



The Cricket Field: The History and Science of the Game of Cricket

James Pycroft

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CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE GAME OF CRICKET.

The Game of Cricket, in some rude form, is undoubtedly as old as the thirteenth century. But whether at that early date Cricket was the name it generally bore is quite another question. For Club-Ball we believe to be the name which usually stood for Cricket in the thirteenth century; though, at the same time, we have some curious evidence that the term Cricket at that early period was also known. But the identity of the game with that now in use is the chief point; the name is of secondary consideration. Games commonly change their names, as every school-boy knows, and bear different appellations in different places.

Nevertheless, all previous writers acquiescing quietly in the opinion of Strutt, expressed in his "Sports and Pastimes," not only forget that[2] Cricket may be older than its name, but erroneously suppose that the name of Cricket occurs in no author in the English language of an earlier date than Thomas D'Urfey, who, in his "Pills to purge Melancholy," writes thus:—

"Herr was the prettiest fellow

At foot-ball and at Cricket;

At hunting chase or nimble race

How featly Herr could prick it."

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