a lyne and an hoke."<sup>2</sup> According to Dame Berners, the noise and fret of hunting, hawking and fowling are not comparable with the quiet and reasonable pleasures of fishing. "For huntynge as to myn entent is to laboryous. For the hunter must alwaye renne & folowe his houndes: traveylllynge, & swetyng full sore. He blowyth tyll his lyppes blister. And whan he wenyth it to be an hare full oft it is an hegge hogge. Thus he chasyth and wote no what. He comyth home at evyn rayn beten pryckyd: and his clothes torne wete<sup>3</sup> shod all myry. Some hounde loste, some surbot."

1. Grimm, Vol. III, 599. Franken und Meinungen, 1450.

2. Juliana Berners, Book of St. Albans, Intro-

3. Ibid. (duction.

The quiet leisure of fishing allows of "custamable prayer."

The technical details, how to make a rod, what colour line for what waters, the proper hook for each fish, all are set down very precisely, quite as precisely as the details in hunting treatises. The table of contents gives not only a very fair idea of the material in the book, but also, a picture of the condition of the art of fishing.

"Prouynge the dysporte and game of anglynge is the very meane and cause that enducith a man into a mery spyryte.-

"Howe ye shall make your rodde craftly.

"To coloure your lynes.

"For whych waters & for whyche seasons.

"How must ye make your lynes.

"The duchys knotte.

"To make your hokes.

"Wyth how grete hokys ye schulle angle to every fysshe.

"Thenne schall ye make your flotys in this wyse.

"How ye shall angle.

"Twelve manere of ympedymentes which cause a man to take noo fysshe.

"What baytes ye schall angle to euey maner of fysshe.

(List of various fish.)

"How ye shall kepe and fede your quycke baytes.

"Baytes made to last all the yere.

"The xij flyes with whyche ye shall angle."

It is obvious, however, that even fishing is a pleasure not permissible to all. The treatise is addressed "to al you that ben vertuous, gentyll and free borne." And it goes on, "and for bycause that this present treatyse sholde not come to the hondys of eche ydle persone whyche wolde desire it--- I have complyd it in a greter volume of dyverse bokys concernynge to gentyll & noble men, to the entent that the forsayd

## FROM THE BOOK OF ST. ALBANS



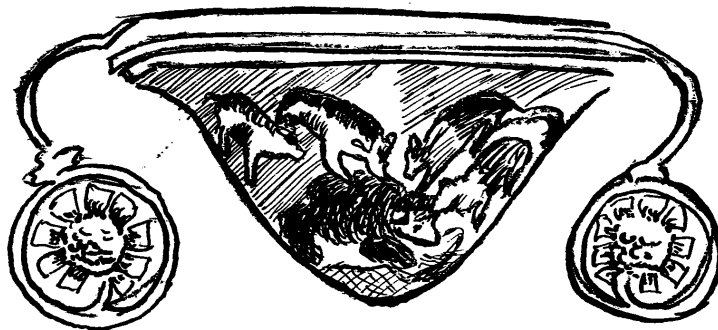
ydle persones which sholde have but lytyll mesure in sayd disporte of fysshynge sholde not by this meane utterly dystroye it."

But had it not already been the custom for "ydle persones" to fish, would the thought have troubled Juliana? The implication is, that the ordinary man would go a-fishing.

Note:- I have omitted to give references for these passages from The Book of St. Albans, because the pages are not numbered, and there are no convenient sections by which they may be located. The treatise on fishing is very short.



Cock Throwing. From a Flemish Calendar, early 16<sup>th</sup> Century.  
Add. MS. 24098. AUGUST.



BEAR BAITING. From a choir stall at Manchester Cathedral.

## Chapter III.

## Wrestling, Kindred Amusements, and Informal Outdoor Sports.

Wrestling, both as an exercise and as a spectacle, appealed to mediaeval man. Jusserand claims that it was popular with all classes of society.<sup>1</sup> In England, the legendary activities of King Richard lend support to his view, but for the most part wrestling was an amusement of the ordinary man. As far as one can gather, wrestling was a mere trial of strength; any "science" involved was more or less accidental. Unfortunately, there is practically no descriptive evidence of it. The sketch book of Wilars de Honecort, however, shows pictures of wrestling matches.<sup>2</sup> Whether these figures are taken from actual life, or copied from a bas relief in the Cathedral at Lausanne,<sup>3</sup> does not matter very much for our purpose. The fact remains that there were wrestling matches to be pictured.

Wrestling was not popular in ecclesiastical and governmental circles. In 1225, the Provincial Council of Scotland forbade "luctae" "in<sup>4</sup>tra ecclesias vel coemeteria." A few years later Robert Grosseteste proclaims the spiritual dangers involved in games "in quibus decertatur pro bravio." The vicarious enjoyment of watching was, to him, no less reprehensible than

1. Jusserand, p. 175.
2. W. de Honecort, Sketch Book, Plates, XXVII, XXXVI.
3. Ibid. Editor's note.
4. Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 611.

actual participation.<sup>1</sup> The Bishop of Worcester warns his subordinates to avoid all dishonest games, among which are included "palæstras publicas."<sup>2</sup> In view of the wrestling match which took place at the monastery at Dunstable it is obvious that such orders<sup>3</sup> were necessary. The Bishop of Durham, in 1255, uses words almost identical with those of Grossteste. He objects to games "in quibus decertatur ad bravium assequendum."<sup>4</sup> The Synod of Exeter says nothing absolute against wrestling, but tries to exclude it from holy<sup>5</sup> ground.

Nearly a century later the battle is still going on. In 1367, the Archbishop of York forbids "luctationes" "in ecclesiis aut earum porticis seu coemeteriis, vel aliis locis sacris."<sup>6</sup> This finds an echo in Myrc's "Instructions to Parish Priests." But Myrc is even more absolute.

"Wrastlynge and schotyng and such maner games  
Thow mygte not use withowte blame." <sup>7</sup>

A contemporary of his, too, objects to wrestling. He claims that it is a part of "accidia," that great enemy<sup>8</sup> of a successful spiritual life.

While the fate of King Richard II's expedition to Scotland in the August of 1385 was in doubt, the Mayor and aldermen of London found it expedient to forbid wrestling matches within seven miles of the

1. Grosseteste, Epistolae, Ep. XXII, p. 74.
2. 1240, Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 673.
3. Annales Dunstaplia, p. 298.
4. Wilkins, Vol. I, 787.
5. " " II, p. 140.
6. " " III, p. 68.
7. Myrc, Instructions, l. 39.
8. Jacob's Well, p. 105.

of the city "either privily or openly."<sup>1</sup> A royal proclamation of 1411, forbids wrestling within "the seintuary ne the boundes of Paule's ne in non other open place within the citee of Londone."<sup>2</sup> In the order of 1385, mention is made of the Skinners Well as a popular place for wrestling matches. Stow writes that this well is "so called for that the Skinners of London held there certain Plays yearly played of Holy Scripture, etc. In place whereof the wrestlings have of later years been kept, and are in Part continued at Bartholomewtide."<sup>3</sup> Fitzstephen, describing London life, says, "In festis tota aestate juvenes ludentes exercentur in saliendo, in arcu, lucta, jactu lapidum etc."<sup>4</sup> He makes no judgment in the matter, simply accepts the fact. Robert of Brunne, however, does not view wrestling with his equanimity. That he disliked it anyway is fairly plain, but that on holy ground, it was past thinking of, his own words testify:

"karolles wrastlynges, or som~~our~~ games  
 who so ever haunteth any syche shames  
 Yn cherche other in ch~~er~~che yerd,  
 Of sacrylege he may be a-ferd." <sup>5</sup>

The statutes of the University of Heidelberg, set down in 1453, forbid the students to participate in "dimicandium" or even to be present at them.<sup>6</sup> But "dimicandium" and "ludi in quibus decertatur pro bravio" most certainly had a wider meaning than wrestling. Under this head quintaine must surely be included.

1. Calendar of Letter Book H. p.272.
2. Riley, p. 580. 3. Stow, Vol. I, p. 25.
4. Munimenta Gildhallæ Lond. Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 12.
5. Brunne, Handlynge Synne, l. 8987. 6. Raskdall, II, II, 670



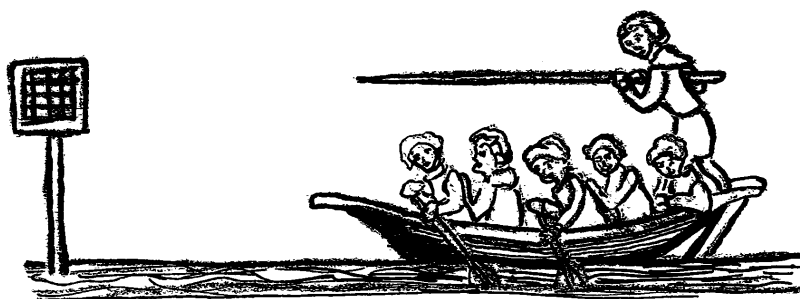
Quintaine, or quinten, appears named in some of the same anathemas as wrestling. But quintaine was not a simple trial of strength, It was the common man's counterpart of the tournament. Like Don Quixote, who tilted against windmills, the common man tilted against an inanimate object. Failure usually brought him to some ridiculous mishap and exposed him to the jeers of his friends. But they all took their turn and the game persisted through the thirteenth century, in spite of ecclesiastical disapproval. This disapproval took various forms. For instance, when an inquisition in the diocese of Lincoln in 1230, question thirty ran, "An alicubi leventur arietes---vel decertatur in praeundo cum vexillo matricis ecclesiae."<sup>1</sup> Ten years later, the Bishop of Worcester expressly forbids his underlings to be present when quintaine took place.<sup>2</sup> "For note wherof I read that in the Year of Christ 1253, the 38th of Henry III the youth Citizens for an exercise of their Activity set forth a game to run at Quinten, and whosoever did best should have a Peacock, which they had prepared as a prize."<sup>3</sup> In that year, in the inquisition as held at Burton, it is recorded that one of the questions ran, "an aliqui laici elevaverint arietes---vel decertaverint de praeundo cum vexillis in visitatione matricis ecclesiae."<sup>4</sup>

1. Wilkins, I, p. 628

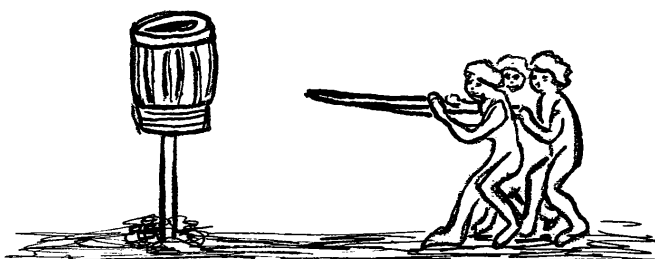
2. Ibid. p. 673.

3. Stow, Vol. I, p. 301.

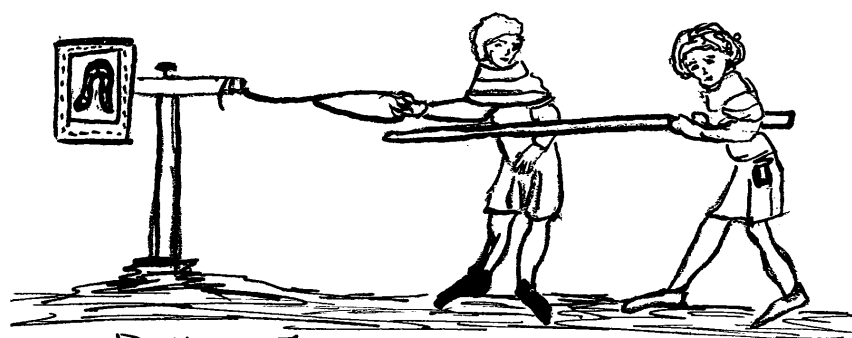
4. Annales de Burton, p. 307. Question 13.



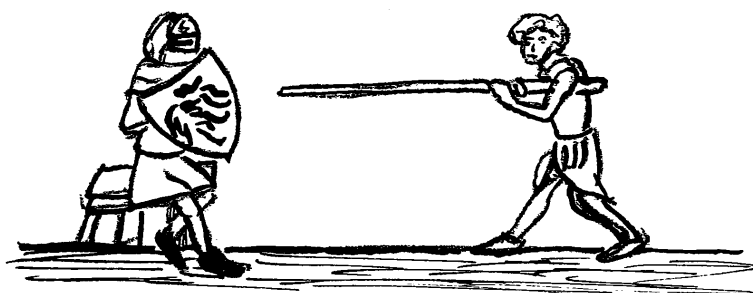
Royal Library, Ms. 2Bvii, XIV Century  
Strutt, p. 116



From Ms. in Bodleian, dated 1343.  
Strutt, p. 120.



Bodleian Ms. 264, c. 1344  
Strutt, p. 118



Bodleian Ms. of 1344  
Strutt, p. 121.

And again, in 1255, the Bishop of Durham forbade  
 "levationes arietum super rotas, et ludos in quibus<sup>1</sup>  
 decertatur ad bravium assequendum."

Fitzstephen's description of a special form of  
 the sport gives a very fair picture of it. "During  
 the Easter feast days, they play at sham naval battles.  
 A shield, tied firmly to a stake, is fixed in midstream.  
 A boat is propelled down by hard rowing and the swift  
 current. In the prow, there is a youth who is to  
 pierce the shield with a lance. If, when he hits the  
 shield, he breaks the lance, he stands unmoved. If  
 the lance remains unbroken, he is thrown into the river,  
 both by his own action and the motion of the boat.  
 However, there are two boats, stationed near at hand  
 full of young men, to save such unfortunates from  
 drowning, when they look as if they are going under,  
 or when bubbles begin to show in the waves. On the  
 bridge, and on the banks of the river, crowds stand  
 around, ready for a good laugh."<sup>2</sup>

After 1255 we do not hear of the game again by  
 the same name. New games appear, which must have been  
 very similar, and were, probably, related. As early<sup>3</sup>  
 as 1252, we hear of the art of "bokelaria" at Oxford.<sup>4</sup>  
 The same sport appears again in an ordinance of 1313.

1. Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 707.

2. This is a very free translation from the  
 Latin in the Munimenta Gildhallae Lond. Vol. II.  
 Pt. I, p. 12.

3. Munimenta Academica Oxon. p. 25.

4. " " " p. 93.

At both times, it seems that the prohibition was due to the disorders arising from the game. In 1442, there is a more explicit reference to it. In an inquiry into a quarrel, it transpired that it had arisen out of the game "vulgariter vocato 'swerd & bokelere (vel Pykyd staff)!" Such games, it is claimed come "ex laetitia cordis" and are consequently not proper recreations for students.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the author of "Jacob's Well" classes with wrestling, as a part of idleness, "pleying at two hande swerde, at swerde and bokelere, & at two pykyd staff at the hurlebotte."<sup>2</sup> The two last, at least, point to a close relation with quintaine, and very probably, they were variations of it. Moreover, Villon who wrote in the late fifteenth century mentions<sup>3</sup> quintaine in one of his poems as if it still existed.

The use of boats in connection with this type of game raises the question as to how far boats were used for pleasure. I would venture to hazard that such use was negligible. Stow refers to Gower's Prologue, when speaking of his own times, showing that people<sup>4</sup> were conveyed up and down the Thames for pleasure. However, he distinctly specifies gentlemen and kings. The implication is, that others did the work in connection with boating for pleasure. On the Thames at least, I imagine that the price would be prohibitive for the

1. Munimenta Academica Oxon. p. 526.

2. Jacob's Well, p. 105.

3. Villon, Oevres, p. 168. Ballades des povres housseurs.

4. Stow, Vol. I p. 45. Gower, Prologue, l. 38.

ordinary man. Even supposing it were within reach of the pocket, I doubt whether it would have been an active enough pastime to appeal to the average. Most certainly if it had been a considerable pastime, it would have been reflected again and again in just such works as those of Gower and Lydgate. Yet, to my knowledge there is only the one reference in Gower. Again, it would most certainly have drawn the fire of the moralists. "Accidia" was their strong suit. Yet, it never does. And furthermore, it would most certainly have come under a similar prohibition as that dealing with swimming in the Fosses near the Tower.<sup>1</sup> But it does not. I do not think that it would be rash to conclude from this negative evidence that boating was not a popular pastime, in either sense of the word.

The same reasoning may be applied to swimming. While swimming was not unknown in the Middle Ages, it was not apparently considered as a necessity or as a recreation. The only information on the subject is very scanty. In 1350, people were forbidden to bathe in the Fosses near the tower.<sup>1a</sup> The Coroner's Rolls mentions three deaths from drowning in 1322, 1325,<sup>2</sup> and 1340. These accounts merely mention that certain persons met their death by drowning while bathing. Other evidence is conspicuously lacking unless the quotation from Fitzstephen about water quintaine may

1, 1a. Riley, p. 261,

2. Calendar of Coroner's Rolls, pp. 59, 127, 257.

be taken to indicate something of that nature. But the argument may be carried either way. No one would have risked immersion in the Thames unless able to swim. On the other hand, care was taken to provide boats so that the unlucky could be rescued. The truth of the matter is, I think, that swimming was not generally regarded as a sport. Probably many people did swim, and enjoyed it, but it was to be a long time before swimming would take its place as a social diversion.

For a picture of winter sports in London, we are again indebted to Fitzstephen. "Cum est congelata palus illa magna quae moenia urbis Aquilonia alluit, exeunt lusum super glaciem densae juvenum turmae. Hii, ex cursu motu captato citatiore, distantia pedum posita, magnum spatium, latere altero praetenso, perlabuntur. Alii quasi magnos lapides molares de glacie sedes sibi faciunt; sessorum unum trahunt plurimi praecurrentes, manibus se tenentes, In tanta citatione motus aliquando pedibus lapsi cadunt omnes proni. Sunt alii super glaciem ludere doctiores singuli pedibus suis aptantes, et sub talaribus suis alligantes, ossa, tibias, scilicet animalium et palos, ferro acuto supposito tenentes in manibus, quos aliquando glaciei illidunt, tanta rapacitate feriuntur<sup>1</sup> quanta avis volans, vel pilum balistae." From there, he goes on to complain of the danger of hurt involved in these sports, but adds that youth takes no thought of that.

1. Munimenta Gildhallae Lond. Vol. II, Pt. I, p. 13

Mumming and hokking were occasional amusements. Hokking took place on the Monday and Tuesday of the third week after Easter. These days became known as the hokkedays.<sup>1a</sup> But it was none the less popular as may be seen in the repetition of the proclamation forbidding it. These proclamations follow one another in quick succession. They appear in 1406, 1410, 1415, 1416, 1417, 1424, again 1424, 1425, 1426, 1428, 1429, 1432, 1438, 1442.<sup>1</sup> The custom in itself was not much worse than a Montreal tag day. The idea was to trip people up and hold them for ransom. Men suffered on the Monday, women on the Tuesday.

A very similar practice had been the cause of some concern from 1331 on, but was localized by place as well as time. The proclamation, which was repeated thirteen times in twenty years, runs: "N're Seignr le Roi defend sur peyne d'emprisonement q nul enfant ne autres ne jue en ul lieu du Paleys de Westmr devant le Parlement q y est somons, a bares ne as autres jues, ne a ouster chaperouns des gentz ne mettre mayn en eux, ne autre empeschement faire qoi chescun ne puisse peysiblement sure ses busoignes."<sup>2</sup> "Bares", Riley

1a. Riley, p. 561.

1. Calendar of Letter Book I. pp. 48, 85, 124, 161, 194, 211; Calendar of Letter Book K. pp. 28, 49, 59, 69, 96, 140, 217, 186. These page numbers correspond with the order of the dates in the text.

2. See Appendix A, p. i.



explains as a game similar to "prisoners' base." His explanation is merely a conjecture but it seems as good as any. The only other reference to it is not very illuminating,

"Bal and bares and such play  
Out of the Chyrchyorde put away." 1

That it is included in the proclamation with "taking off of hoods" and the like indicates that it was played with some considerable force. These latter pastimes, and hokking were simply an indulgence in that horseplay and violence which is characteristic of the Middle Ages,--of its life generally, and of its amusements in particular.

1. Myrc, Instructions, l. 336.

## Chapter IV.

## Mumming, Pageants, Music and Dancing.

In the last chapter I mentioned mumming as an occasional amusement. It took place at Christmas time, and from the disfavour with which it was regarded, it is fair to judge that it also gave cover to much violence and horseplay.

From 1334 on, we have evidences of attempts to check this amusement. Edward III, in 1344, forbids "on the same pain of imprisonment, that any man shall go about at this Feast of Christmas with companions disguised with false faces, or in any other manner, to the houses of the good folks of the City, for playing at dice there: but let each one keep himself quiet and at his ease within his own house."<sup>1</sup> A very similar proclamation was issued on Christmas Eve, both in 1370<sup>2</sup> and in 1372.<sup>3</sup> A short notice to the same effect appears in 1417, under Henry V. The following year "The Mair and Aldermen chargen on the Kynges byhalf, and this Cite, that no maner persone, of what astate, degre or condicioun that euere he be, duryng this holy tyme of Christemes be so hardy in eny wyse to walk by night in any manere mommyng, playes, interludes or any other disgisynges with any feynynd berdes, peyntid visers, diffourmyd or colourid visages in any wyse, up peyne

1. Riley, p. 193.

2. Calendar of Letter Book G. pp. 274, 303.

3. Riley, p. 658.

of emprisonement of her bodyes, and macyng fyne aftir the discrecioun of the Mair and Aldremen: outake that hit be leful to eche persone for to be honestly mery<sup>1</sup> as he can, with in his owne hous dwellyng."

Nor was mumming confined to London. A section of the office of the Mayor of Bristol, set down in 1479, runs: "The Maire and shiref chargen and commaunden on the kyng our souerain lordis behalf, that no maner of persone of whate degre or condicioun that they be of, at no tyme this Christmas goo a mommyng with cloce visaged, nor go aftir curfew rong at St. Nicholas, withoute lighte in theire handes, that is to say skonce, light, lantern light, candel light, or torche light<sup>2</sup> etc." Moreover this proclamation was to be repeated annually. A less explicit reference appears in a letter<sup>3</sup> of Margery Paston, written to her husbond in 1484. Following the example of Lady Morlee, who after her husband's death had allowed her servants "non dysgysynges," the Pastons in view of the recent death of Margaret Paston are to spend a quiet Christmas.

Mumming has been revived lately in certain parts of England. As it is used to-day it is a highly organized affair, really much nearer in spirit to the pageant. Nor is the reason for that confusion far to seek. Many of the gild pageants had the Nativity as a central

1. Riley, p. 669.

2. English Gilds, p. 427.

3. Paston Letters, Vol. VI, p. 78.

theme and were produced at Christmas. It is very probable that after the pageant was over, the cast broke up into smaller groups who went about begging, producing impromptu scenes, popping out at unsuspecting passers by, and amusing themselves generally, as the references to dicing suggest. Possibly to these groups of the cast their friends and relations were added. These, to fall in with the spirit of the occasion, might provide themselves with masks. In fact, the modern French Canadian Mardi Gras activities, and the Halloween practices have more similarity to the old mumming than has the new English mumming.

Nearly all the Gild pageants had a religious origin. The theme was provided by the Nativity, the Crucifixion, and indeed any Biblical or sacred story which could be dramatized. Even the unpromising material of the Lord's Prayer gave rise to the formation of a gild at York, especially to produce a pageant of it. Once performed, the pageant was so popular that it was repeated yearly<sup>1</sup> and the gild was formed.

From the Annals of Burton, it is plain that as early as 1259 the religious element was not always adhered to. This was probably especially true of wandering players, whose morals were slightly doubtful. "Histrionibus," say the Annals, "potest dari cibus quia pauperes sunt, non quia histriones, et eorum ludi non videantur,

1. English Gilds, p. 137.

vel audiantur, vel permittantur fieri coram abbate  
vel monachis.<sup>1</sup> The Synod of Exeter thirty years later  
exhorts the clergy to denounce those "ludos theatrales  
et ludibriorum spectacula" which took place on the eves  
of saint's days, and on the festivals themselves.<sup>2</sup>

Bishop Grosseteste is no less explicit in his injunctions, "ne mimis, jocolationibus aut histrionibus intend-  
ant."<sup>3</sup> Robert of Brunne is of much the same opinion:

"Hyt is forbode hym, yn the decre  
Myracles for to make or se;  
For myracles yyf thow begynne,  
Hyt ys a gaderyng, a syght of synne." 4

He does except, however, those miracles which portray  
the nativity and the resurrection of Christ.

Not everybody shared these sentiments about the  
spiritual peril of haunting "entyrludes and syngynge."<sup>5</sup>

A contemporary record from Sigolgheim at Oberelsass  
makes provisions for the entertainment of "spielleute."<sup>6</sup>

While Antoninus of Florence objected to plays on  
moral grounds,<sup>7</sup> the Mayor of London, in 1385, appears  
to have objected on the grounds of public safety. So  
he forbids the performance of the "play that customarily  
took place at Skynmer's Welle, or any other such play  
until further news arrived of the king's exploits."<sup>8</sup>

This would have been unnecessary if great crowds had  
not been accustomed to attend such plays.

1. Annales de Burton, p. 484.
2. Wilkins, Vol. II, p. 140.
3. Grosseteste, Epistolae, p. 159.
4. Brunne, Handlyng Synne, l. 4637.
5. " " " l. 287.
6. Grimm, Vol. I, p. 666.
7. Antoninus of Florence, Summa Conf. fo. lxxix.
8. Calendar of Letter Book H. p. 272.

In the fifteenth century the attitude of churchmen remained the same. John Myrc, speaking of the customary rejoicings of the Christmas season, says that all such rejoicings, including "playes of vanyte" are a part of idleness.<sup>1</sup> The opinion of his contemporary, the author of Jacob's Well is much the same.<sup>2</sup> Henry Parker defends plays "that ben done pryncypally for devocon honeste and myrthe to teche men to love god the more." But they must be performed "so that people be not letted from goddes worde." Moreover, he objects to all other plays<sup>in</sup> which "rybaudry" and "error ~~agayn~~<sup>2</sup>st the fayth of holychirche or ayenst good lyuynge" are "medled."

But the opinion of the church in these matters does not seem to have had a great deal of weight. It is obvious from the records of Coventry that gild pageants were rapidly becoming a matter of civic pride, as they passed over from religious control to secular.

At Coventry in 1424 it was ordered that masters and journeymen were to contribute alike to the pageants of the weavers. From the latter part of the order which appears to give the journeymen free drinks at the masters' expense, it would seem that the journeymen had not felt constrained to support the pageant from any sense of gild loyalty. Four years later the Smyths tried to evade responsibility for a pageant:

1. Myrc, Festiall, p. 63.
2. Jacob's Well, p. 105.
3. Parker, Dives and Pauper, Comm. III, Cap. xvij, p. 1, ii fol.
4. Coventry Leet Book, p. 93.

To you full wurshipfull Meir, Recordour,  
 hayles and to all your discrete counsell, shewen  
 to you the craft of Smythes how thei were dis-  
 charged of the cotelers pachand be a lete in the  
 tyme of John Gote than Meire, quytances made bet-  
 wene the forseid craftes oder to oder lik as hit  
 is well knownen & redy for to shewe. And now late  
 Giles Allesley in his office of meyralte preyed  
 the forseid craft of smythes to take the gouvern-  
 ance of the seid pachand as for his tyme and no  
 forther. And the seid craft did hit wilfully to  
 his plesaunce; for which cause the forseid pachand  
 is yte put to the forseid craft & thei han no maner  
 of dute to take hit to hem. Whyche thei beseche  
 that ye of your grete goodnes discharge the for-  
 seid craft of smythes of the pachand atte reuer-  
 ence of God & of Truthe, and orden hit elles where  
 yeven better avised be your good discession.

But the discreet council not only refused to remove the  
 burden, but commanded them to carry on as they had been  
 doing.<sup>1</sup>

That the burden was no light one is amply borne  
 out by a series of ordinances beginning in 1475. In  
 that year the Saddlers and Painters of the city are  
 ordered to throw in their lot with the Cardemakers.<sup>2</sup>  
 Some time before 1444 the Masons, also, had been made  
 contributory to this alliance. But in 1444 the alliance  
 would have broken up but for the arbitration of the  
 Mayor and Council of the city.<sup>3</sup> The further statement  
 was made at this time, that, without express permission,  
 no man might play in any of the Corpus Christi plays  
 except that of his own gild.<sup>4</sup> In 1494 an alliance,  
 apparently made earlier, between the Chaundlers, the

1. Coventry Leet Book, p. 115.

2. Ibid. p. 172.

3. " p. 205.

4. " p. 205.

Cooks, and the Smiths was confirmed.<sup>1</sup> In the following year the Skinners and Barbers were ordered to contribute to the Cardmaker's pageant. Thus the Cardmaker's pageant was really produced by six gilds.<sup>2</sup> Certain individuals were attached to the Wrights, Tylers, and Pinners, and the Cappers and Fullers were made contributory to the Girdler's pageant.<sup>3</sup>

The Barbers and the Skinners were to pay 6/8 each toward the Cardmaker's pageant.<sup>4</sup> So, if each of the gilds involved in it paid the same, the cost of the pageant was 2 £, which was a large sum for the fifteenth century. Even though several gilds united forces for these productions, it is evident that they still found the burden heavy. In 1461 "hit is ordeyned that every Craft that hath pagant to play In, that the pagant be made redy and brought furth to pley uppon peyn of C s. to be reased of iiij maistres of the Craftes that so offend."<sup>5</sup> In 1475 the fine was doubled.<sup>6</sup> In the first instance the fine was over twice times the cost of a pageant, and in the second, five times. It only seems odd that the second ordinance was necessary.

An ordinance of 1467 in Worcester shows that the same situation existed there. "Item that v pageunts be hadd amonge the craftes; and that the stewards & contributories ther to belongynge make accomptes as

1. Coventry Leet Book, p. 555.
2. Ibid. p. 564.
3. Ibid. p. 565.
4. Ibid. p. 564.
5. Ibid. p. 312.
6. Ibid. p. 417.



trouth requirt."<sup>1</sup> Again, "it ys ordeyned by this present yeld, that alle maner of Craftys wtyn the seid Cite that have pageants, goynge to the worshippe of God and profit and encrease of the seid cite, and also alle Craftes that ben contributory to the same and the lightys of torches and tapers amonge the seid crafts, usyd in the seid cite, have and enjoie ther good, feithfull and treu approved customs and usages in susteynyng ther pageants, lightes and other necessities to ther craftys, of reason and custom belongynge or apperteynyng."<sup>2</sup>

A few years later at Bristol, the Mayor and wardens of the city are ordered to "receyue at their dores the saint Kateryns players making them to drynk at their dores and rewardyng theym for their playes."<sup>3</sup>

And what of the plays themselves? It is impossible for me to do here anything but sketch in brief certain characteristics. The Shepherds Play, given yearly at Wakefield, affords a very good example of the heights and the depths of feeling of which the mediaeval playgoer was capable. The opening passages are simple and natural, often coarse and vulgar, and bordering on the violent. Nothing could be tenderer or more appealing than the shepherds offering their gifts to the Christ child. The brawl between Noah and his wife in "The Deluge" affords<sup>4</sup> an instance of the mediaeval man's delight in horseplay.

1. English Gilds, p. 372.

2. Ibid. p. 408.

3. Ibid. p. 422.

4. Shepherds' Play and The Deluge (Chester, pp. 32, 33) in "Everyman".

The same simplicity of spirit is portrayed by Mark Connelly in "Green Pastures" We find in these two types of drama that expression in simple known terms of man's relation to God which reflect the naivety of the minds of mediaeval men and of the American Negro.

As no less than four crafts were joined in the production of the Smith's pageant at Coventry, it was obviously a big affair. The Smith's accounts on three separate occasions of the presentation of their Corpus Christi play, the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, show<sup>1</sup> that music was not a small item.

1451, It' payed to the mynstrell's .... viij s.  
           It' spend on mynstrell's diner  
           and (?) on corpus Xi day .....xx d.  
 1471, It' paid to the waytes for  
                                   mynstrelship.....vj s.  
 1477, It' paid to the wayts for pypyng...v s.

A list of instruments used in the thirteenth century gives an idea of the variety, though the explanations are not always very illuminating. A cermonica was a string instrument played by striking the strings. The cithara and the psaltery are both harps. Probably the former was the bigger of the two. The lyre, too, is mentioned. Percussion instruments are represented by tympanum, cymbals and bell. Wind instruments included<sup>2</sup> tuba, buccina, tibia, calamum, cambuca and symphonye.<sup>3</sup> A contemporary drawing shows a man playing on a viol. Late in the fifteenth century we have mention of the

1. Sharp, Coventry Mysteries, p. 35.
2. Bartolomeus Anglicus, Lib. xix, Cap. cxxxiiii, De Musica.
3. Wilars de Honecort, Plate L.

bagpipes. (sackpfiff)<sup>1</sup>

Robert of Brunne found it curious that minstrels should attract men with their "tabure bete and other pypynge." But it was singing that really irritated him.<sup>2</sup> Four times he mentions "karols" or singing as a sin. The Chronicler of Limburg, on the other hand, had a distinct taste for music. He claims that in 1360 "Auch hatt es sich also verwandelt mit dem Pfeifen und Pfeifenspiel, und hatt aufgestiegen in der Musiken dass die nicht also gut war bisher, als min ist angange. Denn wer vor funf oder sechs Jahren ein gut Pfeifer war geheissen in dem ganzen Lande der dächte jetzt und nit eine Fliege."<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately when speaking of songs he only gives us fragments such as:

Schachtafelnspiel<sup>4</sup>  
ich nu beginnen will usw.

However, he does tell us that the popular song writer of that day was a member of the barefoot order, a man of very doubtful character. "Der machte die beste Lieder und Reihen in die Welt, von Gedichten und von Melodien dass dem ouf Rheinstrom oder in diesen Landen wohl gleichen mochte. Und was er sang, das sungen die Leute alle gern, und alle Meister, Pfeifer und ander Spielleute<sup>5</sup> fuhreten den Sang und Gedichte." He sets down snatches

1. Brant, Narrenschiff, p. 55, Ch. 54, l. 7.
2. Brunne, Handlynge Synne, l. 8992, and lines, 6999, 985, 4681.
3. Limburger Chronik, p. 28.
4. Ibid. p. 36.
5. Ibid, p. 55, 1374.

of these songs.<sup>1</sup> One runs:

"Des Volkes bin ich ausgezählt  
Man weiset mich Armen vor die Türe  
Untreu ich nu spüre  
Zu allen Zeiten."

Another:

"Mai, Mai, Mai, deine sonnegliche Zeit  
Monniglichen Freude giebt  
Ohn mir, was meinet das?"

Again:

"Der Untreu ist mit mir gespielt. usw."

"Der Lieder und widersänge," continues the chronicler,

"machte er gar viel, und war alles lustig."

The Latin student songs have been a subject of study now for some time. "Gaudeamus" is probably the most famous of them. I quote here one other:

"Congregatur  
Augmentatur  
Actus juvenum  
Adunatur  
Collectatur  
Chorus virginum  
Et sub tilia  
Ad choreas venereas  
Salutemater, inter eas  
Sua filia." 2

To stern moralists, for whom life was a continuous battle with sin, the levity and cheerfulness of such songs was a source of much irritation. Gerson condemned outright "cantilenas seculares," and again "carmina luxuriosa." His grudging license is, it is true, granted to "cantilinae" with the reservation that it depended

1. Die Limburger Chronik, p. 36.

2. Carmina Burana, p. 189, no. 114.

3. Gerson, Opera, Tom. III, Pars I, col. 126.

not only upon the subject matter of the songs but also upon the time and place of performance.<sup>1</sup> Of course holy days must not be defiled by unholy thoughts. Even this relaxation is absent in Bromyard's opinion. Singing is to him an instrument of the devil. Yet at about this time a mason was carving in the Cathedral at Carlisle a scene in which such secular music was portrayed. A tumbler performs in this carving to the accompaniment of a drum and a violin lies not far off. The scenes on the other pillars all represent the occupations of the months and seasons.<sup>2</sup>

Angelus de Clavasio, too, condemns music unless it is done expressly to the worship of God.<sup>3</sup> Strangely enough he allows musicians to practise their art for the recreation of other people. Nicholas de Clemanges, however, denounces alike the strains of lyre and psaltery and the beating of the drum. Later in the same passage he remembers that he has not mentioned the cithara,<sup>4</sup> and includes it in his denunciation.

Special occasions were celebrated with music. On the visit of the king and queen to Coventry in 1429 not only were special pageants produced, but also special music. Apparently their own minstrels, appointed in 1423, were not enough, so we find in the accounts of the

1. Gerson, Opera, Tom. III, Pars Appendix, Col. 930

2. Bromyard, Chorea, Art. ij Sec. vj.

The pillar on which this scene appears is on the south aisle.

3. Summa Angelica, Ferie, CLXXI.

4. Nicholas de Clemanges, Opera, p. 145.

city:<sup>1</sup>

"to iij mynstrelles of the kyngys.....xx s.  
to iij trumpettes of the kyngys.....xx s.  
to iij mynstrelles of the quenes.....x s.

The city's minstrels were organized in 1439--"Hyt  
is ordeyned that they trumpet shall have the rule off  
the whaytes, and off them be cheffe."<sup>2</sup> A few years later  
they sought<sup>3</sup> a livery of their own. In 1459 the city  
authorities appointed an honest man to go with the waits  
to gather their wages quarterly.<sup>4</sup> These city waits were  
forbidden in 1467 to give their services elsewhere,  
except to abbots and priors within ten miles of the city,<sup>5</sup>  
A very different usage was that in London late in the  
fifteenth century. Whoremongers and bawds were to be  
led to their public place of punishment with minstrels!<sup>6</sup>

Lydgate, a priest in name, lays the follies of music  
at the door of youth:

"Some whyle my wyttys I applye  
To here song and menstralcy  
And pleye on divers Instrumentys." <sup>7</sup>

The Damsel Idleness, too, is responsible for some:

And in thys weye I teche them daunce;  
And also, ffor ther lady sake,  
Endyte lettrys & songys make  
Upon the gladd somerys dayes,  
Balladys Roundelayes, vyrelayes.  
I teche hem ek, (lyk ther ententys,)  
To pleye on sondry Instrumentys  
On harpe, lut, and on gyterne,  
And to revelle at taverne,  
Wyth al merthe and mellodye,  
On rebube and on symphonye." <sup>8</sup>

Though he considerz it a folly, Lydgate does not seem

1. Coventry Leet Book, 1423, p. 59: 1429, p. 121.
2. Ibid. p. 189. 5. Ibid. p. 335.
3. Ibid. p. 200. 6. Monum. Gild. Lond. III, 180.
4. Ibid. p. 307. 7 & 8. Lydgate, Pilgrimage.  
at lines 11199, 11610.

to think it very reprehensible. "Worrlldly Play" is very accomplished:

"ffor I kan (lych to thyn entent)  
 Pleye on every instrument;  
       \*      \*      \*      \*  
 ffor shepperdys I kan also,  
 At the merellys best of alle  
 Whan so that they lyst me calle,  
 Pype and taboure in the strete,  
 Wyth lusty folkys whan I mete.  
       At weddynges to do plesaunce,  
 I can karole wel and daunce." 1

Indeed, Lydgate sees Pleasure himself as a musician of no mean accomplishments. He can

" ---synge songes of pleasaunce,  
 Maisterly revel and Daunce,  
 Pipe and floyte lustely.  
 And also eke ful konyngly  
 In al the crafte and melodye  
 Of musyke and of Armony. \*  
 What tyme that hit shal be do,  
 He ys expert. -----" 2

Almost invariably where music is mentioned, the dance also appears. Dancing was probably the most spontaneous of the pleasures of the Middle Ages. A song and the rythm carried people to their feet. For the most part dancing took place in the open air and in the warmer months.

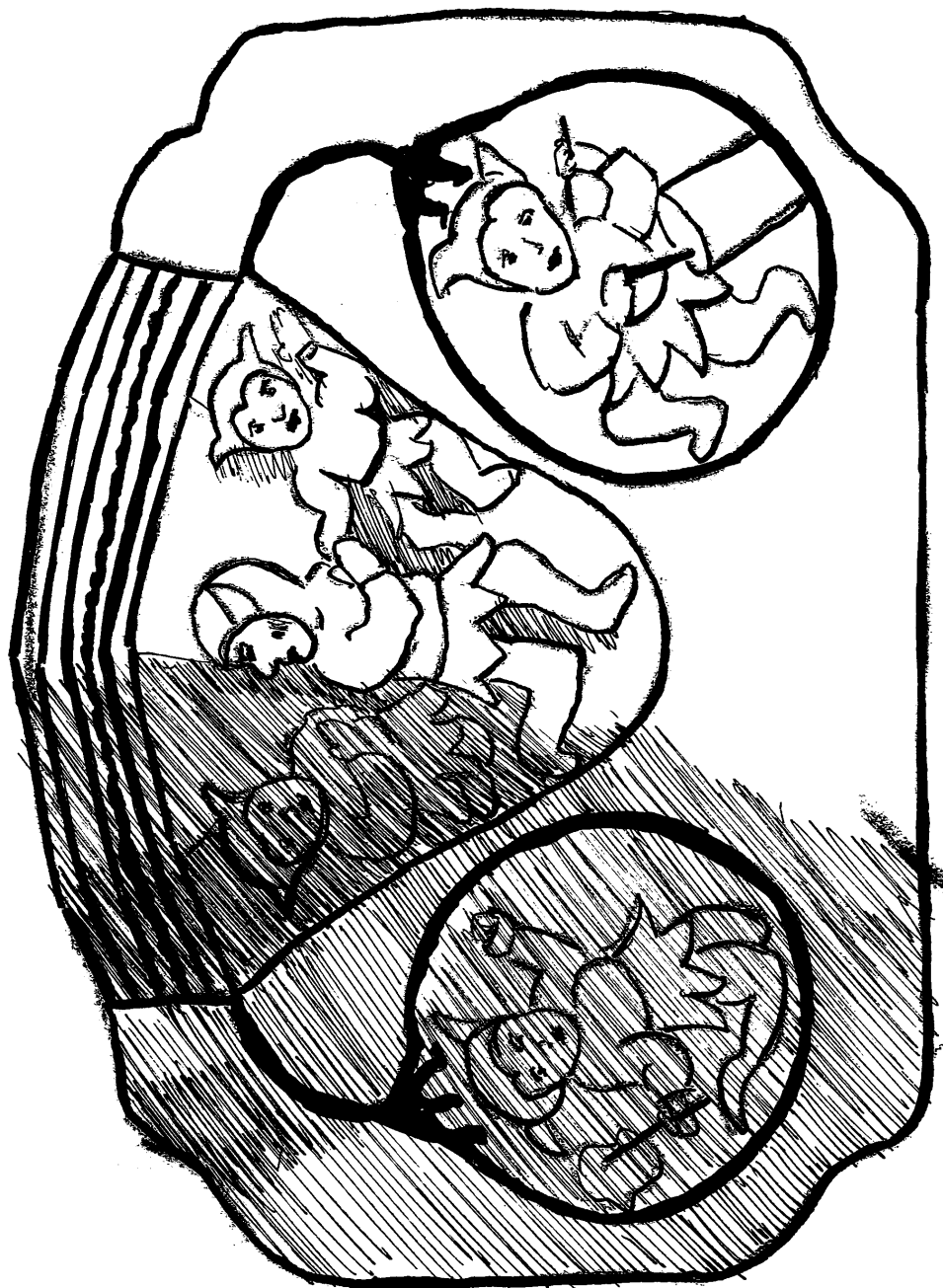
"ich wände daz ich iemer bluomen rôt  
 sache an grüener heide.  
 joch schâte ez guoten liuten waere ich tôt,  
 die noch freuden rungen  
 und je gerne tanzten und sprungen." 3

sang the poet late in the twelfth century.

Moralists invariably blame women for the inception of a dance. Jacques de Vitry, indeed, compares women

1. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, at line 21517.
2. Lydgate, Reson, at line 2394.
3. Walther von der Vogelweide, p. 142, Song, 73.

FROM THE PULPIT SEAT AT BEVERLEY MINSTER





both to decoy birds and bell cows. In the one case they lure men into the net of the devil. In the other the song in their mouths is the bell that tells the devil that his agent is still at work.<sup>1</sup> Caesarius von Heisterbach, a Cistercian of the thirteenth century tells of the sudden and horrible death which overtook a woman who defied her priest when he forbade her to dance.<sup>2</sup>

Berthold, the fiery Franciscan, urges that it is a sin to incite men to dance.<sup>3</sup> His most illuminating statements appear in his sermon on the ten commandments. First he lays down that no work shall be done on Sunday. "Ir sult ouch," he continues, "dar umbe niht tanzen an dem ruowe tage, oder spiln, oder toppeln, daz ir niht ze tuone habet. 'Wie, bruoder Bertholt, dû wilt uns den wec gar enge machen! sullen wir nû nihtes niht ze amte hân, weder niendert varn noch ander dinc tuon, weder tanzen noch spiln? sê, wie suln wir danne tuon daz wir den tac vertriben?'" Later he invokes St. Augustine's well worn dictum, that it is better to work than dance on the sabbath.<sup>4</sup> He does relax a little, allowing his flock to dance at weddings, but follows the permission immediately with the warning, "Dû maht auch alsô tanzen, daz du toetliche sünde tûost."<sup>5</sup> In another sermon he makes his position in the matter quite clear, "Der an dem mântage tanzet das ist übele

1. See Appendix C, p. xi. 2. Dialogus, Vol. I, p. 183, Dist. IV, cap. xi. 3. Berthold, Sermons, Vol. I, p. 213. 4. Ibid. p. 268. 5. Ibid. p. 269.

getan, oder spilt und is darumber verlorn. So ist es  
 michel<sup>1</sup> wirs getân an dem suntage."

In Walther's use of the word "sprungen" we have  
 an indication that the dance was an active affair.

Other writers use similar words, such as "sâlit," and  
 "hop."<sup>2</sup> In Meier Helmbrecht we get another glimpse.

The author gives that same suggestion of jumping,

"swenne er an dem reien spranc." 3

But it is his description of the dance after the tournament that gives us the best picture.

"als sie danne das getâten  
 einen tanz si dô trâten  
 mit hochfertigem gesange!  
 daz kürzt die wîle lange.  
 nie schiere kam ein spilman;  
 mit sîner gîgen huop er an:  
 da stuonden ûf die frowwen  
 die mûht man gerne schôwen:  
 die ritter gegen in giengen,  
 bî handen si si viengen.  
 dâ was wunne uberkraft  
 von frouwen und von ritterschaft  
 in suæzer ougen weide  
 junkherren unde meide,  
 si tanzten froelîche  
 arme unde rîche." 4

Although Robert of Brunne gives no information  
 about the figures of the dances, he does not ignore  
 them as a source of sin, and he tells one story of twelve  
 dancers who, as punishment, were joined together in a  
 mysterious way. For a year they were forced to go  
 about together, dancing. After that when they were

1. Berthold, Sermons, Vol. II, p. 253.

2. See Page 56, note 3, page 53, note 2.

Chaucer's Prologue, l. 4382.

3. Wernherr dem Gartner, Meier Helmbrecht,  
 l. 215.

4. Ibid. l. 939.

separated, they could not stop hopping.<sup>1</sup> Chaucer's description of dancing also stressed the jumping movement, "to hoppe and synge."<sup>2</sup> Often indeed the music was provided by the voices of the dancers. However,<sup>3</sup> when the wife of Bath danced it was "to an harp<sup>e</sup> smale." But Bromyard, the representative of contemporary morality, shook his head over this gayety. Where the devil finds a crowd, there he finds someone, probably a woman, to lead a dance, and the crowd is his.<sup>4</sup>

Reminiscent of night club stabbings, is this account from Paris of 1381. "Et le dimanche après ladicte purification, environ heure de vespres, ledit Jehan vint delez le cymetière d'icelle parroisse, où estoient plusieurs personnes qui dansoient et mesmement lesdiz mariez, tenant en sa main un arc des fleches une grant bodelaire à sa ceinture, et une taloche." These weapons the man used to kill "un individu qui l'attaquait à main armée après avoir diffamé et insulté sa femme."<sup>5</sup> A similar scene was enacted in the same year at Pont de L'Arche.<sup>6</sup>

Herolt had a great distrust of dancing. He claimed that the mortal sin of pride was always present. Did not the women dress themselves up in their finest

1. 4691: 1. Robert of Brunne, Handlyng Synne, l. 4681:  
 1. 9003.  
 2. Chaucer, Prologue, l. 4382.  
 3. Ibid. l. 457.  
 4. Bromyard, Summa Predicantium, Chorea,  
 Art. ij, Section, vj, vij.  
 5. Douet D'Arcq, Vol. II, p. 132.  
 6. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 223.

clothes to incite the admiration and lust of the men.<sup>1</sup>  
 Did they not first view themselves in a mirror before  
 appearing. Twice he quotes St. Augustine's dictum  
 and adds that they also sin who enjoy watching dancing,  
 thus encouraging the dancers.<sup>2</sup> He does admit that at  
 weddings and on the occasion of a victory dancing is  
 permissible, so long as it is done "honesto modo et  
 non gesticulationibus nimis inhonestis", and "ut cantus  
 excitans in talibus non sit de illicitis."<sup>3</sup> A later  
 sermon on dancing says that pride, luxury, envy, avarice  
 and lechery are all involved, and it goes on to describe  
 the agonies in hell, of people who danced on earth. Not  
 only did spectators sin in that they encourage the dan-  
 cers. Even if they disapprove, they sin, because it  
 is written in Luke, "Nolite judicare ut non judicabimini."<sup>4</sup>  
 It is from Herolt that the first indication comes of  
 the reason for the church's vehemence on the subject of  
 dancing. A young priest wished to discover what angered  
 God most. "Et ecce, oranti cum lacrymis, quidam juvenis  
 splendidus apparuit ei dicens quod Christus a chorizant-  
 ibus maxime vituperetur et dehonestatur. Nam extensio  
 brachiorum <sup>et colligatio manuum et brachiorum</sup> irrisorie repræsentat in Cruce Christi  
 extensionem pro vobis. Solent omnes chorizantes coron-  
 ari sertis, et floribus irridendo Christi spineam cor-  
 onam. Item, ornant se vestibus, irridendo Jesum Christum

1. Herolt, Sermones, Vol. II, p. 84, Sermo, 19.

2. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 84, S. 19: p. 407, S. 23.

3. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 407, S. 23: p. 575, Ex. 36.

4. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 421, S. 37, Section 1.

humilem, nudem in Cruce pendentem, Cantant etiam alacriter et rident cachinnis, irridendo fletum, et clamorem Christi in Cruce pendentis. Item osculantur se etiam mutuo, irridendo osculum Judae. Item depingunt facies suas, irridendo consputam, et velatam faciem Christi.<sup>1</sup>"

He tells too the following story, "Mulier procax et vana erat, quæ omni fere festo choreas conjungere consuevit: et factum est, ut juvenibus viris ad saltum juxta choream ludentibus, uni eorum pilam ferire conanti baculus de manu evaderet et dictam mulierem ducentem choream percussam in capite mox necaret." After her body had been taken home, a black bull, either the devil or his emissary, came and carried her spirit to hell.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of such tales of the summary justice of God in the form of circumstances, in London anyway, dancing was a normal pursuit for a summer afternoon.<sup>3</sup> John Myrc bears witness to its popularity elsewhere:

"Hawkyng and huntynge and dawnsynge  
Thow must forgo for anythyng." 4

Like Herolt, Angelus de Clavasio felt that looking at dancing was a very dangerous pastime, more spiritually than materially.<sup>5</sup> He deplored the dancing that he saw

1. Herolt, Sermones, Vol. II, p. 575, E. 35.
2. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 576, E. 40.
3. Fitzstephen in Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 12.
4. Myrc, Instructions, l. 41.
5. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, LXXXVI (versus).

going on, on Sundays. Like most of his brother clerics he cannot refrain from quoting Augustine, "facere melius femina iudearum ei lanam fellarent, quam toto die in hominibus impudice saltare." He stresses the particular peril of "gesticulationes," and issues a special injunction to the clergy, neither to dance nor even to be present at dances.<sup>1</sup> According to the Ploughman, indeed, the clergy were not averse:

"To klippen and kessen  
The damoseles that to the daunce gene." 2

The ordinary man was always ready "to hoppen and houten with heve and hale."<sup>3</sup>

Among the budding clerics dancing was certainly popular, energetic and probably violent. "In a college jealously guarded from female intrusion William of Wykham found it necessary for the protection of the sculpture in the chapel reredos to make a statute against dancing or jumping in the chapel or adjoining Hall. Chorus singing and dancing in the Hall appears forbidden in another statute of the same college."<sup>4</sup> Mr. Rashdall assumes that dancing necessitates women, but most of the morris dances, were danced in sets composed either of women, or of men, more rarely mixed. The "merellys" mentioned in Lydgate was a morris for nine men.<sup>5</sup> In country dancing as it is done to-day we

1. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, LXXXVI.
2. Political Poems and Songs, Vol. I, p. 332.
3. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 330.
4. Rashdall, Universities, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 672.
5. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 21525. This is also the name of a sedentary game, not unlike checkers.

have a survival and a revival of dances such as those described in Meier Helmbrecht. Gower's testimony in this matter gives a picture very like that of the German poet:

"And if it nedes so betyde,  
That I in compaignie abyde,  
Wher as I moste daunce and singe  
The hove dance and carolinge,  
Or for to go the newefat,  
I mai noght wel have up mi fat,  
If that she be noght in the weie;" 1

And again,

"For whanne I mai hire hand beklippe  
With such gladnesse I dance and skippe  
Me thenkth I touche noght the flor:" 2

This touching of one another is one of the dangers of dancing according to Gerson. "Tangere pueros in facie et alibi estne Peccatum?" And the answer he gives is most emphatically, Yes.<sup>3</sup>

Henry Parker is not so vehement, as most of the clergy. "And so" he says, "yf dancyng and playng now on holy days styre men and wymen to pryde, to lechery, glotony and sleuthe/ to over long wakyng on nyghts/ and to ydle ness on the werke dayes/ & other synnes/ as it is ryght lykely that they do now in our dayes, then ben they unlefyll noth on holy daye and on the werke daye. And ayenst all suche spake Saynt Austin. But ayenst honeste daūces & playes done in due tyme & in good maner on the holy daye spake Saynt Austyn not."<sup>4</sup>

1. Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, Lib. VI, l. 141.
2. Ibid. Lib. IV, l. 2783.
3. Opera, Gerson, Tom. III, Pars I, col. 126.
4. Parker, *Dives and Pauper*, Commandment III, xvij, page i, iiij.

Again he goes on to show that the Bible gives license to dancing. Did not the children of Israel dance to celebrate their escape through the Red Sea, and David<sup>1</sup> before the Ark?

Meffreth's sermons show a great similarity to Herolt in this matter of dancing. He, too, tells the story of the woman killed accidentally by a ball player. Probably they both got their story from one of the Liber ~~Ex~~emplorum of the time, or possibly Meffreth found the stories in Herolt's works. We get in Meffreth's sermons the same account of the dance as a ridicule of the passion of Christ. The outstretched arms, the movements of the body are in direct contrast to Christ's helplessness on the cross. The fine clothes and garlands of flowers are a sinful boast thrown against the humility of Jesus and his crown of thorns. The bold eyes and proud gestures ridicule Christ's hanging head. Finally "sicut christus in omnibus membris suis patiebatur, sic<sup>2</sup> chorizans in omnibus membris delectatur."

The Ship of fools has a place for dancers. After a dissertation on the sins involved in the dance, pride and lust being the chief, and also a scornful picture of dancing,<sup>3</sup> "loufen umb als werens toub," he finishes:

1. Parker, Dives and Pauper, Commandment III, xvij, page, i iiij.

2. All this is to be found in Meffreth, Sermones, Pars Hiemalis, R,z, to S, a.

3. Brant, Narrenschiff, p. 60, beg, at l. 61.





"Uff kilchwih, erste mess ouch brocht  
 Do danzten pfaffen, mynch und leyen  
 Die kutt müss sich do hynden reyen  
 Do loufft man, und wurfft umbher eyn  
 Das man hoch sieht die blossen beyn." 1



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1. Brant, Narrenschiff, Cap. 61, l. 83.

## Chapter V.

## Chiefly Playing at Ball.

Ball games, or any games in which missiles were used, were as popular as dancing. We have had some examples of such games already. Shooting at the king's deer with crossbows, and cockthreshing are certainly<sup>1</sup> to be included in the latter class.

Shooting with a longbow does not seem to have been a voluntary pastime. This statement will be borne out indirectly by the evidence which appears in this chapter, and, for that matter, in those preceding and following. However shooting with the crossbow seems to have had a considerable attraction. In view of the many exhortations for the practice of the longbow, it seems probable that casual references to shooting as an amusement would<sup>1</sup> refer rather to the crossbow than the longbow.

In 1367 the Archbishop of York objects to shooting,

1. Proclamations issued by the king, 1363 and 1365: Rymer, pp. 704, 770. London proclamation, undated probably circa 1476; Calendar Letter Bk. L. p. 144. London proclamation, II Henry V, 1414, Cal. Letter Bk. I. p. 125. Statute, 1388. 12 Richard II, c. vi. Statute, 1410, 11 Henry IV, c. iv, also Rot. Parl. Vol. III, p. 643. Statute, 1477, 17 Edward IV, c. iii, also Rot. Parl. Vol. VI, p. 188. Coventry Leet Bk., 1518, p. 661. It is true that usually no explicit reference is made to crossbows. But, as I have pointed out, the urgency and frequency of orders for the use of the long bow lend themselves to the support of the view that shooting with a longbow was not considered amusing. Further material which will be cited later also goes to show that shooting with the crossbow was.

"sagittationes," in holy places.<sup>1</sup> John Myrc has nothing good to say of shooting, nor is his contemporary, the author of "Jacob's Well", any more favourably disposed to it.<sup>2</sup>

In 1441 Will Oxton is ordered by the city of Coventry to move the butts from "le Mukhill in the Litil-park-strete, sine contradictione alicuius, per preceptem Maioris & modo facientes faciant in alio loco: et proviso quod nullus deinceps sagittet in le cokfytynge place, etc."<sup>3</sup> 1474 shows a development of shooting, called "roving". This was shooting at moving butts. Unfortunately no one troubled to explain how the butts were moved. However, by 1474 the powers in Coventry had realized its dangers and had forbidden its practice.<sup>4</sup> It was still popular in 1480. Prior Deram then complains that "the people of this Cite yerely breken the hegges and dikes of the seid Priours in other divers places in their shotyng called rovyng, and nother sparen corn ne grasse but destroyen and defowlen here to his hurte yerely, C s. and some yere more."<sup>5</sup> For Lydgate's "shooting at besselys",<sup>6</sup> Furnivall suggests some kind of archery. It may have been roving, or just ordinary shooting at standing butts.

1. Wilkins, Vol. III, p. 68.
2. Myrc, Instructions, lines 39, 883.  
Jacob's Well, p. 105.
3. Coventry Leet Book, p. 196.
4. Ibid. p. 389.
5. Ibid. p. 445.
6. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 11191.

Edward III's proclamation of 1363, headed "De arte sagittandi intenda, et ludis inutilis et inhonestis prohibendis," after deploring the decline of archery, continues, "et jam dicta arte<sup>quasi</sup> totaliter dismissa, idem populus ad jactus lapidum, lignorum et ferri, et quidam ad pilam manua<sup>1</sup>lem, pedivam et bacularum et ad canibucam--" Only one word is changed in the repetition of this which appeared in 1365.<sup>1</sup> That must be a slip of the pen: for canibucam, is written cambucam.

"Pilam manua<sup>2</sup>lem" may include many ball games, but it most certainly includes ordinary "catch". According to Walther von der Vogelweide, girls indulged in this kind of game. In fact, girls playing ball in the street were for him an indication of the arrival of spring.<sup>2</sup> By a gruesome but lively simile Caesarius von Haesterbach shows that the game was no mere fiction of the imagination. "Daemones animam tollentes et ad vallem profundam, terribilem, fumumque sulphureum evaporantem, illam portantes, ordinabant ex una parte animam miseram ad similitudinem ludi pilae proiciebant, alii ex parte altera per aera volantem manibus suscipie<sup>3</sup>bant." Gower speaks of the child's ball being its greatest treasure. It is not too strained a conclusion

1. Rymer, p. 704, 770.

2. Walther von der Vogelweide, p. 7. Song, l.

3. Caesarius, Dialogus, Vol. I, p. 37, Dist.

I, cap. xxxii.

that the child's game would often be as simple as that  
of the devils.<sup>1</sup> "Pilam" of the statute of Narbonne  
college could also include just such a game.<sup>2</sup> In 1382 the  
constables of East Merrington were enjoined to check  
any sort of ball play, and in Richard II's statute six  
years later, under the head "pelotes a meyn" would fall  
any ordinary game of catch.<sup>3</sup> The order was repeated in  
1410 by Henry IV, at the request of the commons.<sup>4</sup>

In her treatise on the blasing of arms, Juliana  
Berners makes the distinction between "pila" meaning  
pillar, and "pila" -- "for a certen rounde instrument to  
play with which instrument servith otherwhile to the  
honde and thenne it is callyd in latyn (Pila manualis)  
as here."<sup>5</sup> Handball, among other ball games is expressly  
prohibited in a proclamation issued in 1414 in London.  
As it appears with coytes and kailes, which also could  
be claimed as handball, the field is here narrowed to  
catch, tennis and hockey.<sup>6</sup> Myrc himself simply refers to  
"bal" but a note to another line in the same passage  
gives a list of games, in which handball is specifically  
mentioned.<sup>7</sup>

1. Gower, *Mirour de L'Omme*, l. 1469 ff.
  2. Rashdall, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 670, note 2.
  3. Coulton, *Mediaeval Village*, p. 93.
  4. 12 Richard II, c. vi.
  4. 11 Henry IV, c. iv. Rot. Parl. Vol. III, p. 643.
  5. Berners, *Book of St. Albans*, p. e iiij
  - (versus) (Of balllys in armys here now it shall be shewyd.)
  6. Calendar of Letter Book I. p. 125.
  7. Myrc, *Instructions*, l. 334. note in Douce
- MS. to l. 332.

Grace Dieu says to the Pilgrim:

"The same stonys I ha longe  
Kept hem bounde wonder stronge  
With Inne a purs (shortly to say)  
Off entent, with hem to pleye  
With maydens wych on me a-byde,  
Evere a waytynge on my syde,  
At the martews, the gentyl play  
Usyd in fraunce many a day." l.

She might mean marbles, but Furnivall explains the passage as referring to toss ball or catch.

Stones seem hardly the proper instrument for a game of catch, but there were other games in which such hard missiles were not out of place. "Casting of stone" has its counterparts in the casting of the hammer, putting the weight and throwing the discus. In all of these the skill and knack undoubtedly are a great factor in success, but muscular strength is the greatest advantage. In quoits or tiles, on the other hand, strength was a minor asset, though considerable force seems to have been used. Even an amicable game could be fatal to participants. "For while the said John Fuatard and one John le Clerk were playing together with their tiles in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdalen in Suthwark, when throwing the tile in his turn, and quite against his own will, struck the said John Fuatard with his tile on the right side of the head." As a result<sup>2</sup> the unfortunate Fuatard died.

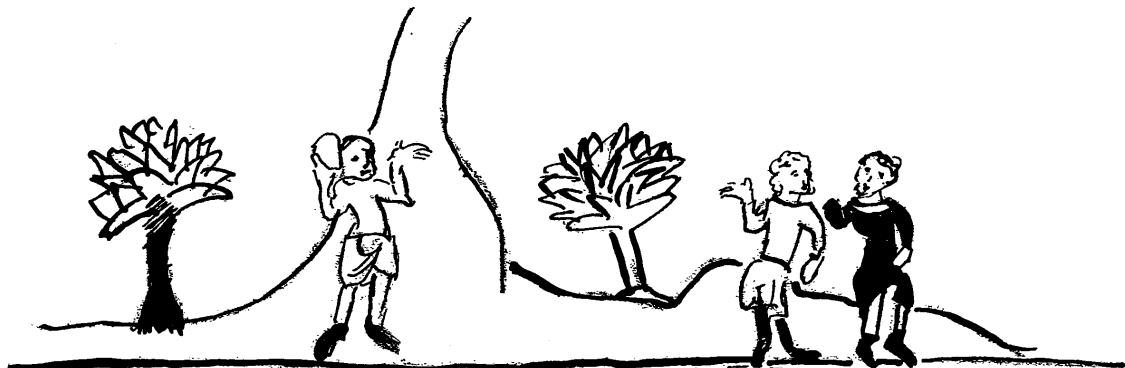
1. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 8427. The explanation of the word in the Oxford dictionary shows a game analagous to stoolball which comes under discussion later.

2. Riley, p. 3.

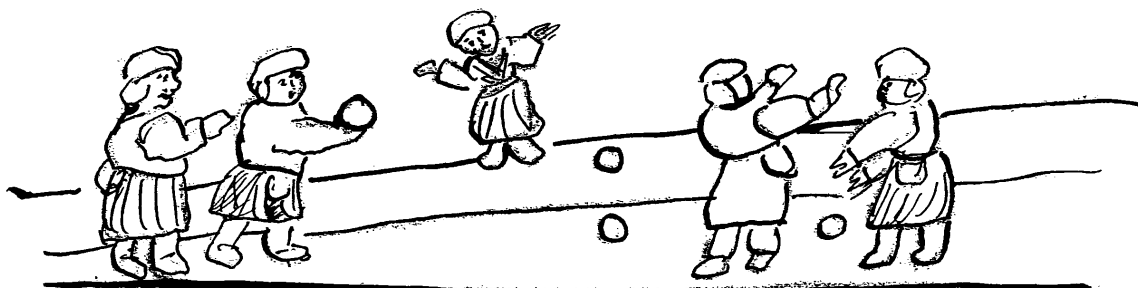
The evidence for casting of the stone in the proclamations of 1363 and 1365 we have already seen. The substance of the proclamations was set down as a statute in 1388. In this statute "coits, Dice Casting of the stone (gettre de pere)<sup>1</sup> Kailes and other such importune games" are forbidden. When the statute was repeated twenty years later, it orders that servants and labourers shall "utterly leave playing at the Balls as well Hand-ball as Football and other Games called Coits Dice Bowling and other such unthrifty games."<sup>2</sup> This repetition<sup>3</sup> was called for by the Commons in Parliament. It is worth noting that Bowling is the translation given here for "gettre de Peer." "Gettre de Pier" appears once again in a proclamation, this time in the city of London in 1414.<sup>4</sup> According to Myrc the "castynge of ax tre and eke of stone" in the churchyard was a common disciplinary<sup>5</sup> problem for the ordinary parish priest.

<sup>6</sup> Bowling was known in Germany as early as 1400. In England after 1414, casting of stone is replaced in the proclamations by bowling and closh. These are also<sup>7</sup> accompanied by Kails. The three games flourished through the rest of the period. Closh and Kails are somewhat similar. Both are related to the game we call skittles or ninepins. Indeed Kails was probably the grandfather

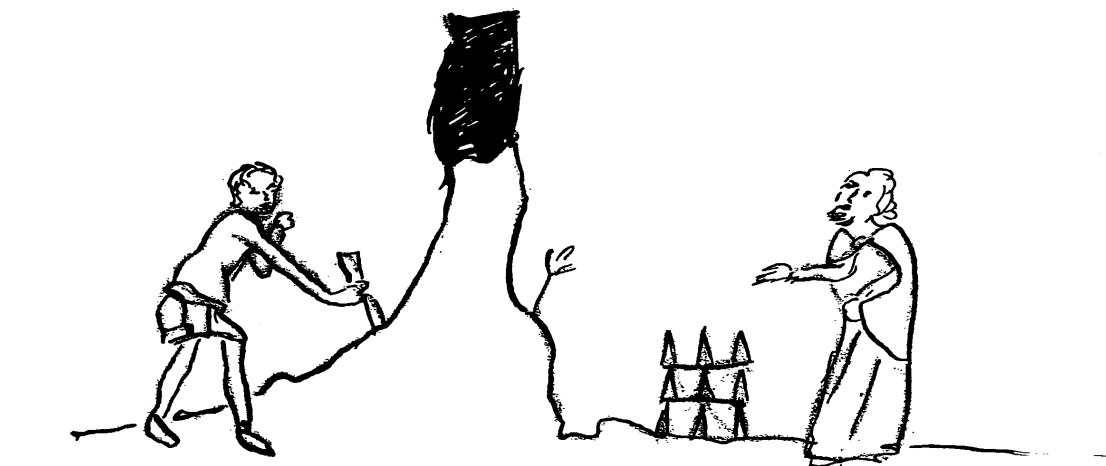
1. 12 Richard II, c. vi.
2. 11 Henry IV, c. iv: 1409-1410.
3. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. III, p. 643.
4. Calendar of Letter Book I. p. 125.
5. Myrc, Instructions, l. 334.
6. Grimm, Vol. III, p. 739. "Item. man schall verbieten kuglein in den dörffern bei 50 pfund Perner." Tirol Schlanders.
7. Calendar of Letter Book I. p. 125.



Putting the Stone: from Royal MS. 10 E. iv  
Early Fourteenth Century.



Bowls: from Add. MS. 24098 Flemish Calendar  
Early Sixteenth Century.



Kails or Ninepins: from Royal MS. 10 E. iv.  
Early Fourteenth Century



and cloy the father of the modern game. Kails was played with a stick. The idea was of course to knock the nine pins down by throwing the stick from a prescribed distance. In cloy the stick was replaced by one of those "round objects" mentioned by Juliana Berners.<sup>1</sup> That cloy developed from kails is certain and the analagous development of bowling from one of the various forms of "pierre jetteresse"<sup>2</sup> and coits is an interesting comment on the growth of the sport. The interest in the games themselves led to variations in them, and the improvement in the implements used. To make a round ball required skilled workmanship, while a stick or a stone could be picked up anywhere. No doubt the idea of a new consumable, recreational commodity was as welcome, if not perhaps so consciously welcome, as it is to the directors of the new world, described by Aldous Huxley.

As I have already suggested skittles, or its earliest form kails, appeared before bowling. Charles le Sage was not slow to follow the English king's example. In 1369 he issued an order forbidding "quilles".<sup>3</sup> The Provost of Paris makes a similar injunction, prohibiting bowls and ninepins on working days.<sup>4</sup> Myrc's "bal" is amplified in a note added early in the fifteenth century,<sup>5</sup> listing "cotteyng" and "bollyng." Late in the

1. Strutt, p. 271. Luce also shows the difference between quilles and bowls. p. 109.

2. Gower, *Mirour de l'Homme*, l. 5781.

3. Luce, p. 102. *English Proc.* 1363, 1365.

4. Wright, p. 223.

5. Myrc, *Instructions*, l. 332. Note to Douce MS.

fifteenth century bowling was forbidden at Thurgau in Germany.<sup>1</sup> When Robert Bassett was mayor of London in 1476, he forbade the exercise of "cloishe playinge or cails indoors or out of doors under penalty of 40 s. and imprisonment for six days."<sup>2</sup> If the weight of the penalty is any indication of the popularity of the game, it is safe to say that it was very popular. The words "indoors or out of doors" too suggest that no opportunity for play was lost.

Although Hails and Bowls had already become a cause of concern in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, cloysh did not appear in the statute books until 1477.<sup>3</sup> Then it appeared together with Kailes and HalfBowl as a "new imagined game." Why Kailes and HalfBowl should be classed as new, it is hard to say, and cloysh itself, as we have seen, had certainly been known as early as 1414.<sup>4</sup> The only possible explanation for this description of them is that their popularity was assuming proportions which brought them urgent governmental attention. The real cause of the complaint against them was that such games, on weekdays, were a waste of a man's working time; on feast days, they kept him from archery practice.

Even at Christmas time when servants and labourers were allowed a little recreation, cloysh and bowls were

1. Grimm, Vol. V, p. 137.

2. Calendar of Letter Book L. p. 140. Similar proclamation, undated, appears *ibid.* p. 144. Cf. Statute 1477.

3. 12 Richard II, c. vi. 11 Henry IV, c. iv. Rotuli Parliamentorum Vol. III, p. 643. 17 Edward IV, c. iii

4. Calendar of Letter Book I. p. 125.

not to be allowed freely.<sup>1</sup> If the game was played everywhere in the street, as it was in Coventry in the sixteenth century, the measure does not seem to be altogether unreasonable.<sup>2</sup> This order, like the others was issued for the encouragement of archery. Youth would not be downed by mere prohibitions:

"Pleye at the cloos, among I shall  
                   \*       \*       \*       \*  
                   And sometyme pleyen at the bowlys  
                   \*       \*       \*       \*<sup>3</sup>  
 and           Pleye at the keylës and the quek."

There is no direct evidence for the evolution of tennis in England until the second half of the fourteenth century, but from 1363 on, tennis was a popular game with all classes.<sup>4</sup> Its play was first forbidden then, and again two years later in the proclamations ordering the practice of the long bow.<sup>4</sup> The only doubt in connection with it here, is whether it falls under the head of "pilam manualement," "bacularum" or "canibucam." Most probably it was played then, as its French name suggests, with the palm of the hand. It must have been known before then even in England, and it was certainly a considerable pastime in Paris in 1292. In that year the "rôles de la taille" show thirteen tennis ball makers, which suggests that the game had seen a fair amount of development.<sup>5</sup> Louis X's death in 1316 is

1. 11 Henry VII, c. 2. 19 Henry VII, c. 13.
2. Coventry Leet Book, p. 661.
3. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 11181, 11190, 11198.
4. Rymer, p. 704, p. 770.
5. Jusserand, p. 240, Guerard, Paris sous Philippe le Bel, Documents Inédits, 1837, Vol. 33, pp. 506, 519, 529, 546. Two apprentices figure here also.

supposed to have been the result of a fever caught  
as a result of a game of tennis.<sup>1</sup> Anyway, it was well  
known in England before Gower's death in 1408, at  
least, so one would judge from the casualness of his  
references to it:

"Of the tenetz to winne or lese a chace  
May no lif wite er that the bal be ronne." 2

and again,

"Au palme qant om juer doit,  
N'iert la pelote plus estroit  
D'estoupe a faire un bon rebouh,  
Qe n'iert le ventre en son endroit  
Du glous, qui sont mangut et boit." 3

"La paume" figures also in the proclamation of Charles  
le Sage. It was one of the games which interfered with  
archery practice in the year 1369.<sup>4</sup> The Provost  
of Paris, too, in 1397 found it necessary to forbid  
tennis play on the working days, and Luce's statement  
makes one of the reasons obvious; The order seems to  
have been useless for between 1375 and 1378 there were  
"un certain nombre d'exemples de rixes plus ou moins  
sanglantes amenées par ce jeu, ou ayant éclaté à l'occas-  
ion de ce jeu."<sup>5</sup>

In the statute of 1388 tennis appears as "pelotes  
a meyn."<sup>6</sup> However the translation in the statute book of

1. Jusserand, p. 242, Chronique Rimee, poss-  
ibly by Geoffroi de Paris.

2. Gower, To King Henry IV, In Praise of Peace,  
l. 296.

3. Gower, Mirour de l'Omme, l. 7791

4. Luce, p. 102.

5. Wright, p. 223 and Luce, p. 105.

6. 12 Richard II, c. vi.

those same words in a statute of 1410 gives the word<sup>1</sup>  
handball. But, as I will show later, that does not  
preclude the possibility of it being tennis. Moreover,  
as tennis was a well known game before 1408, and  
appears definitely mentioned in the contemporary note  
to Myrc's "Instructions to Parish Priests," shortly after  
that, it is reasonable to suppose that the words in both  
statutes are intended to cover tennis as well as other<sup>2</sup>  
ball games. The same is also true of the London<sup>3</sup>  
proclamation published in 1414.

The argument that tennis was a sport of the upper  
classes only is weak. If that were so, why would Myrc's  
commentator expressly mention tennis, when the book  
was intended for the guidance of the ordinary priest  
dealing with ordinary folk. On the whole it was not  
yet an expensive game, in England at least. Raquets  
had not been introduced. The ball was simply struck  
with the hand. At this stage, too, any ball of a  
convenient size would do.

"Hail! put forth thy dall!  
I bring thee but a ball  
Have and play the withall  
And go to the tennis." 4

In France special balls had found their place, or at<sup>5</sup>  
least were being manufactured. They were to come soon

1. 11 Henry IV, c. iv. This repetition was  
made by petition of the Commons, Rot. Parl. Vol. III, p. 643.

2. See page 75 for Reference in Gower. Myrc,  
Instructions, l. 332.

3. Calendar of Letter Book I. p. 125.

4. Everyman, Wakefield Nativity Play, p. 73.

5. See page 74, note 5.

in England. By 1464 "tenysballes" had become a commodity of some importance. The law passed in that year, in which the import of "tenysballes," among certain other articles, was forbidden, is an interesting example of the contrariness of protection.<sup>1</sup> These imports were all forbidden on the ground that they were endangering the life of the home industries. From this two things appear. First, the tennis ball industry, while not flourishing, was yet strong enough to join with other industries which in a like manner were suffering from French competition, and to ask favours from the government. Second, the fact that the favour was granted, which shows a desire to encourage the industry, would lead one to suppose that the game itself might be fostered. The majority of the people of England, however, were still forbidden to play the game on the ground that it interfered with their archery practice. This statute of 1477, which treats of the new imagined games of closh and kailles, brands tennis as an old offender.<sup>2</sup> A similar state of affairs existed in France. Presumably the game was still forbidden, yet we find Louis XI in 1480 giving orders, at the request of the tennis ball makers, for the proper supervision of the game in order to insure the use of their proper balls and no others.<sup>3</sup>

1. 3 Edward IV, c. 4.

2. 17 Edward IV, c. iii. Rot. Parl. Vol. VI, p. 188

3. Jusserand, pp. 245, 246. Ref. Ordonnances des rois de France de la troisième race. Pub. Paris 1723-1849. Vol. XVIII.

A local order from Worcester in 1467, probably issued earlier than that, runs, "Also that no maner persone playe at the pame or at tenys, wtyn the yeld halle of the seid cite uppon payne of every persone found in defea<sup>1</sup>te xl d." The London authorities in 1476 thought drastic measures were necessary. The penalty they imposed was forty shillings and six days' imprisonment for playing tennis closh or cailes, "indoors or out of doors."<sup>2</sup> In spite of these penalties and the heavy penalty imposed by the statute of 1477 on those who allowed such games in the precincts of their houses, the game survived through the century and beyond.<sup>3</sup>

The mediaeval game seems never to have had a lined court, though indoor play postulates a limitation of space. In the "jeu de bonde" which Luce claims is tennis, and which was played in the fourteenth century the roof of a church might occasionally serve as the net.<sup>4</sup> In its early days, tennis was a sort of handball, the ball being struck with the palm of the hand. Later gloves were introduced and gloves with a sort of net to give extra resilience. Finally the raquet appeared. It was first used in the fourteenth century, but was probably not generally used until the sixteenth century.

1. English Gilds, p. 372.

2. Calendar of Letter Book L. p. 140, an undated proclamation appears at p. 1444 which is probably an echo of the statute of 1477.

3. 11 Henry VII, c. 2. 19 Henry VII, c. 13.

4. Luce, p. 105.

Even then the older form of the game persisted. Indeed it seems to have been the only form known in Spain at that time. The French scoring remarked by the Spanish visitor was the same as the modern.<sup>1</sup>

The "baculus" used in ball games might be a golf club, a hockey stick or a bat of any description. "Pilam canibucam" also might refer to any game played with a club. I think that golf was a considerably later development; none of the descriptions of these games lend themselves to a picture of golf. But it is hard to determine whether hockey or stoolball is the object of most of the fourteenth and fifteenth century references. A reference to "crossiam" in the statutes of Narbonne college in 1379 could mean either.<sup>2</sup> Stoolball was probably the more popular of the two games. To-day it is played with much the same circumstances as cricket. According to Grantham, in its early stages it was probably analagous to French cricket. That is, one person equipped with a bat endeavoured to protect a wicket from being hit by a ball thrown by a second person or group of persons.<sup>3</sup> At some time a stool, (called a

1. Jusserand, p. 248, note. "Raro luditur palma.--Quomodo ergo percutiunt pilam? Pugno, ut folles?--Ne sic quidem, sed reticulo.--Confecto ex filo?--Ex fidibus crassiusculis, quales fere sunt sextae in testudine...Sub funem misisse globulum viciū est, seu peccatum.. Numeri (sunt) quaterni, quindecim, triginta, quadraginta quinque seu antegressio, aequalitas numerorum...Pila autem vel ex volatu remittitur, vel ex primo resultu: ex secundo enim ictus est invalidus." Exercitatio linguae latinae.--Leges ludi.-- Opera, Bâle, 1555.

2. Rashdall, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 670, note 2.

3. Grantham, pp. 11 & 12. The original wicket was any handy object such as an old tree stump.



cricket in Scotland,) when the object was to pass the ball between the legs of the stool. Later a raised target was used, a board affixed to a tree or post. This<sup>1</sup> changed the game from a ground game to an air game. How soon several people were involved in the game it is impossible to discover. Nor is it possible to discover what stage of its development it had reached, when Myrc's commentator added his note to the Douce MS. in the middle of the fifteenth century. It seems likely though that the two wickets or crickets were in use when Youth stated that she would ,

"Somewhyle Rennyn at the ball  
Wyth a staff mad lyk an hook." 2

I think that it is fair to claim this reference for stoolball rather than hockey and to take the next line

"And I wyl han a ~~kampyng~~ crook" 3

<sup>4</sup>  
to refer to the latter game.

In dealing with both these games conjecture is stronger than fact. Even in a story told in one of Meffreth's sermons it is uncertain to which game he referred. "Et factum est ut iuuenibus viris ad saltum iuxta choream ludentibus uni eorum pylam ferire conanti baculus de manu evaderet et dictam mulierem ducemem

1. Grantham, pp. 11 & 12.

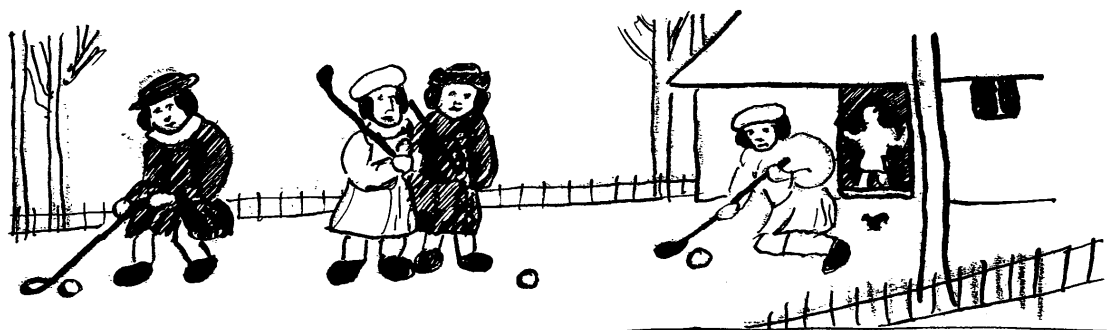
2 & 3. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 11182. l. 11184.

4. At first glance it would seem more reasonable to accept the first couplet as hockey, and the next line as stoolball. Rennyn at the ball does sound like hockey, but when you compare pleyen at the chesse, (Jacob's Well, p. 105.) pleying at the two hande swerde; (Lydgate, Pilg. l. 1429: at the martews.) play at tenys, (English Gilds, p. 372.) ad pilam manualementem...se indulgent. (Rymer, p. 704.) the descriptive evidence of the phrase fades to nothing.



STOOL-BALL (?)

FLEMISH CALENDAR OF SIXTEENTH  
CENTURY  
Add MS. 24098



Billes ?

FLEMISH CALENDAR OF SIXTEENTH  
CENTURY.  
Add MS. 24098,



BALL AND BAT GAME.



HOCKEY.

FROM ROYAL MS. 10. E IV.  
FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

choream percussam in capite mox necaret." A bat would<sup>1</sup>  
 be more likely to fly out of a man's hand in a game  
 approaching our hockey than in stoolball, which was more<sup>2</sup>  
 like our cricket.

Just what les billes forbidden by Charles le Sage  
 in 1369 were, is again uncertain. It sounds like billiards;  
 it was played with "un billart"<sup>3</sup> In 1399, in France, a  
 man called Robin killed another with a billart "qu'il  
 avoit porté avec lui audit hostel et de quoy il avoit  
 joué ledit jours aux billes."<sup>3</sup> The description of  
 this billart, given by Pharaon in La Grande Encyclopedie  
 shows it as being something like a hockey stick. Probably<sup>4</sup>  
 the game was an early form of croquet or clock golf.

(continued from page 80, note 4.)

Moreover a late sixteenth century reference gives in  
 the same line both stoolball and camping ball, so that  
 it is very unlikely that they should refer to the  
 identical game. (Quotation from Drant, Ars Poetica, B. iiij.  
 at p. 14, in Grantham.)

1. Meffreth, Sermones, Pars Hiemalis, Rz.  
 This story appears too in Herolt, Sermones, Vol. II, p. 576,  
 Example 40.

2. "It appears the game was played (as now)  
 by matrons and maids, for in the Countess of Pembrok's  
 Life of Sir Philip Sidney (Arcadia Sonnets)? there is the  
 dialogue between two shepherds, Will and Dick:

Will: A time there is for all, my mother often says  
 When she with skirts tuck'd very high,  
 With girls at stoolball plays." (p. 31.)

This was in 1590. Another still later (1619) reference  
 given by Grantham is, "When country wenches play with  
 ball and stool." (Pasquil's Palm, 1877, p. 152.) Grantham, p. 13  
 Both these are well outside our period but I do not think  
 that it is too strained, to say that if women played  
 in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was no  
 novelty, but simply a continuance of what had been the  
 normal practice in earlier days.

3. Luce, p. 102. Douët D'Arce, Vol. II, p. 241.

4. Luce, p. 110. On ne connaissait alors que  
 le billard de terre, analogue au croquet, qui se jouait  
 en plein air et au ras du sol. Le billard monté, dû  
 EST venu notre jeu actuel, date seulement de l'époque de la  
 Renaissance."

Football was probably the most popular of all these ball games. The earliest record definitely dealing with football, is a proclamation issued by Nicholas de Farndon in London in 1314.<sup>1</sup> A similar ordinance appeared five years later in France, forbidding "ludos soularum."<sup>2</sup> Magoun claims two earlier references for the game, one at Oxford, in 1303, and another at Ulklam in 1280. Both references are vague and Magoun admits that, for the former, the only corroboration lies in the known popularity of the game a little time later.<sup>3</sup> Football is not named in the earlier reference but it does admit of more consideration because the occasion is very similar to a football game in 1321. At Ulklam in 1280, "They were both running to the ball, and ran against each other, and the knife hanging from David's belt stuck out so that the point through the sheath struck against Henry's belly. Henry was wounded right through the sheath and died by his adventure."<sup>4</sup> In 1321, "during a game at ball (ad pilam) as he kicked the ball (cum pede) a lay friend of his also called William ran against and wounded himself on the sheathed knife carried by the canon, so severely that he died."<sup>5</sup> Even in the face of this evidence it can only be accepted as a probability that the game played in 1280 was the

1. Article by Magoun in American Historical Review, October 1929, p. 36.
2. Jusserand, p. 271. (Phillippe le Long)
3. Magoun, p. 36.
4. " p. 35.
5. " p. 37

was the same as that played in 1321. Jusserand, too, claims that the game was well known before the fourteenth century order, and with more direct evidence. Among "Les Gieus de Robin" appears a mention of "la choule" which is the same thing as soule or ludos soularum.<sup>1</sup>

By 1363, football was a common sport in England. It is forbidden in both of Edward III's proclamations for the furtherance of shooting with the long bow.<sup>2</sup> Nor was it any less popular in France. In 1369 Charles le Sage found it expedient to forbid "la soule" for similar reasons.<sup>3</sup> In England this prohibition of football, and other games, was set down in the statute books in 1388.<sup>4</sup> In 1410 the law was again brought forward by the House of Commons.<sup>5</sup> The growing middle class viewed with alarm the increasing license of servants and labourers who left their archery practice, and, worse, their work for such "Jeues importunes." A "lettre de grace" of 1374 shows in its preamble that in spite of the prohibition, the game went on in France as in England, and we have definite news of a game at Neufchatel in 1380.<sup>6</sup> A special act of Charles VI early in his reign seems to accept the playing of "soule" as a matter of course. "Comme, de si longtemps qu'il n'est memoire du contraire, les gens du pays du Vexin Normand et de la forêt de Lyons aient accoutumé de eux ébattre et assembler chacun an

1. Jusserand, p. 270.

2. Rymer, 704, 770, 1363, 1365.

3. Luce, p. 102.

6. Luce, p. 112.

4. 12 Richard II, c. vi.

5. 11 Henry IV, c. iv. Rot. Parl. Vol. III, p. 643.

pour souler et jouer à la soule les uns contre les autres devant la porte de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame de Mortemer.<sup>1</sup>"

Two inquests in 1425 are interesting evidences of the normal procedure on religious holidays. They report games played in 1403 and 1404, one on St. Bartholomew's day. These games were landmarks in the lives of the two men. Both remember baptisms because in football games, immediately following, they suffered broken legs. Another instance of the close relation of football and religious ceremonies is the London proclamation of 1409. "No person shall levy money, or cause it to be levied for the games called foteball, or cokthresshyng; because of marriages that have recently taken place in the seid city, or suburbs thereof; on pain of imprisonment and of making fine at the discretion of the Mayor and Aldermen."<sup>3</sup>

A few years later a more comprehensiver order was issued, forbidding "the playing of handball or football, 'coytes' 'Dyces' stone throwing (gettre de pier) 'kailes' and other such fruitless games" and ordering the practice of the bow, on pain of six days' imprisonment "as of old ordained."<sup>4</sup> That this order had as little effect

1. Luce, p; 112.

2. John Hendyman recollected the baptism of the deceased "because on that day (St Bartholomew's, August 24th, 1403 at Selmeston, immediately after the baptism of the said William, he played at football, and so broke his leg." John Coumbes remembered the baptism of Robert Taub of Chudham in 1404 for the same reason. Magoun, p. 39. (Am. Hist. Review, October 1929.)

3. Riley, p. 571.

4. Calendar of Letter Book I. p, 125, 1414.

as all the others before it is borne out by an extract from the accounts of the Brewer's Company of London.

"The names of Crafftes and Fraternities that deden hyren oure halle yn the seid ij yeres with the sommes of money that they dede payen..... of the ffootballe pleyers be ij tymes...<sup>1</sup>xx d." One wonders who these football players were. Why did they want the hall? Gluttony was one of mediaeval man's besetting sins, so probably it was for a banquet. Did mediaeval London rejoice in a city football league? But whatever the answer to these questions may be, it is significant of the growth and the popularity of the game that there should be a group of people banded together, known simply as the football players, apparently accepted without further qualifications.

A statute of 1477 omits football in its catalogue of unlawful games. This omission is probably a slip of the scribe, for it is expressly mentioned in the petition of the commons which calls for the law.<sup>2</sup> The further omission of football from the list of prohibited games issued by the laws of 1495 and 1503, can, I think, be explained by the fact that the games mentioned are all such as could be played indoors, and were allowable under certain conditions at Christmas time. Football

1. Between 1418 and 1440. Magoun, p. 40.

2. 17 Edward IV, c.iii. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. VI, p. 188.

was omitted because it was not admissible at any time.<sup>1</sup>

The church has little or nothing to say of football in particular. Myrc's commentator is the only ecclesiastical writer who mentions it by name. But all ball games were anathéma to the stricter clergy. Myrc himself saw no reason to go into detail. "Bal and bares and such play" he condemns without further ado.<sup>2</sup> The complaint of Nicholas de Clemanges is simply "plurimos pila tenet."<sup>3</sup> For the most part they do not even make that distinction, but class all games, whether with balls or without, as dishonest at best, and at worst as instruments of the devil.

It is not certain what kind of ball was used in this game of football. That it was not an ordinary ball is obvious from the distinction made by Juliana Berners. "This terme (pila) is take for a certen rounde instrument to play with. whiche instrument servith otherwhile to the honde and thenne it is callyd in latyn (pila manualis) as here. And otherwhyle it is an Instrument for the fotess and thenne it is callyd in latyn (pila pedalis) a foteballe."<sup>4</sup>

But football is one of the few games played in the Middle Ages of which there is direct descriptive

1. 11 Henry VII, c. 2. 19 Henry VII, c. 13.

2. Myrc, Instructions, l. 334. There is no real certainty that the commentator is a churchman, but he probably was.

3. Nicholas de Clemanges, Opera, p. 143, (4).

4. Berners, Boke of St. Albans, Of ballys in armys here now it shall be shewed. p. c iiij, versus. Cf. note on Shrove Tuesday match at the end of the chapter.



evidence. This fact, with the knowledge of the "football players" and the knowledge that money could be, and was, levied for the game, show that it was a popular amusement. Here is a description of the play in the late fifteenth century. "The game at which they had met for common recreation is called by some the football game. It is one in which young men, in country sport, propel a huge ball not throwing it into the air but by striking and roll-  
int it along the ground, and that not with their hands, but with their feet. A game, I say, abominable enough, and, in my judgment at least more common, undignified and worthless than any other kind of game, rarely ending but with some loss, accident or disadvantage to the players themselves. What then? The boundaries had been marked and the game started: and when they were striving manfully kicking in opposite directions, and our hero had thrown himself into the midst of the fray, one of his fellows whose name I know not, came up against him from in front and kicked him by misadventure missing his aim at the ball.<sup>1</sup>

1. Magoun (Am Hist. Rev. ) p. 43: ref. Miracles of Henry VI, published by Knox and Leslie, (p. 17) Philip Stubbes, a puritan of the sixteenth century calls it "rather a friendlie kind of fyghte than a play or recreation....for doth not everyone lye in waight for his adversarie seeking to overthrow him and picke him on the nose, though it be on harde stones, on ditch or dale, on valley or hill, or whatever place soever it be he careth not so he have him downe: and he that can serve the most of this fashion he is counted the only fellow and who but he." (Coulton, Mediaeval Village, p. 95.) This gives the same picture of the unlimited space covered by the play of the game as we hear of it in Branch Johnson's account of the Shrove Tuesday match at Ashburne in 1928, where the goals, the river and the village are three miles apart. He says, too, that the ball used is "a good deal bigger than an orthodox football, made of leather and stuffed with shavings or straw." (Football as a Survival of Magic, W. Branch Johnson: Contemporary Review, Vol. 135. (January to June 1929.)

## Chapter VI.

Sedentary Games (I).  
Backgammon and Dice.

Sedentary games, too, held a prominent place in the social life of the Middle Ages. Their popularity and variety is clear from the mass of the evidence relating to them. According to Strutt there were, in the twelfth century, ten games played with dice.<sup>1</sup> Dicing games, purely as games of chance, were very popular, but tables into which an element of skill entered had also a considerable attraction.

Tables or backgammon was known in thirteenth century Germany, for Berthold makes more than one specific reference to it in his sermons, usually coupling it with dancing. "So gât ir gerne zem tanze, der zem wîne und der zuo dem toppel, der ze unnützer rede, der dâ hin, der sô hin, und gar ungerne dâ hin daz in nutze und guot waere."<sup>2</sup> Nor was Germany the only country which knew the game in the thirteenth century. The French poem from which Robert of Brunne translated his *Handlyng Synne*, deplures the use of the game on

1. Strutt's reference (p. 306) is John of Salisbury (in *DE Nug. Curialum*, lib. I cap. 5.) who mentions the names of these ten games.

2. Berthold von Regensburg, *Sermons*, Vol. II, p. 203. In Vol. I, at p. 268, "Ir sult ouch dar umbe niht tanzen an dem ruowe tage oder spiln oder toppeln, daz ir niht ze tuonne habet..." Again Vol. II, p. 253, "Ist ieman hie der an dem suntage getanzet hât oder gespilt oder getoppelt? Habet ir ez halt an dem mântage getân, ir sit darumbe verlorn."

holy days:

"Ou si prest ne seït, vodra iuer  
As esches ou al tabler  
Ensi demeine le jur devant manger,  
Pur plus outrement Deu oublier." 1

When the Englishman did translate the poem in the early fourteenth century he found no reason to change this substantially. He saw his own countrymen committing the same sin of playing

"-----at the ches or at the tablere,  
Specyaly before the noun  
Whan goddys seruyse owyth to be don." 2

Indæed, among all these moral writers the game was held in great disrepute. "Zuyche kuade gemenes/ specialliche of des/ and of tables byeth uorbode/ be rigte/ uor many zennes/ thet uolyeth zuyche gemenes. The uerste is/ couaytise uor to wyne/ and uor to dyspyly/ his uelaze/" 3  
Moreover as well as being a source of avarice it is the result of gluttony, another of the deadly sins. In the wakings following overindulgence, "me deth manye kueades. ase playe atches. other atetables and me zayth/ many biseimers and folyes. and thus wasteth/ the wreche his time/ and his wyttes/ and his guodes. and wretheth god. and harmeth his bodi/ and more the soule." 4

Of the harm to the soul in this connection there is no specific evidence. But in the Middle Ages when

1. Robert of Brunne, French, l. 4141, English, l. 4304.

2. Robert of Brunne, English, l. 1044.

3. Dan Michel, Ayenbite of Inwyt, p. 45.

4. Ibid. p. 52.

individual temper almost invariably received violent expression, even backgammon could be dangerous to the body. In 1323 a man was killed in a quarrel resulting from a game of tables.<sup>1</sup> Moreover the inexperienced were undoubtedly likely to lose their goods when pitted against professionals who knew the use of false boards.<sup>2</sup>

The opinion of the game, expressed by the author of Jacob's Well, compared with Berthold's words is strikingly similar. The minds of the moralists, whatever the age or country, run in almost identical channels. "This ydelnesse is whanne thou lowyst non occupacyon but....to don ydell dedys, that arn werkys of no profygt, as to pleyin at the tablys, at the chesse & the chekyr, at the hasard, & <sup>at</sup> swyche othere vayn pleyis, in untyme & out of mesure, leuying for hem other occupacyouns that were frutefull."<sup>3</sup>

Later in the century the game was still being used. The Pastons, in 1484, at Christmas not wishing to deprive their servants of all their rightful pastimes, yet wish to limit them on account of the death of Margaret. Tables is included in the list of games suitable for a household in mourning.<sup>4</sup> Lydgate, too, noticed the game. It is a familiar diversion of Youth and Idleness, almost a business with Avarice. But apparently it was not

1. Calendar of Coroners' Rolls, p. 77.

2. Riley, p. 395. Nicholas Prestone and John Outlawe were convicted, partly for using false boards.

3. Jacob's Well, p. 105.

4. Paston Letters, Vol. VI, p. 78.

one of his favourites, for Pleasure only plays it  
 "passingly."<sup>1</sup>

Other forms of dicing were even more popular. Even the clergy were seduced by the fascination of these games of chance. Robert of Grosseteste found it necessary to forbid his subordinates "neque ad aleas, seu taxillos ludant."<sup>2</sup> The Bishop of Worcester, too, set the prohibition down in his constitutions, using almost the identical words.<sup>3</sup> A story was being used at about that time of a priest who refused to leave his dicing in order to visit a dying woman and consequently met a horrible fate in hell. This may have been a fiction invented for the purpose of pointing a moral. Even at that, it must have had some truth in it to make it an effective illustration.<sup>4</sup>

1. Lydgste, Pilgrimage, lines, 11195, 11622, 18426. Reson, l. 2403.

2. Grosseteste, Epistolae, p. 157, Constitutiones.

3. Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 673. 1240, "Prohibeamus etiam clericis.....ne ludant ad aleas vel taxillos."

4. Caesarius von Heisterbach, Dialogus, Dist. V, cap. VIII, p. 2888. The sermons and example books of the time are full of these stories about the sad fate of dicers. Jacques de Vitry's work includes one about a Jew who fled from the game terrified by the blasphemies of his Christian opponent. (Ex. CCXVIII, p. 91.) Another of his tales is of a young man who, having lost everything at dice, was exhorted by a Jew to curse God, the saints and the Virgin. He refused to do the latter. As a result she was gracious to him and interceded for him. (Ex. CCXCVI, p. 124.) A further tale of Caesarius shows that the idea of strip poker was not foreign to the Middle Ages. "Dominus Gerardus Abbas noster intellegem solam in causa esse levitatum, eo quod delusisset vestimenta sua, sola quippe tunica indutus venit, cum tamen satis rogaretur suscipere iuvenem, non consensit." (Dialogus, Dist. I, cap. xi. p. 18.)

Secular authorities were not far behind the ecclesiastical in censuring dicing. In 1281 cases are reported in London, in which people are indicted for playing dice against the law. On September the 8th "the jurors say that Laurence<sup>1</sup>"Bullok", John Burnel, Alan de Ewelle, John Squyret and Thomasin le Barbour play dice in divers taverns after curfew contrary to the statutes of the city." It will be remembered that work was supposed to continue until curfew rung out at the Parish Church. A reference to a particular game appears in 1321. A quarrel arising from a game of "hasard" resulted in a murder.<sup>2</sup> Apparently the moralists are right. Sedentary amusements, such as haunting taverns in company with <sup>2a</sup>hasadoures could be dangerous physically as well as spiritually.

John of Salisbury's testimony as to the number of dicing games already in existence in his day, shows that the game was no new development.<sup>3</sup> Indeed dice were familiar enough in the ancient world. Even in the thirteenth century, Neckam stated that fraud was very possible in the game.<sup>4</sup> Early in the fourteenth century we have definite news of such fraud. The case, reported in London, does not seem to have occasioned

1. Calendar of Letter Bk. B. p. 2.  
A similar indictment was made on Sept. 21, in the same year. Calendar of Letter Bk. B. p. 6.

2. Ibid, p. 38.

2a. Robert of Brunne, Handlyng Synne, l. 1041.

3. Strutt, p. 306.

4. Neckam, De Naturis Rerum, Cap. CLXXXIII.

any particular comment. In the eyes of the law false dice and fair dice were all the same. The charge preferred against Elmer de Multone, in 1311, includes the charge of using false dice, but the charge is that he played dice at all.<sup>1</sup>

For the keeping of the peace an order regulating Christmas festivities was issued. This stated that no one should play dice. Issued in 1334, it was not repeated until late in the century, when it appears twice in rapid succession, in 1370 and 1372.<sup>2</sup> These proclamations may have been observed at first, or like most orders, their making may have been their end. Unless the following cases are a result of the enforcement of them, we have no evidence of their success or failure. John Outlawe was convicted in 1376 on a charge of using false dice.<sup>3</sup> A similar indictment was proved against Richard Scot, "hosyere" and Alice his wife in 1382.<sup>4</sup> These latter were committed to the pillory. But it

1. Riley, p. 86. "Elmer de Multone was attached for that he was indicted in the ward of Chepe for being a common nightwalker, and in the day is wont to entice strangers and persons unknown to a tavern and there deceive them by using false dice;....And also for that he was indicted in the ward of Crepelgate for playing at dice there and for that he is wont to entice men to a tavern and there make them play at dice." The whole charge was taken as one, and Elmer was sent to prison.

2. Riley, p. 193. Calendar of Letter Book G. pp. 274, 303.

3. Riley, p. 395.

4. Ibid. p. 457.

is, I think, significant of its failure that in 1388 the matter came before the royal authority. A statute then sets down the rule that servants and labourers shall leave playing at dice.<sup>1</sup>

If laws could have been properly enforced, England would have been diceless after 1388. But the machinery of government was as yet very imperfect. So in 1410 the Commons sought that the law of 1388 be repeated. As, in this matter, the interests of the king and the burgher class coincided, the request was graciously allowed, and once more it was set down on the statute books that no servant or labourer might play at dice.<sup>2</sup> This law met with no more success than its predecessors. Four years later in London it was found necessary to issue a local order forbidding "dyces".<sup>3</sup>

The struggle to suppress them, and the dicing games themselves continued side by side. Once brought to the attention of the royal authority, the matter continued to receive its intermittent attention. In 1461, not satisfied with a mere prohibition of the games themselves, Edward IV set out to do away with all opportunity for its play.<sup>4</sup> He forbids anyone to allow dicing within his house, or even within his presence, "oute of the xii

1. 12 Richard II, c. vi.
  2. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. III, p. 643
  3. Calendar of Letter Book I. p. 125.
  4. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. V, p. 488, P. 39.
- 11 Henry IV, c. IV.



dayes of Christmas." By a special clause he makes it quite clear that this applies particularly to taverners and hostellers. They are to prevent its play in their own establishments, and anywhere else where they can. After the law, passed in 1464, to protect the makers of dice from foreign competition, one might reasonably suppose that the laws against the game would lapse.

But such was not the case.<sup>1</sup> In 1472, or therabouts, the commons pointed out to the king, that he might take suitable action, that the high price of bows is in part responsible for the playing of unlawful games, among them dice.<sup>2</sup> In 1477 a new prohibition of these unlawful games appears on the statute books.<sup>3</sup> The law goes on to repeat the prohibition to the governors of houses, tenements, and gardens not "to suffre such games to be played under pain of imprisonment for III years and a fine of xx li."<sup>4</sup>

Local authorities were not entirely inactive during this period. A London proclamation forbids dicing to labourers, servants, apprentices and vitellers, on pain of five days' imprisonment.<sup>5</sup> On the surface the attitude of the municipal authorities at Bristol seems to be very different. There, it was set down in 1479, in the Office of the Mayor, that "after dyner,

1. 3 Edward IV, c. 4.
2. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. VI, p. 156.
3. 17 Edward IV, c. 3.
4. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. VI, p. 188, also.
5. Calendar of Letter Book L, p. 144 (no date.)

the seide Maire, Shiref and theire brethern to assemble at the mairez counter, there waytyng the Bishoppes comming, pleying the mean<sup>e</sup>whyles at Dyce, the towne clerke to fynde theym the Dyce and to have 1 d. of every Raphil."<sup>1</sup>

I think this can be shown to be quite in accordance with the general legislative policy: none of the men who were to indulge in the game belonged to the servant class. Moreover the event occurred only once in the year.

In England the turn of the century sees no change in the general policy. Within the time of Christmas and in the house or presence of their masters, servants might play at dice. At any other time, or in any other conditions, for the working classes the game was illegal.<sup>2</sup>

Scanty evidences from France suggest a similar state of affairs, though none of the cases I can quote point to any very consistent policy for that country. In 1382, a man convicted of using false dice was ordered to refrain from playing dice at all in the neighbourhood.<sup>3</sup> There is no intimation in the evidence to show that dicing in itself was considered a crime. Yet, by a royal proclamation some thirteen years before, dice playing had been made an illegal pastime.<sup>4</sup> In spite of

1. English Gilds, p. 422, P. 22.

2. 11 Henry VII, c. 4. 19 Henry VII, c. 13.

3. Douët D'Arca, Vol. I, p. 269.

4. Proclamation of Charles le Sage, 1369.

attempts to enforce this order, there seems to have been no slackening in the popularity and play of the game.<sup>1</sup> A few years later the Provost of Paris forbade<sup>2</sup> the game on working days. Whether the provost did not consider the game an offence at other times, or whether he merely did not think that holidays were his province, is not indicated. At anyrate, elsewhere the game continued into the fifteenth century, for at Creil a man<sup>3</sup> was killed as a result of a quarrel arising from it.

In this matter of gambling Germany presents a rather different picture. We have already seen that in the thirteenth century the ecclesiastics objected to both "toppeln und spielen." Late in the fourteenth century or, perhaps, early in the fifteenth Nider expresses similar views.

As the secular authorities did not generally share these views, there is rarely any attempt to crush dice playing altogether. Usually however checks are put on the worst features of the game, and nearly always there is the threat that permission to play may be withdrawn. For instance, at Rappotsweiler in 1442, it was set down "das spil mag die herschaft lihen<sup>4</sup> hohe oder nider." Six years later very definite

1. Luce, p. 103. Games reported in Les Registres de la chancellerie royale correspondant aux regnes de Charles V, VI, VII. Quarrels in Tresor des Chartes.

2. Wright, p. 223.

3. Douët D'Arcq, Vol. II, p. 69. Quentin went to pay Hutin money that he had lost on another game. Hutin forces him to play again, but this time loses himself. He picks a quarrel with the unwilling Quentin and is killed.

4. Grimm, Vol. V, p. 361, P. 10.

rulings were issued at Balgau. Swearing must not accompany the game, on pain of a fine to the priest and punishment from the secular arm. The host of the inn was to act as the master of ceremonies and keep the game from dishonesty. Moreover anyone found playing on certain specified feast days was liable to a further fine. The order concludes, "soliche spil haben unser gnedige herschaft also angesehen und erlaucht, doch uf ein<sup>1</sup> wiederriefen hat in ir gnade selb vorbehalten."

An order written in 1467 at Thurgau is even more enlightening. "Item wen es nit verboten ist; so sol doch niemand in den benembten gerichtten weder in holz, noch in feld, noch an deheinen anderen örten karten noch spilen dan in ofnen wirtshäusern und mit verlaub des wirtes, doch hierin heilig zeit und tag hindangesetzt, und wer das übersicht, der sol darum mit recht gestraft<sup>2</sup> werden."

Ordinarily, dicing was an allowed pastime at Sanct Gallen. In 1469, however, the "vogther" reserved for himself the right of suspending all signs of a happy mind, including dicing and dancing. This he could do at any time when he felt that the world should be regarded as a vale of tears. The cause of grief might be some<sup>3</sup> general disaster, or it might be a purely personal loss.

1. Grimm, Vol. V, p. 356, PP. 19 & 20.
2. Grimm, Vol. V, p. 129, P. 43.
3. " " I, p. 200, at Burgau.

Another district in Sanct Gallen shows the lord reserving the right to forbid dicing and carding. As long as he did not do so, the games in themselves were lawful, but disobedience to his prohibition was punishable.<sup>1</sup>

A sterner view was taken in some parts of Germany. At Wengi in Thurgau and at Genzingen, late in the fifteenth century, the disapproval is plain. The latter order runs, "Item, ist spiehlen verbotten: der si hauset oder helt oder würfel leihet der verlust 3 turnus als dick als er das thut: wer solches übertritt, den soll man des morgens pfanden."<sup>2</sup> The milder was, however, the more usual attitude in Germany.

The popularity of dicing is reflected in general literature throughout the period. It afforded particular interest to the moralists, both professional and amateur. It appears always in the works of the poetic moralists, and many sermons and theological treatises deal with its unfortunate attraction. Gower's picture of idleness shows the fascination of the game:

"In Wynter he doth noght for cold  
In Somer mai he noght for hete  
So whether that he frese or swete,  
Or be he inne, or be he oute,  
He wol ben ydel al aboute  
But if he pleie oght at Dees." 3

In one passage he mentions the game already noticed in the records of London. His description of the game,

1. Grimm. Vol. I, p. 223. Similar orders: 1453-84, Schwarzwald bis zum Rhein, Sanct Peter, Vol. I, 351. 1495, Stiftslande & Schneckenbund, in Sanct Gallen, V, 178. 1482, Hunsdrück, Beltheim, II, 208. Thurgau, Sommeri, V, 124.

2. Grimm, Vol. V, p. 137: Vol. III, p. 607.  
33. Gower, Confessio Amantis, 4. 1090.

and another which appears in a work published about 1440, deal only with its moral qualities.<sup>1</sup> It is an instrument and fruit of idleness. Although his picture of the game does not tell us how the machinery worked, it is valuable for the impression it gives of the atmosphere of tension which surrounded it.

"Du perte a son hasard s'effroie:  
Car quant ad perdu sa monoie,  
Lors met ses draps a sa courroie  
Mais s'il tout pert, lors comme desvés  
Maldit et jure veut et voie  
Son baptesme et son dieu renoie,  
Et tout conjure les malpées."

The scorn here portrayed is but a feeble echo of the wrath of the more formal ecclesiastical writers. Their contempt and indignation pours down from every side. Idleness is, of course, one of the deadly sins of the game. But it is only one. Avarice and wrath are others. The good confessor must ask the penitent, "Si ludus prohibitus ut est taxillorum ludus, avaritia motus te immiscuisti?" or "Si Deum blasphemisti ludum alearum aut alium exercendo?"<sup>2</sup> In spite of this ecclesiastical judgment of the game, the clergy were still apt to indulge themselves. Bromyard issued a sweeping order that clerics should avoid all worldly occupations.

1. Gower, *Mirour de L'Omme*, at lines 5779, 5990. Jacob's Well, p. 105.

2. Gerson, *Opera*, Tom. I, Pars III, col. 443. De confessione: circa Avaritiae; circa Irae. In his treatise on the ten commandments, in the section on the second commandment he shows that blasphemy accompanies the game "--in ludis frequenter inhonestis, sive prohibitis, ut est taxillorum ludus, enormiter jurant. Tom. I Pars, III, col. 423."

This seems comprehensive enough to include dicing, but Bromyard adds, and the games of dice.<sup>1</sup> His opinion in the matter is clear nor does he relax at any time.

"Illiciti (ludi sunt...) alearum, itaque sub nomine alearum comprehenditur omnis ludus qui viribus nititur fortune...Mendaciorum et perjuriorum mater est alea."<sup>2</sup>

Dicing tended to become a habitual vice. Herolt says, however, "etiamsi homo non duxerit in consuetudinem, adhuc mortaliter peccat." Indeed in view of the sixteen sins which he claims may be involved in the game,<sup>3</sup> his judgment is reasonable.

The fifteenth century preachers and clergy took a no more lenient view of the game. Meffreth forbids the game to the clergy and orders them, too, not to countenance its play. His list of pastimes dangerous to the souls of the laity contains a special reference to dice.<sup>4</sup>

1. Bromyard, Prelatio, Art. V, last sentence of P. xvij. "scientias et occupationes terrenas et ludos alearum.

2. Bromyard, Ludus, Art. I.

3. Herolt, Vol. I, Sermo, 12 Section B.

The list of sins which follows in the section C, runs, 1. Idolatrium. 2. Execrationem et Blasphemiam. 3. Violationem festorum et profanationem sacrorum dierum. 4. Inobedientiam. 5. Homicidium. 6. Furtum. 7. Falsum testimonium. 8. Lucrandi cupiditatem peccaminosam. 9. Im-misericordiam. 10 Usuram. 11. Contemptus prohibitionis Ecclesiae. 12 Scandalum proximorum. 13. Mendacium et perjuriam. 14. Odium proximi. 15. Infidelem deceptionem. 16. Iram et comminationem.

4. Meffreth, Sermones, Pars Aestivalis, j.K. Dominicales, lxii, N.O.P. "Ad aleas seu taxillos clerici non ludant nec his ludis intersint." Pars Aest. iiij. T. The Communion Service of Godstow Nunnery is uncompromising. "Also al maner of haserdoures and comyn dyes players, yif thei at warenyng of holichurche sease not ther of thei shulle be accursed, as law of holichurch seyth." Register of Godstow Nunnery, Vol. I, p. 3. c. 1450.

Antoninus of Florence claimed that dice playing was a deadly sin. Apparently there were gradations of the deadliness for he shows even more disapproval for the man who uses false dice.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps in his youth he had met such a one. Like the English ruling classes he expected taverners to put a stop to the game, even when fair dice were used.<sup>2</sup> His contemporary Angelus de Clavasio is also sure of the imprudence of playing games "qui innitetur solum fortune."<sup>3</sup> To the wide list of sins possibly involved, Nider adds simony, but all varieties of the game are "peccatum mortale laycis vel clericis."<sup>4</sup>

In the face of this universal and bitter disapproval, Henry Parker's opinion is a brave stand, even if it does seem to lack force. His Pauper replies to Dives, who asked about the game, "To use that game for recreation<sup>5</sup> only for playe it may be suffred/ soo that it be done in manere honestly/ & place and tyme conuenyent/ & not to moche in sesyng of tyme. But for to use it for to wyne thereby/ & put thynges in aventure of dyce/ it is a full grete synne & ewyll gotten good that men gete therewith."<sup>5</sup>

Sebastian Brant writing of the customs of his coun-

1. Antoninus of Florence, *Summa Confessionale*, Fo. lvij, Fo. ciij, "Primus eum decepit in ludo vitz per falsos taxillos.

2. Ibid. Fo. lxxviij.

3. Angelus de Clavasio, *Summa Angelica*, CCLXXXIII, (5) the phrase finishes ut ludus chartarum, taxillorum et huiusmodi.

4. Nider, *Manuale Confessorum*, Fo. xlviij. (5)

5. Parker, *Dives et Pauper*, Com. I, c. xxxviii.



trymen adds nothing to the evidence. He merely corroborates the moralists in their observations and conclusions. If the clergy were not sometimes guilty of the indiscretion of at least a casual game, his illustration of the example which elders should show to their juniors would have no point.

"Und wenn der appt die wurfell leyet  
So sind die münch züm spiel bereit." 1

Blasphemy frequently occurred during the play. The wonder is that the blasphemies of dicers do not cause God to bring the world to an end.

"Mörtlich schwür düt man by dem wyn  
Und by dem spyel, um wenig gelt.  
Nit wunder wer, ob gott die welt  
Durch solche schwür liess undergon." 2

He sees "narrscherr narren vil" who know no other way of life but to play at dice day and night. Dicing, too, defiles the holy day.<sup>3</sup> His view is neatly summed up in his own words:

"Spyl mag gar selten sin on sünd  
Eyn spyeler ist nit gottes fründt  
Die spyeler sind des tüfels kynd." 4

Lydgate's tone is mildly disapproving. He is rather content to observe the game and his only moral allusions are implied in the people whom he sees playing<sup>5</sup> the game. Pleasure, Avarice and Youth are all players. Unfortunately his observations were superficial. He

1. Sebastian Brant, Narrenschiff, p. 52, C. 49, l. 9.
2. Ibid. p. 85, C. 87.
3. Ibid. p. 75, C. 77: p. 91, C. 95.
4. Ibid. p. 75, C. 77, l. 93.
5. Lydgate, Reson, l. 2402: Pilgrimage, l. 18428, and l. 11194.

gives no description of the methods of play. However, from him we do get a glimpse of the variety of dicing games. Hasard, which has appeared before in this account he mentions twice.<sup>1</sup> Another game called passage appears with among Youth's pastimes. Avarice does not play passage but at

"-.....the botevaunt  
At hasard and at the devaunt."

Treyggobet, a diversion of the Damsel Idleness is also explained by Furnivall as another dicing game.<sup>2</sup>

These men were not writing for posterity. They were writing very definitely for their contemporaries. Why, then, should they stop to describe a game which everybody knew? It was quite sufficient to mention it. Thus it is that we get no description of the play of the game, with the exception of those accounts of putting everything, even the shirt on a man's back, to "the adventure of the dice." This was sufficiently out of the ordinary to call for direct comment.

1. Lydgate, Pilgrimage:  
Youth, l. 11194.  
Avarice, l. 18428.
2. Ibid. l. 11623.

## Chapter VII.

Sedentary Games (II).  
Cards, Checkers and Chess.

In Europe cards were of later introduction or invention than most of the other sedentary games. There is no evidence of their existence anywhere until the end of the fourteenth century. Their first appearance was almost certainly earlier than that by about half a century. They appear in the records of Castile<sup>1</sup> in 1387, when both cards and dice were forbidden there. Ten years later at Paris, the provost forbids card<sup>2</sup> playing on working days. According to Mr. Gurney Benham<sup>3</sup> in that same year some sort of regulations were laid down at Ulm, which for years was the centre of cardmaking in Germany. Unfortunately he tells us nothing of the nature of these regulations.

In Germany, card playing, as dice playing, was not regarded in itself as a crime. Ordinarily the game was allowed, though the lord reserved to himself the power of forbidding it. Disobedience to such a prohibition<sup>4</sup> was of course punishable. At Thurgau dicing and carding might be forbidden. When, however, there was no prohibition, the games must be played in an

1. Strutt, p. 324.

2. Wright, p. 223.

3. Gurney Benham, *Playing Cards*, p. 13.

4. Grimm, Vol. V. p. 129, P. 43. Thurgau, 1467.

item ein her oder vogt m<sup>g</sup>gent karten und spilen verb<sup>u</sup>ten, und wer das daruber tet, der sol die buosz daran es verboten ist, verfallen sein." Grimm, Vol. I, p. 223, Sanct

open inn, with the permission of the host. Played  
 anywhere else, both games were a crime.<sup>1</sup> In the district  
 of Burgau in Sanct Gallen, the lord might forbid cards  
 when there was any sort of trouble brewing, or even  
 if he himself had suffered some personal sorrow or  
 injury.<sup>2</sup>

Cards are rarely mentioned, particularly, in eccles-  
 iastical document. Nor do individual clerics often  
 speak of it, apart from general denunciations of games  
 of chance. When the game was comparatively in its in-  
 fancy in 1404, one of the acts of the Synod of Langres<sup>3</sup>  
 forbade the game to the clergy. A few years later<sup>4</sup>  
 St. Bernard of Sienna issued an anathema against it.  
 Late in the century one other direct mention of cards  
 is made. Antoninus of Florence demands the restitution<sup>5</sup>  
 of gains made through "chartas dicendo mendacium."

Claims have been made that cards were known in  
 England in the reign of Edward I. The evidence is  
 very slender. Strutt admits the possibility and ex-  
 plains the century of silence on the subject, by the  
 fact that hand-made cards would be expensive, and so  
 not available to the majority of people. Of course,  
 Gallen, Ofnung zu Niderbüren, late fifteenth century.  
 "Item, ain herr von Sanct Gallen oder sin amptlüt  
 mugent ouch verbietten spilen und karten, unnd wer das  
 uberfertt der ist verfallen das daran es verbotten  
 wirst."

1. Grimm, Vol. V, p. 129. P. 43.

2. Grimm, Vol. I, p. 200.

3. Wright, p. 223.

4. Gurney Benham, p. 1.

5. Antoninus of Florence, Summa Confessionale,  
 Fb. ciiij.

all packs would have to be made by hand, and the skill involved would make pretty packs prohibitive in price. But surely, if the game had been known at all, and the king's habits are always common property, the English lower classes would have been content to play with any kind of cards, which would serve the purpose. The workers of Paris knew and played the game. If the only available cards had been expensive they could not have done so. No, the evidence for widespread card playing in England before the middle of the fifteenth century<sup>1</sup> is very slender indeed.

The earliest definite knowledge of the game in England is a petition of 1461. In that year the commons called for a law stating that "noo Lorde, nor other persone of lower astate, condicio~~n~~ or degree whatso~~e~~ver he be, suffre any Dicyng or play<sup>i</sup>ng at the Cardes within his hous or elleswhere, where he may let it, of any of his servauntes or other, oute of the xii dayes of Cristmesse."<sup>2</sup> A special clause is inserted emphasizing this duty to Hostellers, Taverners, Vitailleurs, Artificers or Household<sup>2</sup>ers. It was only three years later<sup>3</sup> that the import of "cartes a juer" was forbidden. It is clear that the game had had a hearty if unofficial

1. Strutt, p. 325. Wright, p. 223.

2. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. V, p. 488.

3. 3 Edward IV, c. 4. The distinction is made between "cartes a juer" and "cartes pur laine". The "Cardmakers" were the makers of the latter. It was not until the seventeenth century that that name was adopted by the makers of playing cards. Gurney Benham, Introduction, p. vi.

welcome, and had already made itself at home. In 1472 the high price of bows is blamed for the fact that "cardes" and "other unlawful games forbidden by your lawes" are practised. Cards then must have been fairly cheap.<sup>1</sup> Cards are omitted from the list of unlawful games set down in the statute books a few years later. However, in a London proclamation, which was probably issued at about that time, "cardyng" appears on the black list.<sup>2</sup>

The end of the century sees the game still being played. It is one of the games allowed to the Paston's servants at Christmas, after Margaret's death in 1485. In this they were, as I have noted before, following the precedent set by Lady Morlee a few years earlier.<sup>3</sup> Obviously they allowed no games at any other time but Christmas. That was, indeed, the only time when recreation was allowed to the lower classes. Henry VII's statutes, at the turn of the century show that this attitude of the more powerful classes was upheld by the government. Both state that Christmas is the only time when cards and other games may be used. Moreover, the servants and apprentices and the rest were to play "only in the dwelling house of his maister or where

1. 17 Edward IV, Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. VI, p. 156.

2. 17 Edward IV, c. iii. Calendar of Letter Book L. p. 144.

3. Paston Letters, Vol. VI, p. 78, letter, 999.

the maister of any of the said servaunts is present. uppon payne of imprisonment by the space of a day in the Stokkes openly." Anyone, not being such a master, who allowed these games was to be fined vj s. viij d.<sup>1</sup> or more.

There is no evidence of the use to which these cards were put, but Mr. Gurney Benham has given an interesting account of the types of cards used. His claim, and it is reasonable, is that our pack is derived from the more cumbersome Tarot pack used in Italy.<sup>2</sup> In this pack there were four suits of fourteen cards, including four court cards. Besides these, there was a suit of trump cards called atouts, each bearing a name of its own. They were: the Mountebank; the Popess; the Empress; the Emperor; the Pope; the Lovers; the Chariot; Justice; the Hermit or old man; Fortune, represented by a wheel; Force; the Hanging Man; Death; Temperance; the Devil; the Hospital; the Star; the Moon; the Sun; the Judgment; the World. There existed in Florence a still larger pack. This contained all the above cards and twenty more; the twelve signs of the zodiac were added with Faith, Hope, Charity and Prudence,<sup>3</sup> and Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. Whether Mr. Gurney Benham's claim is, or is not, true, this pack gave

1. 11 Henry VII, c. 2. 19 Henry VII, c. 13.
2. Gurney Benham, p. 11.
3. Gurney Benham, Chapter II, pp. 5-9.

place, in most countries at anyrate, to the simpler pack. The four suits remained. In various countries they had different designations, though there is a theory that they were, everywhere, accepted as representing the four estates of man, the ecclesiastical or ruling class, the military and noble, the commercial or middle class, and the peasant or working class.

Italy and Spain	Germanic Countries	France	English
Cups	Hearts	Coeur	Hearts
Swords	Acorns	Pike	Spades
Money	Bells	Carreau	Diamonds
Batons	Leaves	Trefle	Clubs

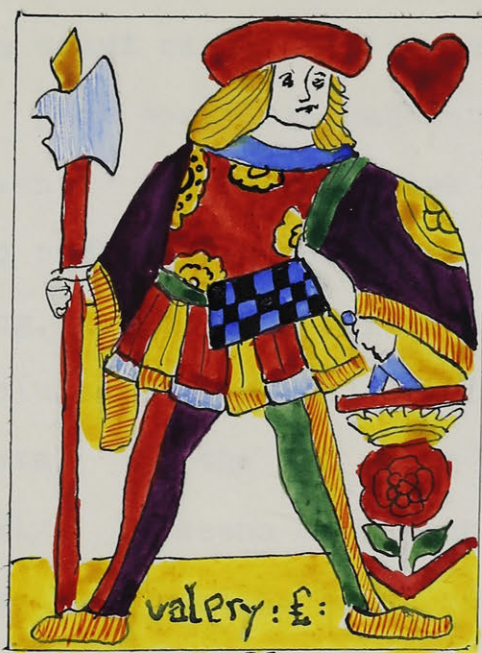
To explain the relation of these suits to one another in detail would take too long. Suffice it to say that the spade is not so far removed from the sword as it seems. In Spanish the name was espadas, the further relation of the Pike or Pique to this group is obvious. The acorns are an unsolved problem.<sup>1</sup>

The English clubs get their name from the Spanish symbol, which was a club or stick, and its form from the German leaves and French trefle. The last two types represent agricultural labour.

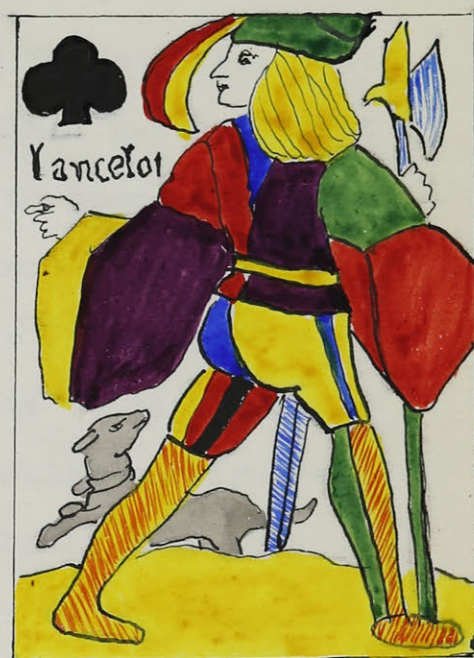
1. Gurney Benham pp. 10 and 11. Strutt, p. 324. Possibly acorns may mean the owning of land. Bells, according to Mr Gurney Benham, referred to the moneyed class. I would suggest that it does, at least refer to the bell of the city hall, which was the merchants rallying place. G.B. pp. 11, 12 13.

Other symbols were sometimes used in Germany: parrots pinks, columbines, and hares: monkeys, lions, parrots, peacocks. About 1477 a circular pack appeared in Germany. Usually, however cards were square or oblong. G.B. p.13.

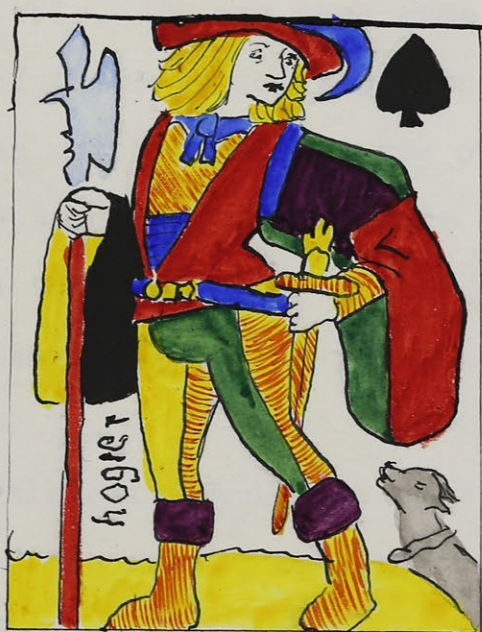




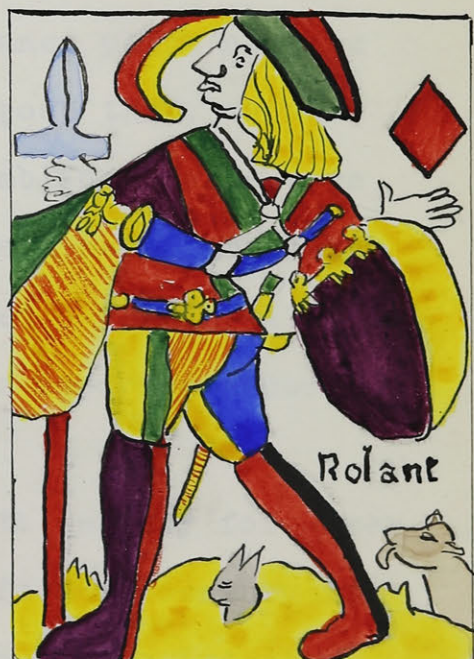
p. 85.



p. 120.



p. 101.



p. 111.

Valets by Valery,  
Rouen(?) c.1490-1500.

Gurney Benham.

The court cards have their own differences. The Italian pack sometimes had four, King, Queen, Knight and Servant. The Spanish pack had no Queens, and the Germanic packs often followed the same plan, having only King, Knight, and Servant. The French pack always included, "la reine" or "la dame" with Kings<sup>1</sup> and Valets. So the old packs resembled our own very strikingly. It seems more than probable that they were sometimes used in games similar to the ones we know.

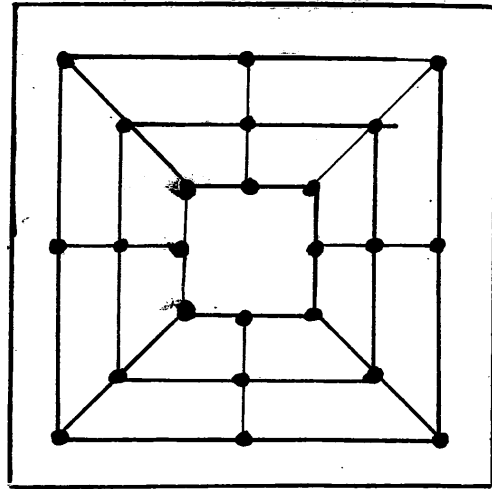
Games of chance are in themselves peculiarly fascinating. With gambling added they are all but irresistible. In any card game, chance plays a large part, and there is no reason to suppose that, to all the games which were a source of gambling, cards were any exception. But there were certain sedentary games in which the element of chance played a very negligible part, although gambling was often an important accompaniment.

Merels existed in the fourteenth century for Gower<sup>2</sup> speaks of the game. Late in the fifteenth century it still had a certain amount of popularity as Lydgate<sup>3</sup> lists it among the pastimes of Youth and Avarice.

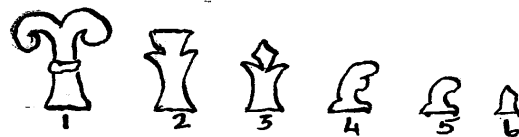
1. Gurney Benham, pp. 10, 11. Spanish; King, Caballo, (literally Horse), and La Sota: Germanic; King, Oberknecht, and Unterknecht. The last two are usually referred to as Unter and Ober. Unter, and Sota simply mean under.

2. Gower, *Mirour de L'Omme*, l. 5780. Idleness.

3. Lydgate, *Pilgrimage*, l. 11192. and l. 18427.



Merelles board.  
Strutt, p. 317.



Chessmen, Fourteenth  
Century.  
Strutt p. 312.

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. King  | 3. Rook.  | 5. Knight |
| 2. Queen | 4. Bishop | 6. Pawn.  |

Again neither of these men saw fit to describe the game. For the moves we are wholly dependent on Strutt's account of the game as he himself had seen it played. He assumes that merels in his own day was much the same as it had always been.

Merels was played usually on a board marked out with lines, and on the lines were twenty four spots.<sup>1</sup> "The manner of playing is briefly this: two persons, having each of them nine pieces or men, lay them down alternately, one by one, upon the spots; the business of either party is to prevent his antagonist from placing three of his pieces so as to form a row of three, without the intervention of an opponent piece. If a row be formed, he that made it, is at liberty to take up one of his competitor's pieces from any part he thinks most to his advantage; excepting he has made a row, which must not be touched if he have another piece upon the board that is not a component part of that row, When all the pieces are laid down, they are played backwards and forwards, in any direction that the lines run, but only can move from one spot to another at one time. He that takes off all his antagonists pieces is the conqueror."<sup>2</sup> Noughts and crosses is nothing but a very elementary form of this game.

1. This could be marked out on the ground too.
2. Strutt, p. 317.

Merels, or merellys, was sometimes called nine men's morris, from the fact that the movements of the pieces on the board, backwards and forwards resembled the movements of a morris dance. I have pointed out earlier that merels may also have been the name of such a dance. In two of Lydgate's references, the word falls so that it might be interpreted as either.<sup>1</sup>

We are no better off for descriptive evidence of the game of checkers or quek, which receives notice from time to time in contemporary records. For instance from the inquest in 1300 of the death of Joice de Cornwall, we find that on the preceding Monday she had been playing checkers with a man called Thomas de Bristoll. Others, too, had repaired on that day to the house of Alice de Wantham to play checkers.<sup>2</sup> The game was still in existence in 1376, because John Outlawe and Nicholas Prestone were attached for enticing John atte Hill and William, his brother,<sup>3</sup> to Nicholas's house to play tables and checkers. Quekboard was called a new imagined game in Edward IV's statute of 1477. Again it seems strange that a game, known more than a century before, should be considered new.<sup>4</sup>

The moralists, stern and mild, took notice of the game. In the middle of the fifteenth century it is

1. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 11193, l. 21525.
2. Calendar of Coroner's Rolls, p. 17.
3. Riley, p. 395.
4. 17 Edward IV, c. iv.

included with other games as idleness. Lydgate's evidence is somewhat confusing. Quek appears with chess as a pastime of Youth.<sup>1</sup> "Worrldly Play" also plays;

"Bothe at ches and the cheker,  
The drawhtes ther-off, ful wel I kan  
Ye bet than any other man." 2

Both games are mentioned side by side in this latter reference. Nor does there seem to be any possibility of confusion when he makes Treason say:

"I playe nouthur at ches nor tables;  
And yiff yt happe (ffer or ner)  
That I play at the cheker  
Outher with hih or louh estat"

Yet he goes on to describe the latter game in the terms of chess:

"To hem ful offte I sey "chek mat"  
When they wene(in ther degre)  
Best assuryd for to be:  
ffor by sleighte off my drawing,  
I ouercome bothe Rook and Kyng." 3

The only explanation I can offer, is that the use of the words check mate here, as in another allusion to checkers, is simply an adoption of a convenient term, to which the other terms followed as a natural complement.<sup>4</sup>

1. Jacob's Well, p. 105. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 11198.

2. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 21520.

3. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 15202, l. 15206.

4. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 10059. Grace Dieu to Pilgrim. "ffor yiff thow konne, at the cheker,  
Thy drawhtys drawe and wel play

. . . . .  
Ther to hym to seyn chek maat. (l. 10063)

This would lead one to suppose that chess was considered a better game than checkers, even in the Middle Ages. It certainly received more attention from contemporary writers, with the result that we have a very adequate knowledge of the mediaeval game.

Chess seems to have been played, as early as the thirteenth century, very much as it is played to-day. Even the same desperate earnestness seems to have possessed the players. "*Cui tantam diligentiam adhibent ludentes ac si magnum emolumentum ex victoria essent consecuturi.*" The moves of the various pieces as described by Alexander Neckam tally almost exactly with their moves to-day. The pawns were in the advance guard, and moved forward one square at a time. To take any other piece they move one square diagonally. If by good play, a pawn was brought to the opposite edge of the board, he was endowed with the powers of a queen. The queens, however, moved only one square diagonally, while the alphas, later the bishop, moved only two squares diagonally. Compared to their modern powers, these pieces were then very weak. The king moved one square any way at all. The rook, now usually the castle had its modern



<sup>1</sup>  
 powers, as had the miles or knight. Neckam's game is the same as that described in the moralization of chess in Gesta Romanorum, in which the chess men are likened to the various orders of society. It is a mark of the widespread interest in the game that it should be thus chosen. Some of the characterizations are particularly instructive of social conditions. The al-  
 phicus, or bishop, is called an eloquent deceiver. The knight "runneth about." The rook moves sideways and forwards, taking all: he is the false merchant. This last is a striking comment on the growth of the  
<sup>2</sup>  
 power of the middle class.

Robert of Brunne was not interested in the play or the implications of it. It is a foolish game and it  
<sup>3</sup>  
 keeps men from church.

" Yif hyt be nat than redy hys dyner  
 Take furthe the chesse or the tabler:  
 So shal he play tyl hyt be none  
 And Goddys servyse be al done.  
 Alas, wykkedly he dyspendyth  
 Alle theylyfe that God hym sendeth." <sup>4</sup>

Then there is, too, Dan Michel's claim that overeating is often the cause of the game for "Efterward ine  
 zuyche wakinges: me deth many kueades as plays ate  
<sup>5</sup>  
 ches other ate tables..." Bromyard, England's great

1. Neckam, De Naturis Rerum, Cap. CLXXXIV.
2. Gesta Romanorum, p. 71.
3. Robert of Brunne, Handlyngge Synne, l. 1044
4. Ibid. l. 4304. In earlier French, l. 4141.
5. Dan Michel, Ayenbite of Inwyt, p. 52.



fourteenth century preacher, compares life in this world to a game of chess. There is nothing original in the idea, or new in his interpretation. The description of the moves of the knight and bishop is the same as that in all contemporary writings. For the first time, however, the term check mate,<sup>1.</sup> "eschehe maat", appears.

Even though the less specifically ecclesiastical references in the writings of the unprofessional moralist were disapproving, the game had its apologists. In Germany according to the chronicler, a song running,

"Schachtafelnspiel  
ich nu beginnen will"

met with immense popular favour.<sup>2</sup> The writer is unknown but the song, itself was taken up by all and sundry.

However, the ordinary attitude is that of Gower, who lists the game "eschequer" as one of the amusements of Oedivesce.<sup>3</sup> A later writer shares his opinion, that chess is a part of idleness.<sup>4</sup> This is borne out again by the fact that chess was allowed only during the Christmas festivities, when a little idleness was condoned. The Paston's indeed considered it a nice quiet game, suitable for the recreation of servants in a house

1. Bromyard, Summa Predicantium, Mundus, Article, V. xvi. and Article IV, vij-xiv.

2. Limburger Chronik, p. 36: 1366.

3. Gower, Mirour de L'Omme, l. 5780.

4. Jacob's Well, p. 105.

of mourning.<sup>1</sup> But, for all that, it seems to have met with little exact observation in the later days of the fifteenth century. There is very little to be gained in the way of description from Lydgate.<sup>2</sup>

His "Worrlldly Play" and Youth play chess, and so does his Damsel Idleness. But they saw no need to describe the game they played. His inclusion of chess as a remunerative pastime of Avarice lends colour to the idea that the game was not infrequently used for gambling, which is corroborated by the account of the game

given by Dan Michel and Neckam.<sup>3</sup> The latter evidence I have already quoted. Dan Michel states that in the game the player wastes his time, his wits and his goods.<sup>4</sup>

Nider, indeed, speaking in fifteenth century Germany states this as a fact, for he demands the restoration of illgotten gain, in which he classes what has been acquired through the game of chess.<sup>5</sup>

The real interest in Lydgate's references to chess lies in the frequency with which he uses its terms. We have already seen this in connection with the game of quek, or checkers. However, he uses the term "check

1. Paston Letters, Vol. VI, p. 78, letter, 999.

2. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 21520, l. 11195, l. 11622.

3. Ibid. l. 18426.

4. Neckam, Cap. CLXXXIV. Dan Michel, p. 52.

5. Nider, Decalogi Legem, Praec. vij, cap. vj, section P. Ut ea licite possint recapi et retineri quod acquirunt per ludos alee, scacorum, vel alios etc,

mate" figuratively as well. Grace Dieu tries to urge the pilgrim to action, by drawing a picture of his fate if he continues in the line of least resistance.

"Yt wer a gret derysfoun  
To the, and gret confusfoun  
Yiff thy chambrere sholde hem brynge,  
And thow for lak off fforseyynge,  
Stood thy sylf disconsolaat;  
Dysarmyd, nakyd, and chek-maat." 1

Later, she again tries to spur him on to

"Make hym lowly to obeye  
Upon hys dongel, in hys estat,  
Ther, to hym to seyn "chek maat." 2

Pleasure, personified, can play dice and tables only passingly, but is a chess player of some considerable skill.<sup>3</sup> Since he makes chess the pleasantest game of pleasure, it seems probable that Lydgate was a keen player himself and so may have found the simile attractive. Even if that were the case, unless he had known that the great majority would understand his meaning, he would have been at pains to explain himself much more fully. But, knowing that the games of which he spoke were widely played and understood, Lydgate, like his predecessors and his contemporaries, saw no reason to show their play.

1. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 8943.
2. Ibid. l. 10061.
3. Lydgate, Reson, l. 2403, ff.

## Chapter VIII.

### Attitudes to Popular Recreation. I. Of Kings, Lords and Gentry.

Significant in the preceding chapters is the almost omnipresent note of disapproval whenever recreations of any sort are mentioned. The governmental records in England are, with only one exception, attempts to crush out useless pastimes used by the lower classes.

Practically nothing of this appears until the second half of the fourteenth century. Yet, from ecclesiastical records of various sorts we know that some of the games, at least, existed well before that time. The royal and noble parties in England were, from the conquest up to the reign of Edward I, engaged in a struggle for power, which ended in decisive victory for neither. If there was any victory it was to the smaller gentry, and the growing class of wealthy merchants, whose support was eagerly sought by both sides. This contact with their "betters" enhanced, in their eyes, their own importance. It also increased their desire for a closer contact, and for a more definite acknowledgment of the gap between themselves and the working classes. This could be achieved by power over them, even in petty matters.

During the struggle the contending factions had had little time to give to the ordering of social life. On their own domains, both king and lord had continued to deal with everyday matters which came before their courts. But it was not until the tumult and the shouting had died, and a working agreement had been reached, that the English ruling classes, as a whole, could attend to the matter of general social legislation. The necessity for concerted action had welded these ruling factions together and England was well on the way to being a self-conscious nation when the Hundred Years' War began. So that, more and more, the royal orders became not merely orders of the king, but the orders of the class of which he was now a part, but in which he was to remain for many years the most important individual.

One isolated series of royal orders does appear in the first half of the fourteenth century. They are occasional orders, and have no very definite place with the general orders of later times. These were the royal edicts against rough games played in the bounds of the palace of Westminster, particularly during the sessions of Parliament. The Londoners'

back chat is a byword to-day. Apparently it existed in 1331, and took a more violent form, resembling hokking. The series of orders for the protection of the dignity and temper of the members of Parliament began in that year. Between 1321 and 1351 the order<sup>1</sup> was repeated thirteen times.

The first general order on the subject of amusements was Edward III's proclamation, "De arte sagittandi intenda, et ludis inutilibus et inhonestis prohibendis." During the course of the Hundred Years' War, Edward III had discovered that the quality of English archery was not improving. Inquiry proved that shooting with the longbow, which had been a matter of pride to the English yeoman, was no longer considered an amusing pastime. Now, "dicta arte quasi totaliter dismissa," the people of England were amusing themselves in ball play of various sorts, in cockfighting and "alios ludos inhonestos et minus utiles et valentes." These games were all to be given up and practice with the longbow was to be resumed wrote the king to his officer in Kent. Moreover, "consimilia brevia<sup>2</sup> diriguntur singulis vicecomitibus per Angliam." The

1. See Appendix A, p. i.

2. Rymer, Foedera, p. 704, 1363.

order certainly had no immediate effect for it was  
<sup>1</sup>  
 repeated two years later.

Possibly the repetition had more effect, for a time at least, than the original. There is no direct evidence to prove either its success or its failure. Conditions in England began to be troubled. Noblemen had always been accustomed to go about armed for their own safety. The working classes had adopted the custom, partly for the same reason, and partly because of the normal desire of the poor to be like the rich. Unpleasant disorders had risen as a result of this new development. Unfortunate quarrels had occurred, too, during games at ball, and at dice, and the result of the combination of the two circumstances had been murder.<sup>2</sup> Besides, games could lead to quite serious disorders. At Southwick in 1381, a fight had arisen between the tenants of the prior and the tenants of the Lord of Helton, "to the grievous peril" of the said tenants' bodies,<sup>3</sup> all over a game of ball. So Richard II forbade the working classes to carry arms in time of peace. But, his statute orders, servants and labourers shall

1. Rymer, Foedera, p. 770. 1365.
2. See Chapters V and VI.
3. Coulton, Mediaeval Village, p. 94.

have bows and arrows. With these they shall amuse themselves on their holidays, instead of wasting their time in useless recreations. About twenty years later the commons, the knights and the merchants, ask that this law be repeated.<sup>1</sup> It is obvious that any attempt to enforce the law had disappeared altogether, and the statute itself had atrophied from disuse.

But Richard II had not finished when he forbade ball games and dice to the working people. It appears that artificers, labourers, servants and grooms had contracted from their superiors other habits. In the lives of these ordinary men such habits were reprehensible. The habit of keeping dogs was to be strictly discouraged. On the holy days, these men sallied forth with these "Greyhounds and other Dogs" to hunt in the "Parks, Warrens and Connigries of Lords and others, to the very great destruction of the same." That was bad, but worse, under the cover of these expeditions they held meetings, and made plots, at least so it was represented to the king. So, "no layman which hath not Lands or Tenements to the value of xl s by Year, nor any Priest nor othre Clerk if he be not advanced

1. 12 Richard II, c. vi. 11 Henry IV, c. iv. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. III, p. 643.



to the value of x £ by year, shall hunt" whether with dogs, ferets or engines, or nets and the like, "to take or destroy Deer, Hares, nor Conies, nor other Gentlemen's game."<sup>1</sup> This statute forms a very interesting commentary on English society at the end of the fourteenth century. First of all, the lords are admitting not only that the knights are gentlemen, but the merchants too. From the inclusion of the poor clergy in the prohibition we see that the wealthier clergy with good livings and benefices were accepted as part of the noble class to which the merchants and knights had gained entry. Symptoms of this were to be seen a century earlier. In 1281 the "commons" of London had objected successfully to the Bishop's claim that he had a right to enclose certain lands in order to enhance their value for his own hunting.<sup>2</sup> It is significant though when the situation is recognized by a general legislative act. There is no need here to enlarge on the social position of the clergy of noble blood. Their nobility was never questioned. Chaucer shows the breed:

1. 13 Richard II, Statute I, cap. xiii.
2. Riley, p. 28.

"A monk ther was, a fair for the maistrie  
 An outridere, that lovide venerie  
 A manly man, to been an abbot able.  
 Ful many a deyntee hors hadde he in stable,  
 And whan he rood men myght his brydel heere  
 Gynglen in a whistlynge wynd als clere  
 And eek as loude, as doothe the chapel belle.

Therefore he was a prikasour aright;  
 Grehoundes he hadde, as swift as fowel in flight.  
 Of prikyng and of hunting for the hare  
 Was al his lust, for no cost wolde he spare  
 I seigh his sleeves y-purfiled at the hond  
 Wyth grys, and that the fyneste of a lond;  
 And fer to festne his hood under his chyn  
 He hadde of gold y-wroght a ful curious pyrn

His bootes souple, his hors in great estaat,  
 Now certainly he was a fair prelaat.  
 He was not pale, as a forpynded goost.  
 A fat swan loved he best of any roost:  
 His palfrey was as broun as is a berye." 1

After 1410 general legislation about games lapses,  
 for a time at least, the law was in part enforced by  
 the lords and gentry in their own localities. Later they  
 relaxed their vigilance. Such indeed one may suppose  
 to be the case. For in 1461 the Rolls of Parliament  
 record a petition that "noo Lorde nor other persone  
 of lower astate, condicioyn or degree whatsoever he  
 be, suffre any Dicyng or Card playing within his hous  
 or elleswhere, where he may let it, of any of his  
 servaunts or others, oute of the xii days of Christmasse"<sup>2</sup>  
 All classes of innkeepers are warned to take notice  
 and so are householders of the working classes. Lords

1. Chaucer, Canterbury Tales, Prologue, l. 165.
2. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. V, p. 488.

were too powerful to be punished for negligence, but imprisonment was the lot of the ordinary man if he failed in this duty.

In spite of these injunctions forbidding recreation to the working man, a considerable trade had grown up in England in certain instruments used in games. For the protection of the merchants who dealt in "tenysballes," "dises," and "cartes a juer," a law was passed in 1464, forbidding their import. All these games were on the forbidden list, yet the merchants are encouraged by protection from competition.<sup>1</sup> It may be argued that the demand for these implements among the nobility and gentry would make for a lucrative trade. Yet it is not to be doubted that the maker of tennis balls would have no objection to selling his wares to any buyer, whether he be an apprentice of a maker of dice or playing cards, though he most certainly would object to his own apprentices using cards or dice. At anyrate, the whole Commons in Parliament complained in 1472 that practice with the longbow was dying out because of the high price of the bows. They pointed out that the "yomen,"

1. 3 Edward IV, c. 4.

unable to practice archery on this account had taken<sup>1</sup> to playing dice and cards and other unlawful game. Apparently dice and cards and, perhaps, tennis balls were not too expensive for them. Five years later the struggle was still alive. At the petition of the commons, a statute was enacted forbidding, once more, all games and urging the use of bows, so that the defence of the land might be assured. Three further reasons for the prohibition of games were brought forward at this time. Players offend God by breaking the holy day. They offend the king by disobedience to his laws, They not only bring impoverishment upon themselves, but by encouraging others in their<sup>2</sup> wicked practices reduce them to the same state.

This law like others fell into disuse and Henry VII in 1495 ordered that apart from the xii days of Christmas the playing of unlawful games was to be<sup>3</sup> punished by a day in the stocks. From one of the Paston letters written in 1484, it appears that some of the gentry had been attending to this duty of sup-<sup>4</sup>pressing unthrifty games. The statute shows that

1. Rotuli Parliamentorum, Vol. VI, p. 156.
2. 17 Edward IV, c. 3.
3. 11 Henry VII, c. 2.
4. Paston Letters, Vol. VI, p. 78, letter, 999.

the ordinary householder had no such scruples, or, at least, no such self interest or self importance. No more did the common ale seller. Provisions were made for dealing with this nuisance. Justices of the peace, drawn from the gentry, were invested with the authority for punishing offenders, and with the responsibility of assuring the good order of ale houses. Henry found it necessary to repeat the order<sup>1</sup> in 1503.

This statute contained another section which dealt with hunting. The ordinary man had begun to find very great pleasure in shooting at the king's deer with crossbows. This had two obvious results. The king's deer decreased in number, and the use of the longbow was rapidly becoming a thing of the past. As the nobility were not asked to practice, the order is,<sup>2</sup> of course, directed against the lower classes.

In France, a proclamation was issued in 1369<sup>3</sup> forbidding games in favour of archery. Behind this, as behind the similar proclamation of Edward III, lay the idea of developing a yeomanry prepared to defend the country at the king's command. Unfortunately I have no other accounts of the general policy used in

1. 19 Henry VII, cap. 13.
2. 19 Henry VII, cap. 4.
3. Luce, p. 102.

France, so I can draw no conclusions in the matter. Strictly speaking there were four estates in France as there were in England, but the merchant class got very little recognition socially. There was no mingling of interests and blood. The nobles formed an isolated group, tending more and more to become the ornamental element of society which Louis XIV eventually made them. Society in France in the Middle Ages was the embryo of society in France in the eighteenth century. Possibly, the royal policy, although more purely royal than that in England, was very similar to it. The action of the nobility in the matter of recreation was not at all concerted. It was simply a matter of individual temperament. The merchants there were probably much like the merchants in England, whose policy, as merchants, I have not yet described.

Germany presents an altogether different spectacle. There was no real central government. There was, it is true, the Holy Roman Empire, but in reality, the local lord or princeling was supreme in his own sphere. The German local prince was a cross between a king and a noble. The orders of these men were usually very much more moderate than the demands of the English

ruling classes.

One order from Appenzell in Sanct Gallen is uncompromising, "des wildbann und alle vischentzen sind des gotzhus und hand alle aebt inne gehebt." The monastery, in the person of the abbot, is here the local lord.<sup>1</sup> The lord of Wurzburg was not so grasping. In the customal of Meinungen in Franken, of 1450, it appears that the burghers have won certain rights. They shall fish in the river on any Wednesday, Friday, or fast day, "darum habin uns alle unsere herr von Wurzpurgk nicht geredtt, sondern uns da bleiben lassen." They have also had the right to hunt hare, foxes and birds, and they can fish in the nearby lake "wenn wir wollen und welches tags einem yderman eben ist."<sup>2</sup>

The lords of Wurzburg reserved certain types of game, known in Germany as "rothwild" for themselves. The lower classes might amuse themselves with what was left. A similar distinction is made in the customal of Domstetten, although with the permission of the "amptmann" they may even hunt rothwild. The amptmann was the lords' steward. The list of animals for the commoners' hunting includes as well as the other animals, mentioned above, bears, boars, and wolves.

1. Grimm, Vol. I, p. 191. 1379.
2. Ibid. Vol. III, p. 599.

Rothwild is defined as "hürsch, hinden, und reher."<sup>1</sup>  
 The term "bürger" is not here used to describe those who might hunt all that was not rothwild. Instead we have the phrase, "die inn das gericht gehörent." This might be meant to include all the lower classes, but I think it refers to those wealthy men who had a right to sit on the town council. My opinion is, I think, borne out by the customal at Remich, set down some years later, where the term "bürger" is again used to describe those who might hunt any thing except Gentlemen's game. These men also had fishing rights in the Mosel.<sup>2</sup> It is possible, of course, that the privilege was wider, for in the customal of Oppeno, of the late fifteenth century, the term "geselle" is used. This latter customal has one very interesting clause. If it should happen that "misslaufen dan die hund und komen ain ein rotwild und werffen das nider, soll man einen vogt von Noppenawe ein viertel geben, das uberig gehört den jägern zu, und hand damit nit gevrevelt."<sup>3</sup>

Ordinary amusements, too, seem rarely to have been forbidden altogether, though usually there is some

1. Grimm, Vol. I, p. 384. Date, 1456.
2. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 242. Date, 1477.
3. Ibid. Vol. IV, p. 511.



attempt made to guard against license. It is certainly significant of a different attitude that the council house at Buitge could be described in a written customal as a "speilhaus."<sup>1</sup> In 1423 an order appeared at Seligenstadt forbidding gaming for gain. Anyone, however, could play for penny stakes.<sup>2</sup> A later order from Rappotsweiler states the lord's rightful privilege<sup>3</sup> of forbidding gaming if he should wish to do so. There were certain conditions which had to be observed at Balgau. It was set down in 1488 that no man might blaspheme. If he did so, he must pay a fine to the priest, and suffer punishment from the secular arm. Play should be used only in the inn under the supervision of the host, whose duty it was to see to the good conduct of the game, and to obtain a percentage of the stakes and winnings for the church. It was within the rights of the lord to recall this limited<sup>4</sup> permission.

The lord of Sanct Gallen or his steward might forbid gaming at Niderbüren, but unless he did so,<sup>5</sup> there was no crime in the game itself. In another district of Sanct Gallen, Stiftsland, the steward should

1. Grimm, Vol. II, p. 760. Date, 1369.
2. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 423.
3. Ibid. Vol. V, p. 361. P, 10. 1442.
4. Ibid. Vol. V, p. 356. PP. 19-22.
5. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 223. Date, 1466.

demand a surety of money, to ensure against any disturbance which might arise from weddings and dances. Moreover, here again, the princeling claimed for himself the right of forbidding amusements of all sorts when he wanted.<sup>1</sup>

Again, at Hefenhofen in the following year, as long as no definite prohibition had been issued, a man might play at dice or cards. But he must play in an inn. In other words he must play under the eye of the host whose duty it was to keep the players in order.<sup>2</sup> At Wangi, another district in Thurgau, the prohibition was absolute as it was also at Genzingen.<sup>3</sup> At Uberlingen a maximum stake was set above which no one might play. Nor might anyone play after nightfall.<sup>4</sup>

Other customals, also, contain orders forbidding play at certain times. At Balgau in 1469, for instance, dancing and gaming were not allowed if the lord was in any sort of difficulty, or had suffered some personal loss.<sup>5</sup> Nor might play be used during the time of a service at Beltheim in 1482.<sup>6</sup>

1. Grimm, Vol. V, pp. 152, 154.
2. Ibid. Vol. V, p. 129, P. 43.
3. Ibid. Vol. V, p. 137, (1475). Vol. IV, p. 607.
4. Ibid. Vol. V. p. 214. PP. 13- 15.
5. Ibid. Vol. I, p. 200.
6. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 208.

In England and in the German principalities, the policies in the matter of amusements were a sign of the relative power of the ruling classes. The English gentry were in a strong enough position to issue orders through the king. If the orders were disregarded, the king was separated from the ordinary man by a gulf of respect which precluded any possibility of his falling into contempt. Moreover he could lay the blame on the gentry and punish the smaller fry for not enforcing his laws. On the other hand, although closer to their underlings than they cared to admit, the gentry could transfer, from themselves to the king, any odium resulting from unpopular laws. It mattered not that the laws had their support and were in reality of their making.

Far other was the lot of the German princeling. He had, as a rule, no large buffer class. He lived at as close quarters with his subjects, as the English gentry with their underlings. Yet, he had no higher authority on which he could lay the blame for unpopular measures. For his dignity's sake, he might reserve to himself the right to forbid amusements, but he

rarely tried to exercise that right. For the maintenance of order he did issue reasonable checks upon amusements. Where he ordered gaming to be kept within the inn, he would undoubtedly receive the full cooperation of the innkeeper, whose business was thus increased. In larger districts the small intermediate order of society between himself and his poorest subjects, like himself, wanted no disorders. Moreover they had won certain privileges for themselves, and wanted none for their subordinates. But drastic measures would have undoubtedly caused trouble, so, usually, he let well alone. He even left loopholes, such as that at Oppeno, where the accidental violation of his preserves was not punishable. There must have been many such accidents!

In both countries, the various systems worked not too badly. They did not work very efficiently and so caused no great anxiety. Social troubles only arose when the religious element was introduced. The peasants revolt in the fourteenth century England, undoubtedly found social fuel. But it was the religious enthusiasts who lit the flame. The same was the case in Germany shortly after our period closes, when Luther came to the fore.

## Chapter IX.

### Attitudes to Popular Recreation.

#### II. Of the City Magnates.

Hitherto we have been dealing with the merchant, more particularly the English merchant, in his role of gentleman. Even the mention of him in the German customals shows him a cut above the ordinary working man. Now we turn to him as townsman and business man.

As a business man his chief interest in the lower classes was the work he could get out of them. To the end that this might be great, the masters of the guilds framed the guild ordinances. Thus, if the ordinances had been enforced, a man would have worked ten or twelve hours a day, anyway for as long as he could see.<sup>1</sup> This would certainly preclude any recreation out of doors, and most of the more active amusements, except mumming which was against the law anyway, and dancing, were conducted almost entirely in the open air. Late in the fifteenth century the masters obtained<sup>2</sup> royal support in this policy, through a statute.

1. See Chapter I.

2. 11 Henry VII, c. 22.

The Coventry and London guilds provide the most complete evidence in the matter. But even the Masons' guild, attached to no particular town, had a working day, which, if properly observed, would preclude all possibility of recreation. Meal times and the summer allotment for a noonday sleep were supposed to be used in the prescribed manner, so that the men might<sup>1</sup> attack their work with fresh vigour. The ordinance of the London Pynners on the question of what the master expected from his labourer is very illuminating. An early ordinance of 1356 had forbidden all night work. In 1488, "they (the master pinners) further prayed that an ordinance forbidding all work by night and on certain days might be ammended so far as to allow every freeman of the Craft, their servants and apprentices, to work at all times from 5 A.M. from Michaelmas, until 8 P.M. until Lady Day (sic) excepting Saturdays and the Vigils of Double Feasts after nune<sup>2</sup> rangen as formerly excepted." From an order of the master Spurriers of 1345 we discover that the master did not always get what he wanted. They were very much upset because "many of the said trade are wandering

1. Salzman, for Beverley, p. 317; for York pp. 117, 118. See also Appendix D, p. xiii.

2. Calendar of Letter Book G. p. 64.  
Calendar of Letter Book L. p, 217.

about all day, withoute working at all at their trade; and then when they have become drunk and frantic they take to their work to the annoyance of the sick and all their neighbourhood." The Spurriers remedy for this was to forbid night work. Then the servants would, theoretically, have to work in the day time, and not waste their time in idle amusements.<sup>1</sup>

Although firm in their support of all existing institutions as all wealthy merchants generally are, they had a keen eye to business. Generally speaking the church's laws as to the observation of holy days and their vigils are strongly endorsed.<sup>2</sup> But they have no doubt that it is their Christian duty to oblige a stranger who "passing by chance through the City upon any Feast Day, shall have occasion in a hurry to buy anything,....but without opening his shop."<sup>3</sup>

A century later at Coventry it is ordered by the Leet that smiths shall "show strangers horsies as well on Sondais as on othur weke days, every man a-pon the payn of xl d: and every barbour that he shave any stranger on Sondag as well as other dais, a-pon the

1. Riley p. 226.

2. See Chapter I.

3. Riley, p. 217. Articles of the Girdelers, 1344.

peyn aforesaid."<sup>1</sup>

It is obvious that the business instinct is well developed. Such orders as the foregoing are the advance guard of the multitude of the "welcome-to-pumpkinville" signs of our own day, and were probably more appreciated. Nor did their idea of advertisement stop at courtesy, it went on to entertainment. The ordinances of Worcester set down "that all maner of Craftys wtyn the seid cite, that have pageants goynge to the worshippe of god and profite and encrease of the seid city....have and enjoie ther good, feithfull and trew approved customes and usages in susteynyng<sup>2</sup> ther pageants lights, etc." As I have already pointed out these pageants were costly affairs, and it is doubtful how much enjoyment the craft as a whole had in the production of them. However attempts were made to distribute the responsibility and expense. At Worcester there were five pageants, to each of which more than one craft guild subscribed. The wealthier and more important guilds, with whom the ultimate responsibility for these pageants rested, had a further duty. They had to provide a "cresset" or light to be carried before the Baillies, at a ceremony performed

1. Coventry Leet Book, p. 185.

2. English Gilds, p. 408.



on "the vigille of the nativitie of Seynt John Baptiste."<sup>1</sup>

The reasons for the similar alliances of guilds in Coventry is never stated in so many words. From the above quotation, however, it becomes clear that pageants were a matter of civic pride, when going to the worship of God and the profit and increase of the city, especially the latter. These shows would certainly bring in people from the surrounding countryside, and thus increase the business of the city craftsmen and merchants. For the proper production of these pageants a great deal of money was necessary. To that end the city council, both at Worcester and Coventry joined together certain crafts.<sup>2</sup>

Even at that the city magnates had trouble, from time to time, with the component parts of their scheme of municipal advertisement. In 1428 the smiths of Coventry complained that their burden was too heavy. They received no comfort from the mayor and his "discreet council": the pageant must be produced.<sup>3</sup> Another source of trouble was that the journeymen who got no direct benefit, and probably no indirect one

1. English Gilds, p. 408. For five pageants see *ibid.* p. 372.

2. See chapter IV.

3. Coventry Leet Book, p. 115.

either, from the increased trade, occasionally refused to contribute. Pressure, of course, was brought to bear on them by the masters, through the city council.<sup>1</sup> An even greater difficulty arose when whole groups defaulted. The city council dealt with this by imposing a fine of one hundred shillings raised from four masters of the guild which thus disappointed them. It was not enough. In 1475 the fine was doubled.<sup>2</sup>

Just what lay behind the order of 1494 that the pageants should be held at "Gossefordstrete" is not certain. As the request was granted it is reasonable to suppose that these inhabitants must have had considerable influence. The inference is that these people were the members of some particular guild, who stood to lose business if passers-by were not attracted to their street. It is more than probable that the other crafts had seen the profitable possibilities which lay in conducting their pageants near their own shops.<sup>3</sup>

1. Coventry Leet Book, p. 93. Dispute in the Weavers guild as to journeymen's contribution to the guild pageant.

2. Coventry Leet Book, pp. 312, 417.

3. Coventry Leet Book, p. 558.

At Coventry, too, we find a body known as the waits. These were musicians, employed by and attached to the city. They were ordered to give their services to no other master, except to abbots and priors within ten miles of the city. This exception was in itself good business. Courtesy to these powerful and wealthy churchmen, might be returned in business from them<sup>1</sup> in the town.

Certain less formal amusements, too, had the formal approval of the city fathers. Early in the fifteenth century they stated that before a bull might be slaughtered for the sale of its meat, it must be given over to be baited. In 1424, the year after this order a place was definitely prepared for the purpose at a place which already had earned the name, the "Bullryng"<sup>2</sup> The yearly "bull running" at Stamford<sup>3</sup> was probably arranged, for a similar reason. In Coventry, a cockfighting place had been established some time before 1441.<sup>4</sup> As spectacles these amusements had a distinct commercial value. Like the pageants they drew crowds.

1. Coventry Leet Book, pp. 59, 189, 200, 335.
2. Ibid. pp. 58, 83.
3. English Gilds, p. 192. Date, 1389.
4. Coventry Leet Book, p. 196.

Other sports seem to have been frowned upon.

In 1452 an order appears that "serviens<sup>ludens</sup> ad aliquem  
locum illicitum, vel bettyns diebus festivis habeat  
imprisonacionem per tres dies et ultro id solvat

vicecomitibus iij d." Nor were the masters who

thus indulged themselves treated very differently.

They had to suffer the same imprisonment and their

fine was twelve pence.<sup>1</sup> Other games had no commercial

value at all, and moreover disorders often arose

from them which did not help the good name of the city.

A very early sixteenth century order may be advanced

as an explanation. Bowling was forbidden at "Seynt

Anne's" before 6 A.M. and after 6 P.M. "but if they

be honest persones that will make litell noyse." A

further clause shows another good reason. "That he

(the keeper of the place) suffre not pore craftesmen

to use bowlyng ther, dayly and wekely levyng ther

besynes at home that they shuld lyve by."<sup>2</sup> The same

reasons undoubtedly lie behind the Worcester order which

forbids tennis and "pame" within the guildhall.<sup>3</sup>

Possibly the dignity of the guildhall also has something  
to do with the prohibition.

1. Coventry Leet Book, p. 271
2. Coventry Leet Book, p. 656,
3. English Gilds, p. 372.

A city like London, however, had no need of advertisement. It was, indeed, too well advertised. Coventry had a stable population, and, as I have shown, by bringing in customers from the countryside, trade was much increased. This, too, would be the case at Worcester, and Bristol, and Stamford. But London, even in the Middle Ages, faced many of the problems which it faces to-day, and it had no efficient machinery to cope with the situation. It covered a far larger area than any other town or city in England. It already had its underworld. As the seat of the government and the centre of royal justice, it was visited by all sorts of people, many of them fairly wealthy. Moreover, as the greatest commercial centre in England it drew numbers of rich merchants on business, particularly towards the close of our period. And thither too, as to their Mecca, the vagabonds flocked, hiding themselves on the outskirts and at Whitechapel. The vagabonds though they cannot be called an order of society, can be classified as a professional class. Moreover, to youths, not necessarily bad, but high spirited and adventurous

and ambitious, it had all the allure, of the unknown, of new worlds to conquer.

So, in London different conditons produced different social legislation. Hokking and mumming were probably frowned upon everywhere. A prohibition of the latter comes to us from Bristol late in the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup> In London these pastimes are both forbidden repeatedly. Early in the fourteenth century, the citizens were ordered not to go about at night, disguised with false faces or in any other manner, at Christmas time.<sup>2</sup> The same order was repeated in 1370 and 1372.<sup>3</sup> It is true that on neither occasion is the word mumming used. However, in 1417 a similar order shows the word mumming, as does the repetition of it in the following year.<sup>4</sup> If my explanation of the word is correct, there seems small wonder for these prohibitions of the amusement. Men and probably women, dressed up and unrecognizable, could easily cause much disorder, especially in the almost total darkness of the streets at night, Hokking, too,

1. English Gilds, p. 427, P. 34.
2. Riley, p. 193. Date, 1334.
3. Calendar of Letter Book G. pp. 274, 303.
4. Riley, pp. 658, 669.

which took place in broad daylight received strict censure. Although it is not definitely stated that the orders were for the safe keeping of the city, they were undoubtedly issued for that purpose. Mediaeval men were not well versed in the control of their emotions and the amusement was not calculated to please the victims. Hot words were usually accompanied by corresponding action.

Similarly the order for the closing of ale houses at nine o'clock, issued in 1410, is for the preservation of order.<sup>1</sup> The further injunctions for 1426 and 1427, which state ten o'clock as closing time, are no less obviously directed to the same end.<sup>2</sup> The common council in 1484 puts the whole matter before the wardmote commissions very clearly. "Furthermore we charge and commaunde you that ye suffre no huxter of Ale or Bere to dwell wtyn your warde but such as bene Fremen or Frewomen of this Citee."<sup>3</sup> These latter were, on their part, "to suffre no misrule nor unlawful gammes to be had used or exercised

1. Calendar of Letter Book I. p. 88.
2. Calendar of Letter Book K. pp. 52, 60.
3. Calendar of Letter Book L. p. 217.

wtin their houses and that every nyght between Mighel-  
 masse and Easter thei Shitte and Sparre their doores  
 at the hour of ix of the klok.<sup>1</sup> The rest of the  
 year they might stay open an hour longer. There were  
 strict prohibitions against opening their houses be-  
 fore the tyme that high masse be doon at their parish  
 chirches."

This attempt to check unlawful games through  
 taverners was a part of the general policy. As early  
 as the first proclamation against mumming, it was  
 included in the order that no one should go to the  
 houses of "the good folks of the city for playing  
 at dice there; but let each one keep himself quiet  
 and at his ease within his own house."<sup>2</sup> The later  
 fourteenth century orders have the same clause but  
 it is further added that people who disobey by playing  
 are liable to imprisonment; the people who receive  
 them for such play are to suffer a fine of twenty  
 shillings.<sup>3</sup> In view of the number of casualties re-  
 sulting from brawls which arose from gambling games,<sup>4</sup>  
 these orders are easily understood.

Other amusements met with much the same treatment.

1. Calendar of Letter Book L. p. 217.

2. Riley, p. 193.

3. Calendar of Letter Book G. pp. 274, 303.

4. See Chapter VI.



An order of 1385 forbade wrestling matches within ten miles of the city, and the performance of a play at Skinners' Well. It is true that the phrase is added "until further news arrived of the king's exploit." The king at the time was conducting military operations in Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Apparently the mayor and aldermen thought that the unusual tension of the time might lead to serious riots in the crowd of spectators who would throng to these shows. Such a riot at such a time would be most unfortunate. It may be argued that this was a specific and temporary order, apart from the general policy. And so it is. But it is only an extension or, perhaps, a confirmation and particularization of the general policy, which had been expressed in the matters of mumming and gambling.

This attitude of disapproval continued, too, after that time. In 1409 cockthreshing and football were forbidden.<sup>2</sup> Later in the century after the royal mandates on the same subject, ball games of all sorts, tennis, closh, bowling, were proclaimed as unlawful.<sup>3</sup> This may have been merely obedience to the royal will, but it must certainly have suited their own interests.

1. Calendar of Letter Book H. p. 272.

2. Riley, p. 571

3. Calendar of Letter Book L. pp. 140, 144.

Moreover that statute had been evoked by a petition  
of the commons,<sup>1</sup> of which the wealthier merchant was  
a member. Undoubtedly they would deplore the loss of  
time involved in these games, keeping men from work,  
profitable to their masters, or from archery practice.  
But another strong reason for these proclamations in  
support of the pseudo-royal policy was the constant  
fear of civil disorders which might arise from the  
practice of almost any game. The condemnation of  
wandering dogs, issued late in the fifteenth century,  
shows the feeling very clearly. "Also to avoid the  
noises, damage and strifes that were wont to arise  
therefrom, it is forbidden that any person shall keep  
a dog accustomed to go at large out of his own enclosure,  
without guard thereof by day or night, within the fran-  
chise of the City, genteel dogs excepted."<sup>2</sup>

The edict of the Provost of Paris early in  
1397 shows the commercial attitude more strongly than  
the municipal. Games were unlawful particularly on<sup>3</sup>  
the working day because they meant neglected work.

In reality the two minds were inseparable. Apart

1. 11 Henry VII, c. iv: 1409-1410. Rot-  
uli Parliamentorum, Vol. III, p. 643.

2. Munimenta Gildhallae Lond. Vol. III, p. 178.

3. Wright, p. 223. Jusserand, 241.

from the fact that the comfortable classes do not like their comfort disturbed and their peace shattered by riots, such disorders are apt to interrupt the happy march of commercial aggrandizement. Moreover even when peaceful, amusements, to borrow the words of the moralists, are idleness. Idleness in the labourer is not profit for the employer. So, although circumstances in smaller towns such as Worcester and Coventry, sometimes made the policies of their magnates differ from that of the London big-wigs, at least on the surface, fundamentally it was the trade interests that ruled in all cities. In view of the continuity of the diverging policies in Coventry and London, the one encouraging some amusements, the other condemning them all, it is plain that these trades had to be served in different ways. But they must be served.

## Chapter X.

Attitudes to Popular Recreation.  
 III. Of the Church and the Clergy.

The ecclesiastical attitude to recreation shows, in the main, the real concern of the spiritual directors of the Middle Ages for the salvation of men's souls. The landlordism of the wealthy and powerful clergy is quite apart from this. Chaucer's picture of the monk shows the type to perfection and certain legal documents bear out his view. We have, for instance, the cases of the Bishop of London in the thirteenth century, and Prior Deram at Coventry in the fifteenth.<sup>1</sup> Both are asserting their rights, not as members of the clergy, which was in itself a privileged class, but as members of the ruling class, the landlord class. A similar state of affairs is shown in Germany at Sanct Gallen in the fourteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Three isolated instances serve as very inadequate grounds for a generalization. From these, however, from such pictures as Chaucer's and others, I make bold to suggest, that anyone, who cares to make a study of the clergy as landlords, and nobles, will find a

1. Riley, p. 28. Coventry Leet Book, pp. 445, 446.

2. Grimm, Vol. I, p. 191. Appenzell.

very rich field in the Middle Ages. Here our only concern is the attitude it bred toward popular recreation. This is set out in Chapter VIII. which deals with the general attitude of the ruling classes. Substantially the views of lay landlords and ecclesiastical landlords are the same in content and in interest,--disapproving.

But the real concern of the clergy in the matter of recreation lay deeper than that, The first chapter of this thesis deals with the question of leisure time, and we have seen that the working man had virtually six weeks holidays, scattered through the year in Vigils and Feastdays. Nor was any work, not absolutely necessary, allowable on Sundays or Saturday afternoons, although occasionally courtesy might be offered to strangers. But we have also seen how the church claimed these days as her own, and laid down laws for their observation. This is set forth by John Myrc, clearly and simply, in his sermon on All Saints' Day. "Good men and woymen, such a day N. ye schull have a solen fest yn all holy chyrche, that ys, the fest of all halowes of Heuen. Wherfor

yn worschyppe of God and all thes seyntys ye schull  
<sup>even and come to the chyrch to the fyrst</sup>  
 fast the euensong, and on the morow to matens, and  
 to masse, and to the second evensong<sup>1</sup>....." Such  
 a plan leaves little enough time for recreation whether  
 honest or dishonest.

The most likely common meeting places for the  
 ordinary man, though he sometimes found his way into  
 the guildhall, were taverns, churches and churchyards.  
 The haunting of taverns, the devil's church,<sup>2</sup> was  
 a sin. The use of holy ground of any sort, for secular  
 purposes, even business, was a desecration. Thus  
 mediaeval man was circumscribed by material and  
 geographical restrictions which reduced his chances  
 for honest recreation to almost nothing. In fact  
 mediaeval man faced the world, with the major part  
 of his time claimed by his masters for work, and most  
 of the remainder by his God and his church for worship,  
 unable to go to Brighton for the week end, with his  
 only places of recreation forbidden to him.

A dreary world it would seem to us, and the  
 minds, harsh and unreasonable, which outlined such a

1. Myro, Festiall, p. 266, Sermon, 64.

2. Meffreth, Sermones, Pars Aest. xij, before

program. The master of to-day prides himself on the progress of modern civilization. We are only just beginning to realize that he, like the bishop of old chess, is an eloquent deceiver. The puritans who are still with us we condemn out of hand. Yet, even the puritan mind, which in extreme cases is always slightly unbalanced, deserves some consideration. If we are not to brand ourselves as equally unbalanced, we must make some effort towards understanding, even if we cannot achieve sympathy. We do not see eye to eye with them, modern or mediaeval, but it behooves us to inquire into their reasons.

In the days of its greatest power, the church and its leaders saw no need to explain at length the reasons for its anathemas. It was enough to say that feast days, and holy places must not be desecrated by unholy amusements, such as dancing and games.<sup>1</sup> To excommunicate those who foolishly disobeyed the church's advice for the preservation of their souls was a simple and summary method of enforcing the opinion.<sup>2</sup> It was not altogether effective, as the frequent repetitions of such orders show. The Bishop

1. Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 600. R. Poore, Episcopus Sarum, 1223.

2. Ibid. Vol. I, pp. 611, 617. Concilium Provinciale Scoticanum, 1225.

of Worcester, and the Bishop of Salisbury, who flourished in the middle of the thirteenth century, are entirely in agreement with the opinion and the methods. The latter is content with a general exhortation, but the former goes to the trouble of explaining the kind of thing to which he objects.<sup>1</sup> Dice, dancing, quintaine, wrestling, all appear in his list. Moreover it is the clergy to whom he is speaking directly. They must not encourage this sort of thing by their presence. The same summary methods were advocated at Oxford ten years later, where the students must be taught to observe the discipline, which will apply to them later.<sup>2</sup> The Bishops of Durham and Norwich, too, hopefully expect implicit, unquestioning obedience to their injunctions about games and amusements.<sup>3</sup>

Even then, in the days of its greatest power, the church, like governments, could make more laws more easily than it could enforce one. Accounts of certain inquisitions of the time contain distinctly leading questions. At Lincoln, it is asked whether anyone has been present at theatrical shows, or played

1. Wilkins, Vol. I, pp. 660, 673.

2. Munimenta Academica Oxon. 1252, p. 25. 1313, p. 93. 1442, p. 526.

3. Wilkins, Vol. I, pp. 707, 733. 1255, 1257.



dice, or indeed, whether games or plays of any sort had taken place on holy ground. The suspicion was always nagging that soemone might have got drunk, or indulged in wrestling or quintaine.<sup>1</sup> Substantially the same questions appear in the inquisition twenty three years later, which were set down in the annals of Burton Abbey. Here we see the dread that such "seculares" may have a particularly pernicious effect upon the clergy. Special regulations are set down concerning their dealings with strolling players. On no account are their performances to be countenanced by the clerical presence. Alms may be given to them, if they are poor, because they are poor, but not because they are players.<sup>2</sup>

At first it is only in these regulations regarding the clergy that any inkling of explanation is offered. The clergy are supposed to be the prototype of the good life. If the world was with them at all, the example was not edifying. This, implied in the earlier thirteenth cnetury orders, is definitely stated in Grosseteste's letters to his subordinates.<sup>3</sup>

1. Wilkins, Vol. I, p. 628. 1230.
2. Annales de Burton, p. 307.
3. Grosseteste, Epistolae, pages, 74, 118, 157, 159, 316.

Nor did this opinion flourish in England alone.

Humbert de Romans points to the impropriety of a laughing cleric, for "Luctus in hac valle lachrymorum debet esse frequens et multus, risus vero rarus et modicus."<sup>1</sup>

Angelus de Clavasio, it is true, makes allowance for a smile which is a fruit of spiritual well being, but all other laughter is a sin. Even wrath is better than such laughter.<sup>2</sup> However, in Humbert's remarks on clothing we get a foretaste of the attitudes expressed later. Luxury and pride must not be fostered in clothing which is too valuable or soft, too short, indecent, too many clothes are as bad, and so the sad tale runs on.<sup>3</sup>

This is only a casual instance of the particularization of sin. Even Berthold, preaching to a laity, whom he recognized as curious, does not see fit to show why dancing and gaming are deadly sins, except that their indulgence is usually in defiance of the fourth commandment.<sup>4</sup> Other German sermons which are attributed to Berthold's influence are even less specific, but their general tenor is more illumin-

1. Humbert de Romans, Speculum. Lib. II, Pars III, Cap. IV, p. 96.

2. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, cap. CCCCVIII, in

3. Humbert de Romans, Lib. II, Pars II, Cap II p. 87.

4. Berthold von Regensburg, Predigten, II, 203.

ating. "Dú welt ist glich ainem valle," cries the preacher, "ir wissent wol, so man ain bôm wil vellen so schrient die lúte. fliehent! fliehent! das úoh der val iht begrife. ze glicher wis ist dú welt ain val, und schriet God und dú schrift állú fliehent! fliehent állú bald von der welt, ald si erschahet si zú dem ewigen tode!"<sup>1</sup> Such flight is to be achieved by chastising the body, with discipline, with fasting, with waking, with prayer and other good things. A man shall be occupied with things of the spirit, not with chatting and gossiping. He shall go gladly to church, to prayer, to confession, and shall weep diligently for his sins.<sup>2</sup> The result will be that portrayed in an earlier sermon. "Der blúme der uff dem aste wahset, daz ist der side blúme, der cubat nit volliger varwe und bezaichnet daz rainne mentsche, daz sich so sere nach Got verjammert hat daz es blaich wirt und sin schön varw verlúret."<sup>3</sup> This then was the ideal. La Belle Dame Sans Merci could do no more. The pure heart was to express itself in a bloodless body, which indeed would have little an-

1. Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters, Vol. X, p. 203.

2. Ibid. Vol. X, p. 333. Serm. 82.

3. Ibid. Vol. X, p. 267.

imal spirits or humour left to express in secular amusements of any sort. It was to this impossible end, a race of men all spirit and no body, that the church as a whole and the more earnest individual clergy bent their efforts.

England affords an excellent example of the impossibility of the aim reflected in the attempts to achieve it. Orders continue sporadically into the fourteenth and even the fifteenth century to foster the conquest of the spiritual life over the so-called base elements of human nature. Whole synods took the matter into their consideration.<sup>1</sup> Simon of Canterbury advocates a reduction of saints' days because they are not observed in the appointed manner, indeed, "the tavern is more frequented than the church, and more orgies and potations abound than tears and prayers."<sup>2</sup> The Archbishop of York some thirty five years later was much exercised about this continual falling from grace.<sup>3</sup> In an order of the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1401 we find him using almost the identical words of his predecessor.<sup>4</sup>

1. Wilkins, Vol. II, Synod of Exeter, 1287, at p. 140: Synod of Sodor, 1291, at p. 178.

2. Ibid. Vol. II, p. 560. 1332.

3. Ibid. Vol. III, p. 68.

4. Ibid. Vol. III, 266.

The French were perhaps the first to begin to analyse the foundations for this attitude, and that analytical outlook soon found its way into England by means of translation. Early in the fourteenth century Robert of Brunne thus sought to enlighten his fellow countrymen. He points out, as do the orders already cited, and as does his French model, that games which from force of circumstance could only be played on holy days, and for the most part in holy places, were for that very reason a sacrilege and a sin.<sup>1</sup> There is nothing new in that, but he goes on to point out that the root of this evil lies for the most part in the deadly sin of idleness.<sup>2</sup> But Robert of Brunne was a humble man, and he points out that such amusements are proper for the rich and powerful to keep them out of that very sin.<sup>3</sup> Safety first is not a new idea. Dan Michel who wrote a few years later is in agreement with his first claim. He further shows that the sin of idleness is often caused by another, gluttony, and that avarice usually played a large part in most sedentary games.<sup>4</sup>

1. 8987.      1. Robert of Brunne, *Handlyng Synne*,
2. Ibid. l. 995 ff. l. 5083.
3. Ibid. l. 4304.
4. Dan Michel, *Ayenbite of Inwyt*. pp. 52, 45.

The more autocratic attitude usually prevailed.

Bromyard goes to considerable trouble to show that amusements are a great let and hindrance to a successful spiritual life. Dancing, chatting even, are instruments formed by the devil to further his own ends.<sup>1</sup> He never tries to explain the why of this. The church had discovered this truth and announced it; Bromyard thought that, for the layman, that should be enough. This same feeling is expressed by Myrc:

"And yef they do any other thyng  
Then serue god by here cumnyng,  
Then they breketh goddes lay  
And holdeth not here halyday." 2

He is strong in his plea that the churchyard is no place for "bal and bares and sucheplay," which his almost contemporary commentator amplifies as, "Danceyng, cotteyng, bollyng, tennessyng, handball, fottball, stoilball, and all maner other games."<sup>3</sup>

The process is carried no further by Nicholas de Clemanges. Holy days and holy places have been set aside for the refreshment of the spirit. He sees them becoming a source of sin instead and so pleads

1. Bromyard, Summa Predicantium, Ferie, Art. vij. Chorea, Art. ij. Ludus, Art. ij, iij.
2. Myrc, Instructions, l. 890.
3. Ibid. l. 332, and note on it.

that no more opportunities be given for disobedience to the church's laws, by the establishment of new feasts. A part of his indictment runs, "Alius in villam suam pergit, alius in negotiationem, maxima ad mundinas turba proficiscitur: quae iam publico et solenni more nonnisi celeberrimis aguntur diebus, quosdam histrio delectat, nonnullos theatra occupant, plurimos pila tenet, permultos alea."<sup>1</sup>

So far, apart from these general anathemas, we find only three main divisions of sin involved in amusements, sacrilege, idleness and gluttony, and avarice. The end of the fourteenth and the early fifteenth centuries show the development of the analytical process. The church was, for a variety of reasons, not so strong as it had been, or so sure of its position. Its leaders begin to seek to rationalize the stand they have taken, and whole showers of sins descended on mankind. In Germany, for example, Nider, classing dicing as simony, points out that the initial sin of sabbath breaking is accompanied usually by avarice, perjury, fraud, wrath, blasphemy, murder, and idolatry. On most of these counts

1. Nicholas de Clemanges, Opera, p. 143.

dicing becomes a direct defiance of the ten command-  
 ments.<sup>1</sup> Even a casual game may involve one or more  
 or all of sixteen mortal sins, and the spiritual  
 damage of habitual play is irreparable.<sup>2</sup> Neckam's  
 stricture, "Aequum est enim ut quae turpiter adquisita  
 sunt, infelicitate consumantur." pales before Herolt's  
 further judgment, "si lucratur, tunc lucratur in-  
 fernum et si perdit, tunc perdit coelum et quidquid  
 lucratur, hoc debet dari propter DEUM, cum consilio  
 sui confessoris. Et non potest defalcare quod uno  
 die lucratur et alia die perdit."<sup>3</sup> Like the earlier  
 writers, Gerson, content in his enumeration of sins  
 to set down quite unqualified the word "ludus", is  
 drawn out further on the subject of dice. Dice playing  
 involves avarice, wrath and blasphemy.<sup>4</sup>

The mediæval divines could not get their minds  
 off these sedentary amusements. Certain games  
 claims Angelus de Clavasio were invented by the devil  
 for the destruction of men's souls. The second  
 class of these he describes as "ludus alee", "et

1. Nider, Manuale Conf. fo. xlviij.

2. Herolt, Sermones Discipuli, no. 12.

Vol. I.

3. Neckam, De Naturis Rerum, Cap. CLXXXIII.  
 Herolt, Vol. II, p. 184, no. 42, section III.

4. Gerson, Opera Omnia, Tom. III, Pars I,  
 col. 126.



sub isto comprehenditur omnis ludus qui innititur solum fortune ut ludus chartarum, taxillorum, et huius modi." The third class are those which are in part games of chance, in part of skill. Such a game is "tables played with dice."<sup>1</sup> As I have already pointed out in a previous chapter the popularity of cards was by this time growing rapidly. But it had disturbed the clerical peace of mind considerably earlier. In 1404 the Synod of Langres had found it necessary to forbid the game, particularly to the clergy, and Bernard of Siena had<sup>2</sup> blasted them in a sermon in 1423.

In a simple order, such as that at Godstow Nunnery, which excommunicates dice players, we see the old attitude cropping out.<sup>3</sup> The chief sin is the contempt of the ecclesiastical prohibition. The individual clergy, however, still continue to explain themselves. Even Parker, whose general views I shall show later, deploras the blasphemy in the game.<sup>4</sup> Antoninus of Florence suggests that avarice and fraud accompany sedentary games, when

1. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, Cap. CCLXXXIII.

2. Wright, p. 223. Gurney Benham, p. 1.

3. Vol. I, p. 3. circa 1450, Register of Godstow Nunnery.

4. Parker, Dives and Pauper, Comm. II, cap. ij.

he demands the restoration of winnings, on pain of hell. Moreover he is as severe towards people, such as taverners, who allow the game. They, too, will suffer for their sin in hell.<sup>1</sup> Meffreth's opinion of the game is substantially the same as Herolt's. Though his list of the sins involved is not so long and detailed, it is almost as comprehensive, containing greed, robbery, usury, falshood, blasphemy, corruption to the bystanders and the contempt of the ecclesiastical orders on the matter.<sup>2</sup>

All these men have something to say of dancing. Pride and levity and lust are each possibly involved in its exercise, in which "*chorisantes omnibus sensibus et membris peccare p̄nt. viz. gressu, ornatu, cantu, visu, auditu.*"<sup>3</sup> Herolt shared this opinion of Nider's. Of the twelve types of people who sin mortally, "*Noni sunt viri, et mulieres, etiam virgines, quae Deum offendunt chorizando, et etiam superbiendo in vestibus. Nam quaecumque mulier, vel virgo, se sic ornat in crinibus, in facie, in peplis, in cingulis, in vestibus, inspiciendo se in*

1. Antoninus of Florence, *Summa Confessionale*, fo. lvij, fo. ciiij, fo. lxxvij.

2. Meffreth, *Sermones*, Pars Aest. j K.

3. Nider, *Decalogi Legem*, Praec. vij, cap. vj, U. Praec. vj, cap. iii, B,D,F.

speculo, et hoc facit ex superbia, alliciendo masculas ad malas concupiscentias, talis persona peccat mortaliter. Similiter superbi, qui in diebus festivis chorizant, gravius peccant, quam si manibus laborarent. vide Augustine.<sup>1</sup> Pride, luxury, envy, avarice and their many subdivisions find their natural places in the hearts of those who thus forget their God.<sup>2</sup> In certain well defined circumstances, at a wedding, or a victory, done by lay folk with good intentions, using only decent songs, dancing might possibly accomplished without sin.<sup>3</sup> But Herolt would agree with Angelus who, admitting the same general view, yet adds that good intentions are but a frail safeguard against the multitude of probable sins, and really it would be safer not to do it at all.<sup>4</sup> Antoninus of Florence makes allowances in a like manner. He speaks with the same air of doubt and makes his own list of the possible and probable sins, levity, vanity, pride, lust, sacrilege of holy times and places, and horrors! the possibility of corrupting

1. Herolt, Sermones Discipuli. Vol. II, p. 84. no. 19. Similar statements at, p. 431, no. 27, and p. 407, no. 23.

2. Herolt, Vol. II, p. 575, no. 36.

3. Herolt, Vol. II, p. 407, no. 23.

4. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, cap. LXXXVI.

the clergy by inciting them to dance with women.<sup>1</sup>

Some of Meffreth's remarks on dancing seem casual. A wise man will avoid dancing for fear of being led into one of the many sins which surround the dancers.<sup>2</sup> Gluttony and luxury lead men into the sacrilege, by inspiring them to dance on the holy day.<sup>3</sup> But Meffreth is as agitated over the matter as Herolt. They both tell the same story. Dancing ridicules the passion of Christ. The outstretched arms of the dancers, the movement of the body, the crowns of flowers and fine garments, the bold eyes, all these are in direct scorn of Christ on the cross, his helplessness, his crown of thorns, his nakedness, and his humility,--"sic christus in omnibus membris suis patiebatur, sic chorizans in omnibus membris delectatur."<sup>4</sup>

Looking on at this spectacle had its own peculiar dangers. If a spectator took pleasure in watching the dance, he was undoubtedly sharing in the

1. Antoninus of Florence, Summa Confessionale, fo. lxiiij.

2. Meffreth, Sermones, Pars Aest. lxii, N.O.P.

3. Ibid. Pars Aestivalis, lxiii, V.

4. Meffreth, Pars Hiemalis, Rz- Sa. Herolt, Vol. II. p. 575, Example, 35.

idleness and lascivious thoughts of the dancers.<sup>1</sup>  
 Even disapproval would not save him; "Insuper  
 circumstantes peccant in hoc quod considerant de-  
 positiones verba, et mores chorizantium. Et tunc  
 ex his consideratis judicant chorizantes quod  
 est contra Evangelium Luc. C. 37. Nolite judicare  
 ut non judicabimini.<sup>2</sup> Straight indeed was the way  
 and narrow the gate for these men, hemmed in on all  
 sides, by impassable mountains of sin.

But when they had finished with the most pop-  
 ular amusements, these mediaeval puritans were by  
 no means through. They even dared to challenge  
 the nobles' enjoyment of tournaments. Tournaments  
 were dangerous and a bad example. They occasioned  
 sacrilege and pride.<sup>3</sup> But these objections began  
 long before Angelus and extended to the similar  
 amusements of the lower classes. Early in the  
 thirteenth century the church through its general  
 orders, and the clergy individually objected to  
 "luctae," "palaestras publicas," and "ludos, in quibus  
 decertatur pro bravio."<sup>4</sup> The latter classification

1. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Ang. cap. LXXXVI

2. Herolt, Sermones, Vol. I, p. 421, no. 37.

3. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Ang.

Ludus et Jocus, CCCCLVI, CCLXXXII.

4. See Chapter III, pp. 33-38.

shows the games as a source of pride. But the chief objection again lies in the sacrilege of using them on holy days, and the consequent contempt of the ecclesiastical laws.

Theatrical shows, if I may so designate them, were, according to Angelus, allowable under certain conditions,. Time and place must of course be considered, but the emphasis here is on the words, "Si fiat...personis congruis et gestibus vel verbis honestis." Otherwise the sin of acting or watching is deadly.<sup>1</sup> It is clear that comedy is not likely to fill the conditions described. Antoninus puts the matter even more clearly. They are a sin not only if they contain "in verbis vel factis turpia," but also if they countenance levity.<sup>2</sup> Meffreth implies all this and goes on to point out the loss of goods in games and spectacles.<sup>3</sup> For the fullest account, however, we have to return again to Angelus de Clavasio. He sees two types of recreation, the first spiritual, the second human. The latter type is, of course, of no value, often even harmful. His list of these human recreations comprehends spectacles, wrestling, ball

1. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, cap. CLXXXV, R.

2. Antoninus of Florence, Summa Confessionale, fo. lxxix, fo. lxiiij.

3. Meffreth, Pars Aest. lxii, N.O.P., lxiii, V.

play, dancing, chess, quintaine.<sup>1</sup> It is strange that ball play does not figure very often in these objections. To all appearances its various forms were very popular, and not only with the laity, yet the only objection ever raised is that it occasions sacrilege, by sabbath breaking, and the desecration of holy places.<sup>2</sup>

Public conduct is after all a direct concern of any church which is alive, but indirectly so. However, certain incidental matters, not particularly identified with the subject in hand, shows the church interfering even with personal and what we should most certainly consider private affairs. I cite this material because it shows so clearly the attitude of the church. Baths on Sundays were a luxury, fitting least of all to the clergy, whose interest in externals should be completely overwhelmed by thoughts of the delights of the spirit.<sup>3</sup> A church council in 1453 actually legislated as to the personal appearance of the clergy. They should not oil or curl their

1. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, cap. CCLXXXII.

2. Myrc, Instructions, l. 332. Nicholas de Clemanges, Opera, p. 143.

3. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, p. xxiii, versus.

hair. In general they must be a good example to the laity by refraining from worldly indulgence of any sort.<sup>1</sup>

Even music, whose spiritual benefits are more readily recognized to-day, was distrusted. Church music itself was under some suspicion. St. Bernard held that it should be good but plain, for elaborate music distracted man's attention, and the words were in this way lost. Composing an office for St. Victor's day, St. Bernard wrote a hymn that would not scan.<sup>2</sup> With the friars the case is even more clearly set down. In the earliest days the brothers had cheered their marches with song, sometimes adapting popular airs. But St. Bonaventura deploras this. "Let them not sing on their way," says he, "especially to secular airs, even though the words be good: for lay folk understand the bare sound only." Besides, "it befitteth not a religious to raise his voice above the ordinary." He includes as offences against the seventh commandment listening to news and to musical instruments.<sup>3</sup>

The devil's intelligence is never underrated.

1. Wilkins, Vol. III, p. 567. Concilium provinciale Cashellense Limerice, 1453.
2. Coulton, Five Centuries of Religion, p. 301.
3. Coulton, Ten Mediaeval Studies, p. 48.



Bartholomaeus Anglicus admits that music may be of good effect, but, recognizing its pleasurable qualities, claims that the devil "tempteth the eares by song and melody, that he myght make the Christen strengthe feble and faint."<sup>1</sup> Much later Dan Michel carries the case against the minstrels. They are wicked men, servants of the devil, and shall not be given alms.<sup>2</sup> Even wise divines, like Gerson, who recognize the distinctions of good and bad music, good and bad in the moral sense at least, yet distrust it usually as an instrument of the devil. Gerson's defence, if it may be called that, points to the necessity of the decency of the contents and the congruity of the time and place.<sup>3</sup> Songs that had passed the moral censorship must, nevertheless, not be used if sacrilege were involved, and, as I have suggested, suitable time and place were not easy to find. However, even a loophole which leads nowhere makes a prohibition more palatable. Nicholas de Clemanges had no care for feelings. He made a straightforward objection<sup>4</sup> to the use of instrumental music for pleasure.

1. Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, Lib. XIX, cap. cxxxiiii, Lib. II, cap. xix, p. ix, b.
2. Dan Michel, *Ayenbite of Inwyte*, p. 192.
3. Gerson, *Opera*, Tom. III, Appendix, col. 930.
4. Nicholas de Clemanges, *Opera*, p. 145.

Angelus de Clavasio was of much the same mind, but he makes a strange allowance. Musicians may play, not only to the worship of God, but for the recreation of others.<sup>1</sup> These men were undoubtedly speaking of secular music. However, even later in the fifteenth century the old distrust of church music still prevailed. Parker shows the two trends of opinion in his conversation between Dives and Pauper.

Dives. Me thinketh yt it were better to say  
 goddes seruyce in holy chirche without note  
 than with note and hacking of the syllables  
 Y wordes of our prayers and praysyng as we  
 do. For who shold telle the kyng of Eng-  
 londe a tale or make his prayer to him and  
 made so many notes & hackynges in his tale  
 he sholde have lytyll thanke.

Pauper. (Points out the difference between a  
 human king, who has to be informed of things  
 and not worshipped.) But god knoweth it  
 (man's heart and will) longe er we speke it  
 with our mouth. And therfore whan we synge  
 in our prayers with cleneness of lyfe &  
 deuocyon of herte/ we please god in as moche  
 as we worship him with our power of voyce &  
 tongue etc. (Then he goes on to blame the  
 deadly singing for bad behaviour in and slack  
 attendance at church.) 2

From the foregoing it is clear that the clergy were not always entirely at one in these matters. Moreover, the clergy themselves were not altogether docile to the ecclesiastical discipline. Manning quotes Parker's exhortations to preachers that "undre

1. Angelus de Clavasio, Summa Angelica, Ferie, CLXXI, seq.

2. Parker, Dives and Pauper, Commandment I, cap. lix, page t. i.

colour of prechyng they rene nat to moche about en veyne  
 in the Sunday."<sup>1</sup> And Parker had strong words for  
 the clergy who would a-hunting go, and the people who  
 encouraged them. "I pray to God that euyl mote they  
 spede also of tymes as they take ony man of relygyon  
 or of holy chirche."<sup>2</sup>

But there are evidences in the thirteenth  
 century that the clergy not only individually, but  
 in whole groups, did not practise what the more en-  
 ergetic of them preached. In 1225, the monastic  
 clergy at Worcester allowed and even supported a tour-  
 nament. They were summarily excommunicated by the  
 Bishop, but not so much from his religious zeal as  
 from the jealousy which always existed between the regular  
 and secular clergy.<sup>3</sup> Business as well as pleasure  
 was forbidden on feast days, but we find monasteries  
 and bishops seeking the right by royal grant of holding  
 markets and fairs at specified feasts. Among them<sup>4</sup>  
 was the Bishop of Worcester.

1. Manning, Chapter IX, pp. 123-130.

2. Parker, Dives and Pauper, Comm. I, cap. i.

3. Annales Wigornia, p. 418.

4. Annales Wigornia, p. 431. "Dominus  
 episcopus obtinuit nundinas a domino rege apud Blockele  
 per v dies et apud Stratford per iv, et apud Alvichirche  
 per iii, et mercatum apud Alvichirche feria quarta."  
 Other examples of this are to be found: in Annales de  
 Burton, p. 237, the Abbot and monks might hold a fair  
 and market for three days, at the feast of St. Bartholomew.

Of course, the apology may be offered that there was no other possible time for such things. But, particularly in the case of the Bishop of Worcester, it shows the direction of the interest of the ecclesiastical lords. However, as the matter of the tournament at Worcester indicates, more purely pleasurable reasons often ruled. At Dunstable a suit arose between a woman called Christiana, and the monastery. During the suit it transpired that many of the monastic clergy had been present at the wrestling match, outside the monastery, in which her husband had met his death.<sup>1</sup>

Not only did the clergy thus encourage the laity in their folly. They indulged in amusements themselves. We have already heard of the death of one John Fustard, while he was playing at tiles. His companion on that occasion, and it was in 1276, was a clerk attached to the church of St. Mary Magdalen in Southwark.<sup>2</sup> Another very similar instance, still in the thirteenth century, is that of the death of a certain William during a game of football.<sup>3</sup> William de Spalding, who caused his death, was a canon of Souldham, of the Gilbertine order of

(continued from page 175, note 4.)

*Annales de Bermondeseia*, p. 462. 1268, the prior and convent are to be allowed a market "in vigilia et in die et in crastino Sanctae Trinitatis."

1. *Annales de Dunstaplia*, p. 298.

2. Riley, p. 3, P. 2.

3. *American Hist. Review*. Magoun, Football, p. 37.

Sempringham. The man was absolved on the plea of accident. Having a still unsatisfied conscience, he appealed to the pope for a more final absolution. Apparently he feared no ill effects from the sin of indulging in a secular amusement. Indeed from the foregoing incidents one might conclude that the holiness of the lives of the clergy acted as a charm against the possible ills of the game. From Jusserand we get another glimpse of canonical life. Of football he writes, "Les ecclésiastiques, en certaines villes, s'adonnaient à ce jeu; à Auxerre, tout nouveau chanoine était tenu de donner à ses confrères un ballon; la partie offrait le plus singulier mélange d'exercices pieux et sportifs. Le jeu commençait par le chant de la prose: "Victimae Pascalis laudes," et se terminait par une ronde que dansaient ensemble tous les chanoines. L'usage était fort ancien, puisque les règles du jeu furent codifiées en une ordonnance du 18 avril 1396: "Ordinatio de Pila facienda." The tendency for each new canon to outdo his predecessor in the size of his ball resulted in an order of 1414, limiting<sup>1</sup> the size.

The laity were not stupid and its poets were prone to echo the observations and opinions around

1. Jusserand, p. 270.

them. To protect the sculpture of the Chapel reredos, William of Wykeham found it necessary to forbid the budding clerics of his college to dance in the Chapel or adjoining Hall.<sup>1</sup> When they got out into the world, the lighter minded clergy were not averse

"To clippen and kissen they counten in tounes  
The damoseles that to the dance sewe." 2

But the church and the sterner clergy tried to prevent these scandals. Late in the fifteenth century an order was issued at Sens, reminiscent of the dancers' "blossen bein," forbidding the clergy to play at tennis "surtout en chemise et en public."<sup>3</sup> Sterner minds realised the truth of Brant's saying,

"Und wenn der appt die würffel leydt  
So sind die munch zûm spiel bereit." 4

They also realized that he might have added with equal truth, that the laity would not be slow to follow the example, which they in many cases so little needed. Where the example was unnecessary, the actions of frivolous priests formed a very excellent excuse for lapses in correct conduct.

This self indulgence of the clergy is not to be

1. Rashdall, Vol. II, Pt. II, p.672.
2. Political Poems and Songs, Vol. I, p. 332.
3. Jusserand, p. 241. Reference in Thomassin, *Ancienne et Nouvelle discipline de L'Eglise*. Tom. III, column 1355. Brant, p. 60, cap. 61.
4. Brant, *Narrenschiff*, p. 52, cap. 49, l. 9.

wondered at. Berthold's understudy might say what he liked about the conditions and results of a successful spiritual life, the idea had little appeal for the ordinary man or the ordinary cleric. The clergy were drawn from all classes of humanity: some of them were possessed, as were some of the laity, of a love of fun and a sense of humour. A halo and a harp in the future are small consolation for dullness in the present. So while the moralist preached and the councils ordered, some of the clergy sought for themselves and their cures, a more normal life. Possibly seek is too strong a word, they just slipped into it.

Echoes of this milder attitude are to be found in the fabrics of churches. At Beverley and Manchester and St. Davids, the choir stalls are covered with carvings which are full of humour. They were carved by laymen, it is true, but the clergy countenanced them. At St. David's, on one of the seats a sea voyage and a sea sick passenger are represented. A whole series appears on the seats at Beverley Minster. These are a related group dealing with the controversy between the clergy of the minster and the friars. The friars

are always represented as foxes, the laity usually as geese. Even the laity noticed religious squabbles. Other scenes make up the number, one of which appears in another chapter. If I remember rightly, of the whole number, which must be about sixty, only two represent biblical scenes. Thus did recreations still find their way into the churches in whose precincts, even, they were forbidden. At Carlisle, the carvings of the capitals of the pillars represent, for the most part, scenes of the seasons. One on the south aisle, however, shows a tumbler performing his antics to the accompaniment of a tabor, and a viol lies nearby. Practically all of these carvings date approximately from the thirteenth century. Their spirit is entirely opposed to the spirit animating the orders and exhortations which I have cited in the earlier part of this chapter. Yet there they remain, inside the churches, to this day.

The relaxation of discipline, which finds its expression in these wooden and stone representations, sometimes appears in the works of the sterner clergy. Berthold forstalls the protests of his parishoners by telling them that they may dance at weddings, but he



stipulates that they must exercise great care lest<sup>1</sup> they fall into sin. A century later, Gerson makes similar allowances in favour of honest games but with similar reservations in favour of decent decorum. He issues a further warning against sins which may be committed while drinking, dancing or in any other amusement.<sup>2</sup> Nider, too, claims that such times of rejoicing as weddings, a home-coming, a victory, may be celebrated by a dance. He points out, though, that before the celebrations reach this stage, the<sup>3</sup> clergy should withdraw.

Henry Parker carries the argument still further. Even on Sundays, decent dances are permissible, so long as they should not "styre men and wyemen to pryde, to lechery, glotonye and sleuthe/ to over long wakynges on nyghts/ and to ydelness on the werke dayes/ and

1. Berthold von Regensburg, Predigten, Vol. I, p. 269.  
 2. Gerson, Opera, Tom I, Pars, III, col. 432, cap. vii. Tom. III, Appendix, col. 925. "An chorizare semper sit peccatum? Dico quod non, in pluribus casibus, quantum est de se; sed fragilitas hominum talis est, quemadmodum difficulter fiunt choreae sine diversis peccatis. Certum est quod qui propter choream committet perficere quod est faciendum, aut facit scienter alterum peccare, peccat graviter. Etiam choreae sunt inordinatae omnino publicae, et sine rationis mensura, aut quand mulieres impregnatae perdunt fructum earum, sicut accidit. Nota quod omnia peccata chorisant in chorea etc. Tangere pueros in facie, et alibi, estne peccatum? Dico quod melius est se abstinere et cadere potest, vel accidere magis peccatum, quam habere decem pueros de sua propria cognata germana."

3. Nider, Decalogi Legem, Praec. VI, Cap. III, F.

other synnes." He admits the possibility quite frankly, but not the probability. Moreover he adds that the Scriptures give precedents. David danced before the ark, and the children of Israel thus celebrated their safe passage through the Red Sea.<sup>1</sup> Parker even defends dice playing, as long as it remains a game "for honest recreacyon ~~only~~," and does not become a lucrative business. But again he points to the possible dangers such as blasphemy.<sup>2</sup> His Dives asks, "In ryaltees as playes and dances that are used in grete festes and in the sondayes/ are they not lefull." And Pauper replies that they are "That ben done pryncypally for deuocoon honeste and myrthe to teche men to love God the more/ and for no rybaudry/ ne medled with rybaudry ne lesyngs ben lefull/so that people be not letted there from goddes seruyce/ ne from herynge of goddes worde and that none errours be meddled in suche ryalte<sup>e</sup>s and playes agaynst the fayth of holy chirche/ ne ayenst good lyuynges. All other playes ben forboden<sup>3</sup> bothe holy dayes and werken dayes."

1. Parker, Dives and Pauper, Commandment III, xcij, p. i, iiij. eviiij, p. i, iiij.

2. Ibid. Commandment I, xxxviii, two pages after d, iiij. See also Commandment II.

3. Ibid. Commandment III, xvij, p. i, ii, seq.

Leaving out the considerations of those clergy whose interests lay in social advancement, wealth and power, the fact remains that the rest, the real shepherds, had the welfare of their flocks at heart. To their minds the air was full of devils, as our modern air, according to our advertisements, is full of germs. They could even disrupt divine service.

"Unus videlicet faciendo clerum in choro male officium dicere discurrendo. Alius faciendo populum in ecclesiam<sup>1</sup> garrulare. Tertius faciendo alios extra laborare."

If the devil could do that by means of his henchmen, how much greater would his power be when a man is completely off his guard dancing or dicing, or trying his strength and skill in some other amusement. That is the keystone of the ecclesiastical attitude. The conscientious clergy were earnestly concerned for the safety of men's souls. So they hemmed humanity in with barriers calculated to keep out the devil. So the orders were framed, so the sermons preached and so the tracts were written by men who knew their own human frailty. They sought to bring man to salvation by

1. Bromyard, Summa Predicantium. Ferie, Art. vij.

robbing him of all external distractions, especially pleasurable ones, which kept him from his true end. They wished to make of all men the colourless man of Berthold's understudy, whose spirit has overcome the weaknesses of the flesh and the temptations of the devil.

Occasionally, individuals saw that the way was too hard, that "recreation and rest are necessary in human life." But still Meffreth continues, "at the same time virtue is necessary to keep the balance in games and amusements, though they are decent and honest." <sup>1</sup> Men like Berthold, Gerson and Nider, sought to alleviate the hard lot by making exceptions which allowed a little jollity now and then. But all of them exhort mankind to watch for the devil, and pray for deliverance.

v.Q. 1. Meffreth, Sermones, Pars Aestivalis,

## Chapter XL.

### Attitudes to Popular Recreation. IV. Of the Ordinary Man.

The governments of mediaeval times sought by proclamations and laws to keep the peace, and preserve society in its old forms.

"God bless the squire and his relations  
And keep us in our proper stations."

That was the ideal prayer of the nobility, and probably of the bulk of the lower classes too. The nobility saw the answer to this prayer in the complete submission of the lower classes, and the abrogation to themselves of all the privileges and pleasures which life could offer. Servants were created by God to work that their masters might have leisure for amusement.

The municipalities were governed by the merchants. In England they were not divided from the nobility by very clear cut lines. On the continent in their own sphere they formed a separate class of power. The power of money was rapidly superceding the power of arms and blood, though its final supremacy was still a long, long way off. Power and money meant

leisure time for themselves. Their servants and underlings were a race of men set apart to work for the achievement of this end. Amusements and recreation were occasionally one of their duties, but never one of their rights.

The church in its various temporal capacities shared these views. In its spiritual capacity it saw human recreation as an instrument of the devil. Salvation depended on the decent accomplishment of one's proper duties on the week day, and due honour to God and his saints on the holy day. This was particularly the necessity of the poor man. The powerful were sometimes encouraged win merit vicariously by buying masses for the souls of others, rather than attending for the good of their own. The endowment of churches also had a very salutary effect on God's attitude to a man's shortcomings. It is only fair to remind the reader that these latter cases were not as manifold as the modern Protestant puritan would have us believe. There was honesty in the Middle Ages, not only in the Catholic Church, but sometimes even in the government.

Not one of these three classes of society met with any singular success in their measures to preserve the social and spiritual order. The municipalities were probably the most successful. At Coventry, for instance, orders rarely had to be repeated. But Coventry was static, and the masters were truly in power. London was a sprawling thing. The masters were supposedly in power and they made and remade orders for the safekeeping of the city. But the situation was really beyond their control. The central government was constrained by the upper classes to a continual verbal vigilance. We have seen how each succeeding law adopted the forms of its predecessor. The ecclesiastical orders from all times and places during the period show a strange similarity, and the continuity of the struggle. All these classes made concessions, possibly to render their general opinions more palatable to the people against whom they were directing their general policy of suppression. The central authorities withdrew the law for a period of twelve days at Christmas time. This was, of course, accepted by the municipalities. Certain small cities even legalized particular amusements and so cast a blight on them. The church eventually

accepted the inevitability of certain types of amusements and endeavoured simply to minimize them and the dangers involved in them.

These concessions, large as their makers probably thought them, did not have the desired effect. The first law making Christmas allowances appeared in 1461. In 1472 a further law, forbidding amusements, was passed which had no mention of a relaxation at Christmas or any other time. In 1495 the government retreated to its position of 1461, and in 1503 the law of 1495 was repeated almost word for word. This type of legislation was, as I have already pointed out beneficial to the merchant. London, which was more and more becoming the centre of government, echoed the general legislature. But at Coventry the commercialization of sport had spelled the death of its spontaneity. The journeyman's pleasure in producing pageants wanes when he has to perform them for the increase and profit of his employer. Nor can the butcher be expected to take any great enjoyment from the spectacle of his meat being spoiled in the bull ring.



The life of the ordinary man in the Middle Ages, if lived according to the arrangements made by his superiors, temporal and spiritual, would have been a dull affair indeed. But the ordinary man was no more a mere clod, than the average knight was a flower of chivalry, or the normal cleric a flame of devotion. There was no organized defiance to the upper classes. Their rules and regulations were not a matter of concern. When mediaeval man wanted to amuse himself, he did.

The law forbade gambling; the church declared it a sin; the law courts, as in London, from time to time rounded up the offenders and dealt with them severely. We have records of this through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Yet there is no evidence to show that the games died out. On the contrary it shows that they flourished. Nor does the church's direst punishment, excommunication, seem to have had any more effect.

If the church had no very determined objection to ball games, the government had. It ordered men to leave playing at ball and practise with their bows.

But the law had to be repeated eight times between 1363 and 1503.

The nobility began complaining about the commons' encroachment upon their hunting privileges in the thirteenth century. A law was passed in 1390 to deal with the matter. The nobility were still complaining in the time of Prior Deram, late in the fifteenth century.

The practice of hokking and its forerunner "bars" show a similar history. Laws were ineffectual. Between 1332 and 1352, no less than thirteen proclamations forbidding it were published. Again between 1406 and 1438 thirteen orders were made to prevent hokking, more particularly in the city of London. Mumming in a like fashion, continued in spite of the orders against it.

From 1223 on, dancing worried the churchmen, high and low. The greater clergy fulminated against it, and ordered their subordinates to forbid it in their parishes. Great and small, alike, told horrid stories of the awful fate that awaited dancing sinners. Yet

mediaeval man danced on. He had heard the stories so often, and he had seen so many dancers die peacefully in their beds, or at least in the pursuit of a fairly tranquil existence. The idea of confession and absolution was so simple and credible. It was the pardoner's profit.

The law of the powerful could thunder and threaten. The voice of the church commanded, pleaded, explained and cried again, "Fly! Fly! From these worldly pleasures." But the thunderstorms of legal wrath had so very few effective bolts. The machinery of government was quite inadequate to deal with refractory peasants and workmen. Anyway, it usually had bigger fish to fry. At first the churches methods were more effective. The church had its Dantes who told their tales of hell. But the average human soon tires of travellers' tales, when he neither knows, nor expects to know the town or country, especially when the traveller repeats himself. Perhaps there were some curés like Daudet's curé de Cucugnan, shrewd and kindly, but the ordinary priest lacked imagination and moderation. He borrowed his tales

from example books. The stories did not ring true, they were too general in character and allusion. What has "quidam vir" got to do with John atte Hill or William, his brother? Besides the priest told the same tale so often that familiarity with hell bred boredom if not actual contempt. So humanity at large payed little attention to their priests when they tried to interfere with pleasure. And all priests were not puritans.

So, in spite of the church, the ordinary man danced and diced, and enjoyed his quintaine and wrestling. In spite of the government, the canons and clerks joined the common laity when they broke the king's laws in ball play. The struggle against amusements was hopeless. Youth enjoyed dancing and singing: she would

".....be ffethryd and go ffle,  
 And among, go sporte me;  
 Pleye at the closs, among I shal  
 And somewhye Rennyn at the bal  
 Wyth a staf mad lyk an hook  
 And I wyl han a kamyng crook;  
 ffor I desyre, in my depos,  
 ffor to han noon other croos:  
 And among I wyl nat spare,  
 To hunt for hert, ffor buk and hare,

Sometyme ffysshē and cacche ffowlys,  
 And sometyme pleyen at the bowlys;  
 Among, shetyn at besselys,  
 And affter pleyn at the merellys,  
 Now at the ches, now at the tablys,  
 Rede no storyes but on ffablys,  
 On thing that is nat worth a lik;  
 Pleye at the keyles and the quek;  
 Somewhyle my wyttys I applye  
 To her<sup>e</sup> song and menstralcyē 1  
 And pleye on divers Instruments."

When creaking limbs told of a youth that was past,  
 age could still commit the sin of finding enjoyment  
 in looking on, and Pleasure, the handmaid of Idleness  
 could still offer "pleyes delytables" Dancing, football,  
 tennis, quoits and all the rest of them might be a  
 bit too strenuous, but age could play

"At Mereles, dees, and tables  
 But best and most especially  
 At the chesse he dooth excelle." 2

1. Lydgate, Pilgrimage, l. 11080, ff.
2. Lydgate, Reson, l. 2403.

## APPENDIX A.

Texts of Petitions and Statutes dealing with amusements from 1332 to 1503.

Rotuli Parliamentorum. Vol. II, p. 64.

Parliament vi Edward III, 1331, 1332.

3. N're Seignr le Roi defend sur peyne d'enprisonement q nul enfaunt ne autres ne jue en ul lieu du Paleys de Westmr durant le Parlement q y est somons, a bares ne as autres jues, ne a ouster chaperouns des gentz ne mettre mayn en eux, ne autre empeschement faire qoi chescun ne puisse paysiblement sure ses busoignes.

This order was repeated in:

1332, vi Edward III, 2, Ibid. p. 66.  
 1332, vi Edward III, 4, " p. 68.  
 1339, xiii Edward III, 2, Ibid. p. 103.  
 1340, xiv Edward III, 2, Ibid. p. 112.  
 1340, xiv Edward III, 3, " p. 117.  
 1341, xv Edward III, 2, " p. 126.  
 1343, xvii Edward III, 3, " p. 135.  
 1344, xviii Edward III, 2, Ibid. p. 146.  
 1346, xx Edward III, 1, Ibid. p. 157.  
 1347, xxi Edward III, 1, " p. 164. (not quite complete.)  
 1350, xxv Edward III, 8, " p. 235.  
 1351-2, xxv Edward III, 5, Ibid. p. 236.

Rymer's Foedera. Vol. II Pt. II.

Anno 37 Edward III, A.D. 1363.

De arte sagittandi utenda, et ludis inutilibus et inhonestis prohibendis.

Rex, vicecomitis Kantiae salutem. Quia populus regni nostri, tam nobiles, quam ignobiles, in jocis suis, artem sagittandi, ante haec tempora, communiter exercebant, unde toti regno nostro honorem et commodum, nobis, in actibus nostris guerrinis, Dei adjutorio cooperante, subventionem non modicam dinoscitur provenisse; et jam, dicta arte quasi totaliter dismissa, idem populus ad jactus lapidum, lignorum et ferri: et quidam ad pilam manualet, pedivam et bacularum, et ad canibucam et gallorum pugnam; quidam etiam ad alios ludos inhonestos, et minus utiles, aut valentes, se indulgent: per quod dictum regnum de sagittariis, infra breve, deveniet verisimiliter, quod absit destitutum.

Hos, volentes super hoc remedium apponi opportunum, tibi praecipimus quod in locis, in comitatu tuo, tam

Infra libertates, quam extra, ubi expedire videris, publice facias proclamari, quod quilibet ejusdem comitatus, in corpore potens, diebus festivis, cum vacaverit, arcubus et sagittis, vel pilettis aut boltis, in jocis suis, utatur, artemque sagittandi discat et exerceat: omnibus et singulis, ex parte nostra inhibens ne ad hujusmodi jactus lapidum, lignorum, ferri: pilam manualementem, pedivam vel bacularem; aut canibucam vel gallorum pugnam, aut alios ludos vanos hujusmodi, qui valere non poterunt, sub poena imprisonment, aliter qualiter intendat, aut se inde intromittant.

Teste Rege, apud Westm' primo die Junii

Per ipsum Regem.

Consimilia brevia diriguntur singulis vicecomitibus per Angliam.

This writ was repeated in 1365. (Rymer, p. 770) Only one change appears. The word canibucam is written cambucam.

### Statutes of the Realm. Vol. II.

Anno tredecimo Richard II St. 1, Cap. xiii. 1389-1390.  
(Originally French)

Forasmuch as divers Artificers, Labourers, and and Servants, and Grooms, keep Greyhounds, and other Dogs, and on Holydays, when good Christian People be at Church hearing Divine Service, they go Hunting in Parks, Warrens and Connigries of Lords and others, to the very great Destruction of the same, and sometime under such Colour they make their Assemblies, Conferences, and Conspiracies for to rise and disobey their allegiance. It is ordained and assented, that no Manner of Artificer, Labourer, nor any other Layman, which hath not Lands or Tenements to the Value of xl s by Year, nor any Priest nor other Clerk, if he be not advanced to the Value of x l (pounds) by Year, shall have or keep from henceforth any Greyhound, (Hound, nor other Dog) to hunt; nor shall they use (Fyrets) Heys Nets, Harepipes nor Cords, nor other Engines for to take or destroy (Deer, Hares nor Conies, nor other Gentlemen's Game,) upon Pain of one Year's Imprisonment; and that Justices of Peace have Power to enquire and punish them by the Pain aforesaid.

Statutes of the Realm. Vol. II.

Extract from Statute Anno duodecimo Richard II, Cap. VI.  
1388 (Originally French)

--No servant etc. to carry arms in time of peace.--  
but such Servants and Labourers shall have Bows and  
Arrows and use the same the Sundays & Holydays, and  
leave all playing at Tennis or Football, (les jeux  
as pelotes sibn a meyn come a piee) and other Games  
called Coits, Dice, Casting of the Stone, Kailes and  
other such importune games. (gettire de pere)

Rotuli Parliamentorum. Vol. III, p. 643

1410, xi Henry IV. No. xxv.

Item priont les Communes q come a Parlement tenuz a  
Cambrigg p Estatent estoit ordeigne, a toutz Servantz  
& Laborers eient Arkes & Sectes & les usent le Dymenge  
& jours de Festes, & lessent tout outrement les Jeux  
as Pelotes si bn a mayn come a pee, & les autres Jeux  
appelez Coites, Dys, gettire de Peer, Kayles & autres  
tieux Jeux importunes;---

Statutes of the Realm. Vol. II.

1410, Anno undecimo Henry IV, Cap. IV

Whereas in the Statute made at (Cant.) the xii year of  
the Reign of King Richard, amongst other Things it  
was accorded and assented, that the Servants and Labourers  
of Husbandry and Labourers & Servants of Artificers and  
of Victuallers, should have Bows and Arrows and use the  
same the Sundays and other festival Days and utterly  
leave playing at the Balls as well Hand-Ball as Foot-  
Ball, (les jeux a pelotes sibn a main come a pee)  
and other Games called Coits, Dice, Bowling and Kails  
and other such unthrifty games.

Rotuli Parliamentorum. Vol. V, p. 488.

1461, 1 Edward IV. Extract.

And also that noo Lorde, nor other persone of lower  
astate, condicion or degree, whatsoever he be, suffre  
any Dicyng, or playng at the Cardes within his hous,  
or elles where where he may let it, of any of his ser-  
vauntes or other, oute of the xii dayes of Cristmasse.

And also that noon Hosteler, Taverner, Vitailler, Arti-  
ficer or Housholder, or other use any such Pley, or  
suffre to be used any such Pley in their houses, or  
elles where where they may let it, uppon payne of  
prisonement, and other arbitrarie at the Kynges wille.



Statutes of the Realm. Vol. II.

iii Edward IV Cap. 4., 1464.

Item. come en le dit plement p lartificers des mestiers mainuelx homes & femes en la Cite de Loundres et outres Citeez Villes Burghs & Villages deins cest roialme et Gales inhabtauntz & reseautz piteousment ad estre monstre & compleiynne, coment toutz ceux en generall et chacun deux son gaundement empoverez, & grevousment endamagez et prejudicez de lour encrece du mond et vivre cotidian, p la gaund multitude des divers chaffares & wares, a leur mestiers et occupacions appteignantez, esteants pleinement ov<sup>ez</sup> & p<sup>st</sup> faitz al vende si bien p les mains destrangeez esteantz enemiez du Roy---

(Forbids the import of certain things.) ---cestassavoir ascuns bonettes lanuz ascuns draps lanuz, laces corses ribans frenges de soie et de file, lace de file, soie enfile, soie en ascuns maniere enbraudes, laces dor, tires de soie, ou dor, selles estrivens ou ascune herneise regardant as Sellers, esperons moleins pur freines andirens, gredirnes, ascuns maniere serure, martens vulgarement nomez hamers pinsons firetonges drepyng frames dises tenysballes pointes laces burses Gauntz ceinctes, harneis pur ceinctes, de ferre, de laton, dasser destaine, ou de allemine, ascune chose overee, dascun quirre tawe, ascun maner pellure tawe, wodeknyveses, botkyns, sheres pur taillours, cisours rasours shethes, cardes a Jouer, espujes---cardes pur laine etc. etc.

Rotuli Parliamentorum. Vol. VI. p. 156.

circa xiv Edward IV, 1472-1475.

47. (The high price of bows is held responsible for the decline of the popularity and quality of archery.) ---and the said Yomen, in defaute of such Bowes, nowe usen unlawfull occupacions, as pleiying at the Cardes, Dise pleiying and other unlawful games forbeden by your lawes, to the grete hurt, shame and reprove of this your noble Reame and to the grete comfort of your enemyes owtward, and to the utter desolation and fete of Archerye.

Repeated more vaguely xxii Edward IV, 1482. Rot. VI, p. 222.

Statutes of the Realm. Vol. II.

Anno septimo decimo Edward IV Cap III. 1477-1478.

Whereas by the Laws of this Land no Person should use any unlawful Games as Dice, Coits, Tennis(1) and such like Games, but that every Person strong and able of Body should use his Bow, because that the Defence of this Land was much by Archers contrary to which Laws

the Games aforesaid and many new imagined Games called Closh, Kailes, HalfBowl, Hand in & Hand out, and Queck-board be daily used in divers Parts of this Land, as well by Persons of good reputation, as of small having, and such evil disposed persons, that doubt not to offend God in not observing their holy Days, nor in breaking the Laws of the Land to their own Impoverishment, and by their ungracious Procurement and encouraging, do bring others to such Games till they be utterly undone and impoverished of their Goods, to the pernicious Example of divers of the King's liege People-----

(1) In the petition of the Commons (Rot. VI, p 188) Section 29, the word football appears after tennis.

A further clause follows to the effect that Governors of houses, tenements & gardens were forbidden to suffer such games to be played under penalty of imprisonment for three years, & xx pounds.

#### Statutes of the Realm. Vol. II

Anno undecimo Henry VII, c. 2. 1495.

And ferthermore it is ordeyned and enacted by the seid auctorite that noon apprentice ne s<sup>7</sup>vaunt of husbondry laborer ner s<sup>7</sup>vaunt artificer play at the Tables from the xth day of January next comyng but onely for mete and drinke, ner at the Tenys Closshe Dise Cardes Bowles nor any other unlawfull game in no wise out of Cristmas, and in Cristmas to play oonly in the dwelling house of his maister or where the maister of any the said s<sup>7</sup>vauntes is p<sup>7</sup>sent, upon payne of imprisonment by the space of a day in the Stokkes openly; And that the Housholder where disyng carding tenys pleiying bowles Closh or any other unlawfull game afore reherced shalbe used, otherwise then is afore reherced, and that lawfully be p<sup>7</sup>sent before Justices of Peas the Maire Shiref in his Towne or Stuard in his lete or by examination had afore the seid Justices of peas, that pces be made upon the same as upon endytment of trespas ayenst the Kingis peas and that the seid mysdoer be admytted to no fyne undre the some of vj s. viij d. And that it be lawfull to ij of the Justices of the peas wherof on shalbe of the Quorum within their auctorite to reiecte and put away comen ale selling in Tounes and places where they shall thinke convenyent, and to take suertie of the kepers of ale houses of their good behaving by the discrecion of the Justices of the peas, etc.

#### Statutes of the Realm. Vol. II.

Anno nono decimo Henry VII, c.13. 1503.

And furthermore it is ordeigned and enacted by the same auctorite that noon apprentice ne s<sup>7</sup>vaunt at husbondry laborer ne s<sup>7</sup>vaunt artificer play at the tables, from

the fest of Easter next comyng, ne at the Tenys Closshe dyse cards boweles nor any other unlawefull gamys, in no wise oute of the xij days of Cristmas, and then to play only in the duelling house of his Maist<sup>r</sup> or wher the Maist<sup>r</sup> of eny of the seid s<sup>r</sup>vaun<sup>t</sup> be p<sup>r</sup>sent, upon payn of imprisonment by the space of a day in the Stokks opynly: And that the Housholder where dysyng cardying Tenysplayng Boweles Crosse or any other unlawefull game afore reherced shalbe used-----

From here the statute continues in the words of the one preceding.

Statutes of the Realm. Vol. II.

Anno nono decimo Henry VII, c. 4.

(Longbow) greatly decayed in this Realme, forasmoche as howe of late the King's Subjects of the same gretly delyte them selfe and take pleasour in usyng of cross-bowes, wherby grett distruccion of the Kings Deer as well in Forrests Chases as in Parkes dayly is hadde and doone, and shtyng in Longe Bowes lytyll or nothyng used & lykely in shorte space to be lost & utterly decayed to the great hurte & enfebelyng of this Realme & to the cumforth of oure owtewarde enemyes yf remedie be nott therfore in dewe tyme purveyd etc.

Cotinues to the effect that no one shall shoot with the cross bow unless for the defence of his house or if he have 200 marks freehold.

## APPENDIX B.

## Extracts from Ecclesiastical Prohibitions.

Constitutiones R. Poore Sarum Episcopi. 1223 p. 600

## De Reverentia.

Adhuc prohibemus, ne choreae vel turpes et inhonesti ludi, qui ad lasciviam invitant fiant in Coemeteriis; et ne ibi tractentur causae seculares ex consuetudine, maxime in quibus agitur de iudicio sanguinis. Prohibemus quoque ne denunciationes scottallorum fiant in ecclesia per laicos, nec in ecclesiis, nec extra ecclesias per sacerdotes, vel per clericos.

Concilium Provinciale Scoticanum. 1225 p. 611

## De feriis.

XXIX. Statuimus etiam, quod de caetero placita secularia in diebus dominicis ac in aliis festivitatum solennibus minime teneantur; neque in ecclesiis, coemeteriis aut aliis locis Deo dedicatis talia placita, et maxime causae sanguinum, aut criminales, per quoscunque iudices seculares locis aut temporibus praedictis agitentur.

Quod Luctae vel Ludi. p. 617.

LXXV. Huic etiam prohibitione duximus addendum, ut in aliquibus festivitatum infra ecclesias vel coemeteria luctae vel ludi de caetero fieri non permittantur; et qui ter monitus a sacerdote loci, ab huiusmodi cessare voluerit, ingressus ecclesiae interdicatur eidem. Qui suspensus a sua insolentia non destiterit, excommunicationis sententiae innodetur.

Sub interminatione anathematis firmiter prohibemus ne laici teneant placita sua secularia in ecclesiis, vel coemeteriis, et ne laici secus altare, quum sacra mysteria celebrenter, stare vel sedere inter clericos praesumant, excepta domino rege et maioribus regni quibus propter suam excellentiam in hac parte duximus deferendum. p. 618.

Inquisitiones per archidiaconatus Lincoln. 1230

Question 17. An aliqui intendunt histrionibus, vel ludant ad aleas, vel taxillos?

Question 25. An mercato, vel ludi, seu placita secularia sint vel fiant alicubi in locis sacris?

Question 9. An aliqui sint ebriosi, vel tabernas frequentantes, vel usuarii, vel negotiatores, vel pugnantes, vel alio vitio notate?

Question 30. An alicubi levantur arietes, ut faciunt scottalos, vel decertetur in praeuendo cum vexillo matricis ecclesiae. p. 628.

Constitutiones W. de Cantilupo, Wigorn Episcopi. 1240.

Ne placita secularia, et ludi inhonesti p. 666.  
(First states that animals should be kept out of the churchyard.)

Ad servandum quoque tam coemeterii, quam ecclesiae reverentiam, prohibemus, ne in coemeteriis, vel aliis locis sacratis, vel etiam alibi diebus dominiciis mercata teneantur, vel sanguinis causae tractentur, nec ludi fiant inhonesti; maxime in sanctorum vigiliis, et festis ecclesiarum, quod potius in dedecus sanctis cedere novimus, quam honorem; etc.

Ne clerici intersint ludis inhonestis. p. 673.  
Prohibemus etiam clericis, ne intersint ludis inhonestis, vel choreis, vel ludant ad aleas, vel taxillos; nec sustineant ludos fieri de rege et regina, nec arietes levare, nec palaestras publicas fieri, nec gildas inhonestas; et praecipue mercatorum et peregrinorum, quas omnino fieri prohibemus, per quae multa novimus pericula provenisse.

Constitutiones W. de Kirkam, Episcopi Dunelm. 1255

Insuper interdicimus levationes arietum super rotas, et ludos, in quibus decertatur ad bravium assequendum.

Insuper et scotallorum potationes, et ludos in sacris quoscunque arctius prohibemus, prout in patrum et praedecessorum constitutionibus est constitutum.  
p. 707.

Statuta synodalia W. et S. Norwic. Episc. 1257

Omnes quoque ludi et placita secularia a locis sacris omnino arceantur. p. 733.

All the foregoing extracts are in Wilkin's Concilia at the given page in Volume I. The next group will be found in Volume II.

Synodus Exoniensis diocesis. 1287

---sacerdotibus parochialibus districte praecipimus, ut in ecclesiis suis denuncient publice, ne quisquam luctas, coreas, vel alios ludos inhonestos in coemeteriis exercere praesumant: praecipue in vigiliis, et in festis sanctorum, cum hujusmodi ludos theatrales et ludibriorum spectacula introductos, per quos ecclesiarum coinquinatur honestas, sacri ordines detestantur.  
p. 140.

Constitutiones synodales Sodorenses.

1291

Statuimus, quod de caetero secularia placita in dominicis diebus, aut festivis solennibus, minime teneantur in ecclesiis, in coemeteriis, vel aliis locis Deo dedicatis, et maxime causae sanguinis, aut criminales per quocunque iudices seculares locis vel temporibus praedictis agitentur. Quod si necesse fuerit edicta regalia, vel aliqua ex parte principis forte coram populo proferre, non infra missarum solennia, sed sive ante, sive post, ubi commodius potest fieri, extra tamen ecclesiam, ne praepediantur divina, praecipimus vel permittimus. p. 178.

Constitutiones Johannis Thoresby Archiep. Eboracensis.

1367

Ne in locis sacris festivis diebus mercata, placita, vel spectacula teneantur. Vol. III, p. 68

---ne quis in ecclesiis, aut earum porticis, seu coemeteriis, vel aliis locis sacris nostrae diocesis diebus dominicis, et festivis forum rerum venialium teneat, vel mercatum, nec ullam in eis negotiatum exerceri praesumat, nec etiam placita secularia teneantur in eisdem, nec in ipsis fiant luctationes, sagittationes, vel ludi, qui causam vel occasionem praestare poterunt peccati, dissensionis, odii sive pugnae: sed quilibet catholicus illuc reverenter accedat ad orandum et peccatorum veniam humiliter implorandum.

Archiepiscopi Cant. Monition ne mercimonia teneantur in coemeterio diebus festivis. 1401. Vol. III, p. 266.

---Sed, proh dolor! lasciviente nimium humana fragilitate et in deteriore labente, quod ad honorem Dei et popularis devotionis parabatur augmentum, commissum est in sensum reprobum et dissolutionis cumulum hiis diebus, dum in diebus dominicis coliter taberna potius quam ecclesia, comessationes ebrietates, et negotiationes abundant, et frequentantur, uberius quam lachrymas vel orationes, aut alia opera pietatis.

Concilium provinciale Cashellense Limerici. 1453.

20. Statuit concilium, quod omnes clerici ad primam tonsuram ordinati, ad privilegium in rebus et personis habere volentes, seipsos honeste habeant, caste vivant, et maxime beneficiati, et ad sacros ordines promoti, usuras et ludos alearum omnino evitent; superiores barbas non deferant, comam non nutrant, curulos scindant, praedis, et furtis, et violentiis abstineant, sub poena majoris excommunicationis latae sententiae ipso facto, et nihilominus privilegium in rebus omittant, postquam de hoc coram ordinariis loci convicti fuerint.

Vol. III, p. 567.

## APPENDIX C.

I quote the three following examples in order to show the influence of the *Example Books*.

## I. The Perils of Dicing.

From *Liber Exemplorum*, p. 111, Ex. 193.

Adhuc autem ludos inordinatos detestabiles demonstrant quedam scripta in summa de viciis. Quidam miles cum occasione ludi per oculos Dei juraret proprius eius oculus super scacariam cecidit de capite eius. Et quidam sagittarius valde commotus ex hoc quod ludendo perdisset, sagittam direxit ad celum, quasi vellet se vindicare de Deo. Sequenti vero die cum sederet ad ludum eadem hora rediit sagitta super alearium sanginolenta.

From *Ayenbite of Inwyrt*, by Dan Michel, p. 45.

A knygt wes/ thet zuor/ be godes eyen. an haste/ his on eye/ lhith othe thet cheker. An archer/ vor thet he hedde y-lore ate **geme**; hom his bogé/ and ssat an hez/ a-ye god. Thane morgen/ huanne he zet/ ate gemene: his arowe/ vil othe thet cheker/ al bloody.

## II. The Dangers of Dancing.

From *Herolt, Sermones Discipuli, Exempla Promptuarii*, P. 576 no. 40. Chorea.

Mulier procax, & vana erat, quae omni fere festo choreas conjungere consuevit: & factum est, ut iuvenibus viris ad saltum juxta choream ludentibus, uni eorum pilam ferire conanti, baculus de manu evaderet et dictam mulierem ducentem choream percussam in capite mox necaret:

From *Meffreth, Sermones, Pars Hiemalis*, R,z.

Mulier procax et vana erat in brabantie partibus in quadam villam que omni fere festo choreas jungere consuevit: et factum est ut iuvenibus viris ad saltum juxta choream ludentibus, uni eorum pylam ferire conanti, baculus de manu evaderet & dictam mulierem ducemem choream percussam in capite mox necaret:

Both these stories continue to tell how her body was gored in the night by a black bull which was the devil.

From Herolt, Sermones Discipuli, Exempla Promptuarii,  
P. 575, no. 35. Choreia.

Quidam nobilis filium suum dilectio Deo dedicavit in religione, ubi multum proficiebat. Juxta more oranti juxta Crucem, occurrit sibi, quod petebat scire, quid amplius iram Dei provocaret, & peccata multiplicaret. Et ecce oranti cum lacrymis, quidam juvenis splendidus apparuit ei dicens quod Christus a choris maxime vituperetur, & dehonestatur. Nam extensio brachiorum, & colligatio manuum, & brachiorum irrisorie repraesentat in Cruce Christi extensionem pro vobis. Solent omnes chorizantes coronari sertis, & floribus irridendo Christi spineam coronam. Item ornant se vestibus, irridendo Jesum Christum humilem, nudum in Cruce pendentem. Cantant etiam alacriter & rident chachinnis, irridendo fletum, et clamorem Christi in Cruce pendentis. Item depingunt facies suas, irridendo consputum, & velatam faciem Christi.

\* Item osculantur se etiam mutuo, irridendo osculum Judae

From Meffreth, Sermones, Pars Hiemalis, R,z to S,a.

The following extracts are supported in the text by quotations from the Bible and the Church Fathers.

Primo ut Christus extendit manus suas in cruce,--- Sic etiam chorizantes i derisione Christi cruci fixi expandunt manus suas ad suos amatores vel amatrices. ---Secundo Christus habuit pedes confixos cruci quos movere non potuit, chorizantes autem in blasphemiam Christi movent pedes et totum corpus.--- Tertio in cruce Christus nudus pependit, --Sz chorizantes i derisione crucifixi se melioribus induunt vestimentis.---Quarto Christus in cruce coronam spineam habuit. chorizantes autem habent sarta de floribus.---Quinto Christus habuit caput inclinatum sub spinea corona---chorizantes erigunt capita sua sub corona aut serto florido qz currunt adversus deum erecto collo.--- Sexto sicut Christus in omnibus membris suis patiebatur sic chorizans in omnibus membris delectatur.---Septimo in cruce Christus dulciter cantavit cum pro peccantibus exoravit--- chorizantes autem dulci cantu peccatoribus non prosunt: sed per hunc a diabolo capiuntur et decipiuntur qd probat in natura.---Octavo Christus pro dolore clamans moriebat, chorizantes autem pro gaudio nihil cogitant de Christi out ipsorum morte.

### III.

The following exempla also show a striking similarity.

From Jaques de Vitry, Exempla, p. 114 cap. CCLXXIII

Mulier enim cantans in chorea est velut instrumentum dyaboli, quod gallice dicitur quailliers, quo



goturnices capiuntur et ad cuius vocem congregantur, et sicut anceps unam avem excecata ligat in campo ad quam alie conveniunt et, tunc rethe expandens, capit illas, ita muliere excecata cantante, dum ad illam alie congregantur, rethi dyaboli omnes capiuntur. Rethe enim ancupis infernalis est chorea.

From Jaques de Vitry: *Exempla*, p. 131, cap. CCCXIV

Quando autem homo non vult amittere vaccam suam ligat ad collum eius campanulam ut audito sono securus sit de illa. sicut vaccaque alias preedit in collo campanam gerit, sic mulier que prima cantat coream ducit quasi campanam dyaboli ad collum habet ligatam. Quando autem dyabolus sonum audit securus redditur dicens: Nondum vaccam meam amisi.

From Meffreth, *Sermones, Pars Hiemalis*, R,z.

Dicunt naturales qz arabus est quidam piscis qui sic capitur. Nam piscator in aquam mittet particam in qua sunt aliquae campanule, et iuxta eum ponit rethe et pulsat campanulas quas piscis libenter audit: et appropinquat: rhetequ sic intrat et capitur.

This is explanatory of "Septimō" in the passage from Meffreth which immediately precedes III.

## APPENDIX D.

York Fabric Rolls, pp. 171-173.

Ordinacio facta,

Acta, Cap. 1343-1368. The exact date is probably 1352.

Quod ipsi cementarii, carpentarii, et ceteri operarii, <sup>incipere debent operari</sup> singulis diebus operalibus in estate, usque a pulsacionem campanae B.M.V., et tunc sedeant ad iantaculum infra logium fabricae, cum non jejunaverint, per spacium dimidiaae Lente: et tunc predicti magistri, vel unus eorum, pulsabit super ostium logii, et omnes statim accedent ad opera sua; et sic officia sua diligenter complebunt, usque ad horam nonam, et tunc ad prandia sua ibunt. Item in yeme, videlicet, a festo Sancti Michaelis usque ad festum Paschae, lucescente die ad opus suum venient, et statim, unus quisque cum venerit, incipiet operari, et sic continuare in forma praedicta usque ad horam nonam. Post prandium vero, a festo Invencionis Sanctae Crucis usque ad festum Beati Petri ad vincula, dormire debent infra logium. Et cum vicarii venerint de mensa canonicorum post prandium, magister cementarius, vel ejus substitutus, jacet eos de sompno surgere, et ad opus suum accedere; et sic debent operari usque ad primam pulsacionem ad vespervas, et tunc in logio ad potandum sedebunt a dicta prima pulsacione usque ad terciam pulsacionem propulsatam, tam in estate quam in yeme. Item a feste Beati Petri ad vincula predicto usque ad festum Invencionis Sanctae Crucis, statim post prandium suum propalam hora competenti sumptum, ad opus suum redibunt non expectantes recessum vicariorum de mensa canonicorum, et unusquisque, cum redierit, incipiet operari: et sic operabuntur usque ad primam pulsacionem vespervarum, et tunc potabunt infra logium usque ad terciam pulsacionem propulsatam, et redibunt ad opera sua, et sic operabuntur usque ad pulsacionem campanae abbatthiae Beatae Mariae quae vocatur le Langebell, videlicet, singulis diebus operalibus, a festo Sancti Petri in Cathedra usque ad festum Sancti Michaelis, et a festo Sancti Michaelis usque ad dictum festum Sancti Petri, quamdiu per lucem diei videre poterunt, opera sua continuabunt annuatim. Item quilibet cementarius minus capiet per septimanam in yeme quam in estate, ad valorem unius dietae, videlicet a festo Sancti Michaelis usque ad festum Paschae. Item quando duo festa acced-erint infra septimanam, amittat unusquisque unam dietam, et, cum tria evenerint, medietatem illius septimanae. Item in vigiliis et in sabbatis, quando post nonam requieverint, propter solempnitatem diei subsequentis, tunc operabuntur usque ad pulsacionem horae nonae.

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#### Abbreviations.

- E.E.T.S. Early English Texts Society.  
O.S. Old Series.  
E.S. Extra Series.  
R.S. Rolls Series.

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