ON DOMESTIC GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, F.S.A.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

1. THE GAME OF CHESS.

THE Camden Society has recently published an early French metrical romance, ("Blonde of Oxford," by Philippe de Reimes), which gives us a very interesting picture of the manners of the thirteenth century. Jean of Dammartin is represented as the son of a noble family in France, who comes to England to seek his fortune, and enters the service of an Earl of Oxford, as one of the esquires in his household. There his duty is to attend upon the earl's daughter, the lady Blonde, and to serve her at table. "After the meal, they wash their hands and then go to play, as each likes best, either in forests or on rivers (*i. e.* hunting or hawking), or in amusements of other kinds. Jean goes to which of them he likes, and, when he returns, he often goes to play in the chambers of the countess, with the ladies, who oblige him to teach them French." Jean does his best to please them, for which he was qualified by his education, "For he was very well acquainted with chamber games, such as chess, tables, and dice, with which he entertains his damsel (Blonde); he often says 'check' and 'mate' to her; and he taught her to play many a game."

> De jus de cambres seut assés,
> D'eschés, de tables, et de dés,
> Dont il sa damoisele esbat;
> Souvent li dist eschek et mat;
> De maint jeu à juer l'aprist.
> *Blonde of Oxford*, l. 399.

This is a correct picture of the usual occupations of the after-part of the day among the superior classes of society in the feudal ages; and scenes in accordance with it are often found in the illuminations of the mediæval manuscripts. One of these is represented in the accompanying engraving (Fig. 1), taken from a manuscript of the fifteenth century, containing the romance of the "Quatre Fils d'Aymon," and preserved in the Library of the Arsenal, in Paris. In the chamber in front, a nobleman and one of the great ladies of his household are engaged at chess, while in the background we see other ladies enjoying themselves in the garden, which is shown to us with its summer-house and its flower-beds surrounded with fences of lattice-work. It may be remarked, that the attention of the chess-players is withdrawn suddenly from their game by the entrance of an armed knight, who appears in another compartment of the illumination.

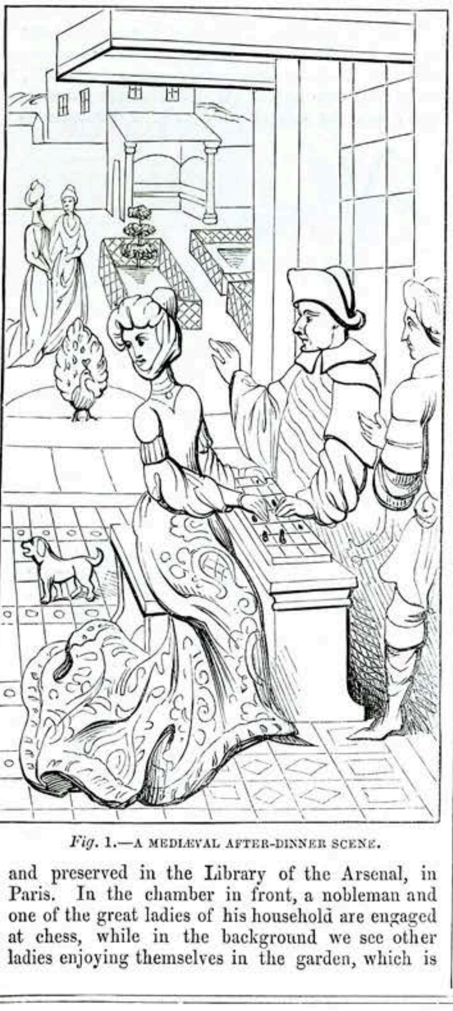

Fig. 1.—A MEDIÆVAL AFTER-DINNER SCENE.

Of the chamber games enumerated in the foregoing extract from the romance of "Blonde of Oxford," that of chess was no doubt looked upon as by far the most distinguished. To play well at chess was considered as a very important part of an aristocratic education. Thus, in the "Chanson-de-Geste" (metrical romance) of Parise la Duchesse, the son of the heroine, who was brought up by the king in his palace, had no sooner reached his fifteenth year, than "he was taught first his letters, until he had made sufficient progress in them, and then he learnt to play at tables and chess," and learnt these games so well, "that no man in this world was able to mate him."

> Quant l'anfès ot xv. anz et compliz et passez,
> Premiers aprist à lettres, tant qu'il en sot assez;
> Puis aprist-il as tables et à eschas joier,
> It n'a ome an cest monde qui l'en peust mater.
> *Parise la Duchesse*, p. 86.

In this numerous cycle of romances, scenes in which kings and princes, as well as nobles, are represented as occupying their leisure with the game of chess occur very frequently, and sometimes the game forms an important incident in the story. In "Garin le Loherain," a messenger hurries to Bordeaux, and finds Count Thiebaut playing at chess with Berengier d'Autri. Thiebaut is so much excited by his news, that he pushes the chess-board violently from him, and scatters the chess-men about the place.

> Thiebaus l'oït, à pou n'enraze vis,
> Li eschés boute, et le jeu espandit.
> *Garin le Loherain*, ii. 77.

So, in the same romance, the Emperor Pepin, arriving at his camp, had no sooner entered his tent than, having put on a loose tunic *(bliaut)*, and a mantle, he called for a chess-board, and sat down to play.

> Eschés demande, si est au jeu assis.
> *Ib.*, ii. 127.

Even Witikind, the king of the pagan Saxons, is represented as amusing himself with this game. When the messenger, who carried him news that Charlemagne was on the way to make war upon him, arrived at 'Tremoigne,' the palace of the Saxon king, he found Witikind playing at chess with Escorfaus de Lutise, and the Saxon queen, Sebile, who was also well acquainted with the game, looking on.

> A lui joe as eschas Escorfaus de Lutise;
> Sebile les esgarde, qi do jeu est aprise.
> *Chanson des Saxons*, i. 91.

Witikind was so angry at this intelligence, that his face "became as red as a cherry," and he broke the chess-board to pieces.

> D'ire et de mautalant rugist comme cerise;
> Le message regarde, le geu peçoie et brise.

In the "Chanson-de-Geste," of Guerin de Montglaive, the story turns upon an imprudent act of Charlemagne, who stakes his whole kingdom upon a game of chess, and losing it to Guerin, is obliged to compound with him by surrendering to him his right to the city of Montglaive, then in the possession of the Saracens.

These "Chansons-de-Geste," formed upon the traditions of the early Carlovingian period, can only of course be taken as a picture of the manner of the age at which they were composed, that is, of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and we know, from historical evidence, that they are strictly true. At that period chess certainly was what has been termed the royal game. The celebrated Walter Mapes, writing in the latter half of the twelfth century, gives a curious anecdote relating to tragical events which had occurred at the court of Brittany, apparently in the earlier part of the same century. Alan, of Brittany, perhaps the last of the name who had ruled over that country, had, at the suggestion of his wife, entrapped a feudatory prince, Remelin, and subjected him to the loss of his eyes and other mutilations. Remelin's son, Wigan, having escaped a similar fate, made war upon Alan, and reduced him to such extremities that, through the interference of the king of France, he made his peace with Wigan, by giving him his daughter in marriage, and thus for many years the country remained in peace. But it appears that the lady always shared in her father's feuds, and looked with exulting contempt on her father's mutilated enemy. One day she was playing with her husband at chess, and, towards the end of the game, Wigan, called away by some important business, asked one of his knights to take his place at the chess-board. The lady was the conqueror, and when she made her last move, she said to the knight, "It is not to you, but to the son of the mutilated that I say 'mate.'" Wigan heard this sarcasm, and, deeply offended, hurried to the residence of his father-in-law, took him by surprise, and inflicted upon him the same mutilations which had been experienced by Remelin. Then, returning home, he engaged in another game with his wife, and, having gained it, threw the eyes and other parts of which her father had been deprived on the chess-board, exclaiming, "I say *mate*, to the daughter of the mutilated." The story goes on to say that the lady concealed her desire of vengeance, until she found an opportunity of effecting the murder of her husband.

We need not be surprised if, among the turbulent barons of the middle ages, the game of chess often gave rise to disputes and sanguinary quarrels. The curious history of the Fitz-Warines, reduced to writing certainly in the thirteenth century, gives the following account of the origin of the feud between King John and Fulk Fitz-Warine, the outlaw:—"Young Fulk," we are told, "was bred with the four sons of King Henry II., and was much beloved by them all except John; for he used often to quarrel with John. It happened that John and Fulk were sitting all alone in a chamber playing at chess; John took the chess-board and struck Fulk a great blow. Fulk felt himself hurt, raised his foot and struck John in the middle of the stomach, that his head went against the wall, and he became all weak, and fainted. Fulk was in consternation; but he was glad that there was nobody in the chamber but they two, and he rubbed John's ears, who recovered from his fainting-fit, and went to the king, his father, and made a great complaint. 'Hold your tongue, wretch,' said the king, 'you are always quarrelling. If Fulk did anything but good to you, it must have been by your own desert;' and he called his master, and made him beat him finely and well for complaining." Similar incidents recur continually in the early romances, known as the "Chansons-de-Geste," which give us so vivid a picture of feudal times. A fatal quarrel of this kind was the cause of the feud between Charlemagne and Ogier le Danois. At one of the Easter festivals of the court of Charlemagne, the emperor's son Charles and Bauduin, the illegitimate son of Ogier, went to play together. Bauduin and young Charles took a chess-board and sat down to the game for pastime. "They have arranged their chess-men on the board. The king's son first moved his pawn, and young Banduin moved his *aufin* (bishop) backwards. The king's son thought to press him very hard, and moves his knight upon the other *aufin*. The one moved forward and the other backward so long, that young Bauduin said 'mate' to him in the corner."

> Il et Callos prisent un esquekier,
> Au ju s'asisent por aus esbanier.
> S'ont lor esches assis sor le tabler.
> Li fix au roi traist son paon premier,
> Bauduinés traist son aufin arier.
> Li fix au roi le volt forment coitier,
> Sus l'autre aufin a trait son chevalier.
> Tant traist li uns avant et l'autre arier,
> Bauduinés li dist mat en l'angler.
> *Ogier de Danemarche*, l. 3159.

The young prince was furious at his defeat, and, not content with treating the son of Ogier with the most insulting language, he seized the chess-board in his two hands, and struck him so violent a blow on the forehead, that he split his head, and scattered his brains over the floor. In a well-known illuminated manuscript of the fifteenth century, in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 15 E, VI.), containing a copy of the romance of "Ogier le Danois," this scene is represented in an illumination, which is copied in our cut (Fig. 2.) Similar incidents are rather common in these old romances. In that of "Parise la Duchesse," her young son, brought up as a foundling at the court of the King of Hungary, becomes an object of jealousy to the old nobles.

Four of the sons of the latter conspire to murder him, and it is arranged that they shall invite him to go and play at chess with them in a retired cellar, and, having secretly provided themselves with knives, insult him, in order to draw him into a quarrel, and then stab him to death. "Hugues," they said, "will you come with us to play at chess? you may gain a hundred francs on the gilt chess-board, and at the same time you will teach us chess and dice; for certainly you know the games much better than any of us." Hugues seems to have been conscious of the frequency of quarrels arising from the game, for it was not until they had promised him that they would not seek any cause of dispute, that he accepted their invitation. They then led him into the cellar, and sat down at the chess-board. "He began by playing with the son of Duke Granier; and each put down a hundred francs in coined money; but he had soon vanquished and mated them all, that not one of them was able to mate him."

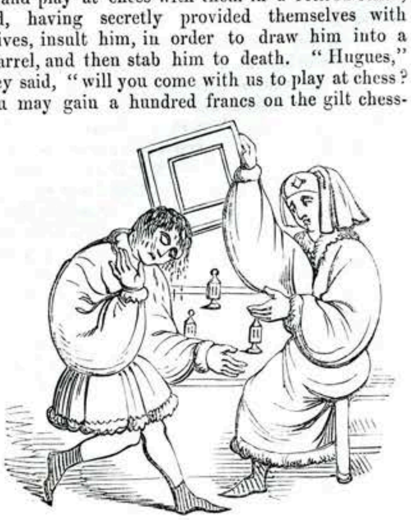

Fig. 2.—A QUARREL AT CHESS.

> Au fil au Duc Graner comença à juer;
> Chascuns mist c. frans de deniers moniez;
> Mais il les a trestoz et vancus et matez,
> Que il n'i ot i. sol qui l'an poüst mater.
>
> *Parise la Duchesse*, p. 105.

Hugues, in kindness, offered to teach them better how to play, without allowing them to risk their money, but they drew their knives upon him, and insulted him in the most outrageous terms. He killed the foremost of them with a blow of his fist, and seizing upon the chess-board for a weapon, for he was unarmed, he "brained" the other three with it. We learn from this anecdote that it was the custom in the middle ages to play at chess for money.

As I have already remarked, these romances picture to us the manners of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and not those of the Carlovingian era. The period when the game of chess was first introduced into western Europe can only be conjectured, for writers of all descriptions were so much in the habit of employing the notions belonging to their own time in relating the events of the past, that we can place no dependance on anything which is not absolute contemporary evidence. The chess-board and men so long preserved in the treasury of St. Denis, and said to have belonged to Charlemagne, were, I think, probably, not older than the eleventh century, and appear to have had a Byzantine origin. If the game of chess had been known at the court of Charlemagne, I cannot but think that we should have found some distinct allusion to it. The earliest mention of this game that we know is found in a letter from Damianus, cardinal bishop of Ostia, to Alexander II., who was elected to the Papacy in 1061, and enjoyed it until 1073. Damianus tells the pope how he was travelling with a bishop of Florence, when, "having arrived in the evening at a hostel, I withdrew," he says, "into the cell of a priest, while he remained with the crowd of travellers in the spacious house. In the morning, I was informed by my servant that the aforesaid bishop had been playing at the game of chess; which information, like an arrow, pierced my heart very acutely. At a convenient hour, I sent for him, and said in a tone of severe reproof, 'The hand is stretched out, the rod is ready for the back of the offender.' 'Let the fault be proved,' said he, 'and penance shall not be refused.' 'Was it well,' I rejoined, 'was it worthy of the character you bear, to spend the evening in the vanity of chess-play *(in vanitate scachorum)*, and defile the hands and tongue, which ought to be the mediator between man and the Deity? Are you not aware that, by the canonical law, bishops, who are dice-players, are ordered to be deposed?' He, however, making himself a shield of defence from the difference in the names, said that dice was one thing, and chess another; consequently that the canon only forbade dice, but that it tacitly allowed chess. To which I replied, 'Chess,' I said, 'is not named in the text, but the general term of dice comprehends both the games. Wherefore, since dice are prohibited, and chess is not expressly mentioned, it follows, without doubt, that both kinds of play are included under one term, and equally condemned?'" This occurred in Italy, and it is evident from it that the game of chess was then well known there, though I think we have a right to conclude from it, that it had not been long known. There appears to be little room for doubting, that chess was, like so many other mediæval practices, an oriental invention, that the Byzantine Greeks derived it from the Saracens, and that from them it came by way of Italy to France.

The knowledge of the game of chess, however, seems to have been brought more directly from the East by the Scandinavian navigators, to whom such a means of passing time in their distant voyages, and in their long nights at home, was most welcome, and who soon became extraordinarily attached to it, and displayed their ingenuity in elaborately carving chess-men in ivory (that is, in the ivory of the walrus), which seem to have found an extensive market in other countries. In the year 1831, a considerable number of these carved ivory chess-men were found on the coast of the Isle of Lewis, probably the result of some shipwreck in the twelfth century, for to that period they belong. They belonged to at least seven sets, and had therefore probably been the stock of a dealer. Part of them were obtained by the British Museum, and a very learned and valuable paper on them was communicated by Sir Frederick Madden to the Society of Antiquaries, and printed in the twenty-fourth volume of the *Archæologia*. Some of the best of them, however, remained in private hands, and have more recently passed into the rich museum of Lord Londesborough. We give here two groups of these curious chess-men, taken from the collection of Lord Londesborough, and from those in the British Museum as engraved in the volume of the *Archæologia* just referred to. The first group, forming our cut Fig. 3, consists of a king (1), from the collection of Lord Londesborough, and a queen (2), bishop (3), and knight (4), all from the *Archæologia;* and the second group, Fig. 4, presents us with the warriors on foot, to which the Icelanders gave the name of *hrokr*, and to which Sir Frederick Madden gives the English name of warders, one of them (5) from Lord Londesborough's collection, the other (6) from the British Museum. The rest are pawns, all from the latter collection; they are generally plain and octagonal, as in the group to the right (7), but were sometimes ornamented, as in the case of the other example here given (8.)

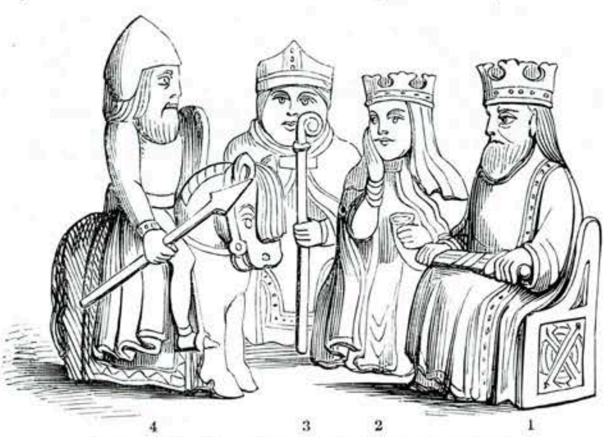

Fig. 3.—ICELANDIC CHESS-MEN OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

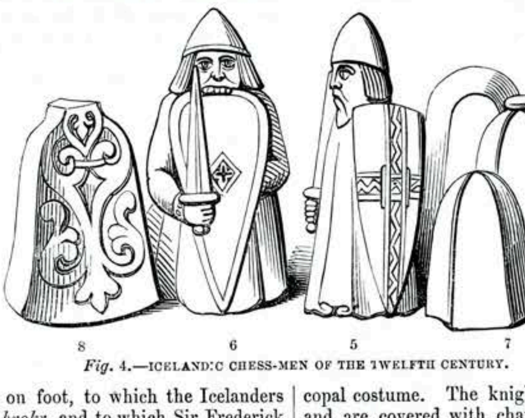

Fig. 4.—ICELANDIC CHESS-MEN OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY.

It will be seen at once that in name and character these chess-men are nearly identical with those in common use, although in costume they are purely Scandinavian. The king sits in the position, with his sword across his knee, and his hand ready to draw it, which is described as characteristic of royalty in the old northern poetry. The queen holds in her hand a drinking horn, in which at great festivals the lady of the household was accustomed to serve out the ale or mead to the guests. The bishops are some seated, and others standing, but all distinguished by the mitre, crosier, and episcopal costume. The knights are all on horseback, and are covered with characteristic armour. The armed men on foot, just mentioned by the name of warders, were peculiar to the Scandinavian set of chess-men, and supplied the place of the rocks, or rooks, in the mediæval game, and of the modern castle.

Several of the chess-men had indeed gone through more than one modification in their progress from the East. The Arabs and Persians admitted no female among the persons on their chess-board, and the piece which we call the queen was with them the *pherz* (vizier or councillor). The oriental name, under the form *fers, ferz,* or *ferce,* in Latin *ferzia,* was long preserved in the middle ages, though certainly as early as the twelfth century the original character of the piece had been changed for that of a queen, and the names fers and queen became synonymous. It is hardly necessary to say that a bishop would not be found on a Saracenic chess-board. This piece was called by the Persians and Arabs *pil*, or *phil*, meaning an elephant, under the form of which animal it was represented. This name was also preserved in its transmission to the West, and with the Arab article prefixed became *alfil*, or more commonly *alfin*, which was again softened down into *aufin*, the usual name of the piece in the old French and English writers. The character of the bishop must have been adopted very early among the Christians, and it is found under that character among the Northerns, and in England. Such, however, was not the case everywhere. The Russians and Swedes have preserved the original name of the elephant. In Italy and France this piece was sometimes represented as an archer; and at an early period in the latter country, from a supposed confusion of the Arabic *fil*, with the French *fol*, it was sometimes called by the latter name, and represented as a court jester. Roc, the name given by the Saracens to the piece now called the castle, meant apparently a hero, or champion, Persian *rokh;* the name was preserved in the middle ages, but the piece seems to have been first represented under the character of an elephant, and it was no doubt, from the tower which the elephant carried on its back, that our modern form originated. The Icelanders seem alone to have adopted the name in its original meaning, for with them, as shown above, the *hrokr* is represented as a warrior on foot.

A few examples of carved chess-men have been found in different parts of England, which show that these highly-ornamented pieces were in use at all periods. One of these, represented in Fig. 5, is preserved in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and, to judge by the costume, belongs to the earlier part of the thirteenth century. Its material is the tooth of the walrus (the northern ivory); it represents a knight on both sides, one wielding a lance, the other a sword, the intervening spaces being filled with foliage. Another knight, made of real ivory, is represented in Fig. 6, taken from an engraving in the third volume of the *Archæological Journal*, where it is stated to be in the possession of the Rev. John Eagles, of Worcester. It belongs to the reign of Edward III. Here the knight is on horseback, and wears chain-mail and plate. The body of the horse is entirely covered with chain-mail, over which housings are placed, and the head with plate-armour.

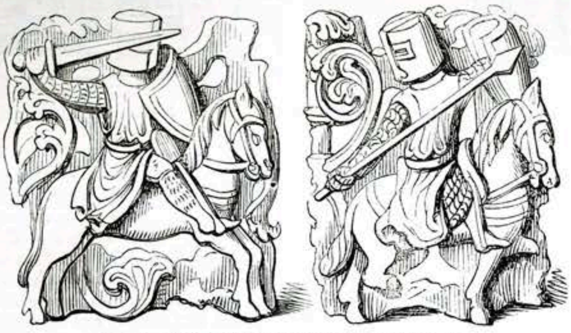

Fig. 5.—CHESS-MAN OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.

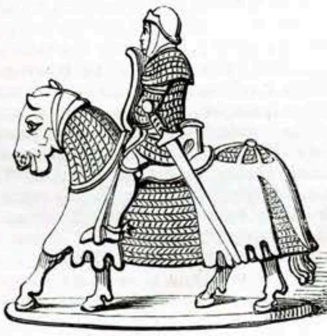

Fig. 6—CHESS-MAN OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

All who are acquainted with the general character of mediæval carving will suppose that these ornamental chess-men were of large dimensions, and consequently rather clumsy for use. The largest of those found in the Isle of Lewis, a king, is upwards of four inches in height, and nearly seven inches in circumference. They were hence rather formidable weapons in a strong hand, and we find them used as such in some of the scenes of the early romances. According to one version of the death of Bauduin, the illegitimate son of Ogier, the young prince Charles struck him with the rook so violent a blow that he made his two eyes fly out.

> Là le dona Callos le cop mortel
> Si com juoit as eskés et as dés;
> Là le feri d'un rok par tel fiertés,
> Que andus les elx li fist du cief voler.
>
> *Ogier de Danemarche*, l. 90.

A rather rude illumination is one of the manuscripts, of which M. Barrois has given a fac-simile in his edition of this romance, representing Charles striking his opponent with the rook. According to another version of the story, the young prince, using the rook as a missile, threw it at him. An incident in the romance of the "Quatre Fils d'Aymon," where the agents of Regnault go to arrest the duke, Richard of Normandy, and find him playing at chess, is thus told quaintly in the English version, printed by Copeland:—"When Duke Richarde saw that these sergeauntes had him thus by the arm, and helde in his hande a lady of ivery, wherewith he would have given a mate to Yonnet, he withdrew his arme, and gave to one of the sergeauntes such a stroke with it into the forehead, that he made him tumble over and over at his feete; and than he tooke a rooke, and smote another withall upon his head, that he all to-brost it to the brayne."

The chess-boards were naturally large, and were sometimes made of the precious metals, and of other rich materials. In one romance, the chess-board and men are made of crystal; in another, that of Alexander, the men are made of sapphires and topazes. A chess-board, preserved in the museum of the Hôtel de Cluny, at Paris, and said to have been the one given by the old man of the mountains (the Sheikh of the Hassassins) to St. Louis, is made of rock-crystal, and mounted in silver gilt. In the romances, however, the chess-board is sometimes spoken of as made of *ormier*, or elm. In fact, when the game of chess came into extensive use, it became necessary not only to make the chess-board and men of less expensive materials and smaller, but to give to the latter simple conventional forms, instead of making them elaborate sculptures. The foundation for this latter practice had already been laid by the Arabs, whose tenets, contrary to those of the Persians, proscribed all images of living beings. The mediæval conventional form of the rook, a figure with a bi-parted head, somewhat approaching to the heraldic form of the fleur-de-lis, appears to have been taken directly from the Arabs. The knight was represented by a small upright column, the upper part of it bent to one side, and is supposed to have been meant for a rude representation of the horse's head. The aufin, or bishop, had the same form as the knight, except that the bent end was cleft, probably as an indication of the episcopal mitre. The accompanying figure of a chess-board (Fig. 7), taken from a manuscript of the earlier part of the fourteenth century, (MS. Cotton. Cleopat. B. IX.), but no doubt copied from one of the latter part of the thirteenth century, when the Anglo-Norman metrical treatise on chess which it illustrates was composed, gives all the conventional forms of chess-men used at that time. The piece at the left hand extremity of the lower row is evidently a king. The other king is seen in the centre of the upper row. Immediately to the left of the latter is the queen, and the two figures below the king and queen are knights, while those to the left of the queen and white knight are rooks. Those in the right hand corner, at top and bottom, are aufins, or bishops. The pawns on this chess-board bear a striking resemblance to those found in the Isle of Lewis. The same forms, with very slight variations, present themselves in the scenes of chess-playing as depicted in the illuminated manuscripts. Thus, in a manuscript of the French prose romance of "Meliadus," in the British Museum (MS. Addit., No. 12,228, fol. 23 v°), written between the years 1330 and 1350, we have an interesting sketch, given in our cut, Fig. 8, of two kings engaged in this game. The rooks and the bishop are distinctly represented, but the others are less easily recognised, in consequence of the imperfect drawing. Our next cut, Fig. 9, is taken from the well-known manuscript of the poetry of the German Minnesingers, made for Rudiger von Manesse, early in the fourteenth century, and now preserved in the National Library in Paris, and represents the prince poet, Otto of Brandenburg, playing at chess with a lady. We have here the same conventional forms of chess-men, a circumstance which shows that the same types prevailed in England, France, and Germany. Another group, in which a king is introduced playing at chess, forms the subject of our cut, Fig. 10, and is taken from a manuscript of the thirteenth century, in the Harleian collection in the British Museum (No. 1275), consisting of a numerous series of illustrations of the Bible history, executed evidently in England. It will be seen that the character of chess as a royal game is sustained throughout.

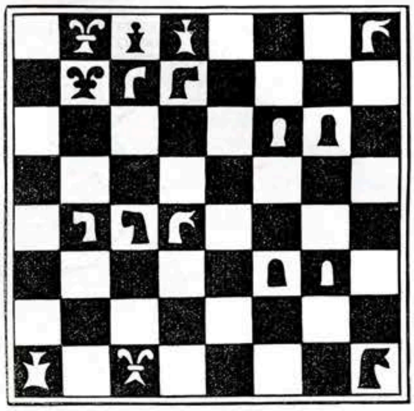

Fig. 7.—AN EARLY CHESS-BOARD AND CHESS-MEN.

In this century the game of chess had become extremely popular among the feudal aristocracy—including, under that head, all who could aspire to knighthood. Already, in the twelfth century, directions for the game had been composed in Latin verse, which seems to show that, in spite of the zeal of men like Cardinal Damianus, it was popular among the clergy. Towards the latter end of the thirteenth century, a French dominican friar, Jacques de Cessoles, made the game the subject of a moral work, entitled *Moralitas de Scaccario*, which became very popular in later times, was published in a French version by Jean de Vignay, and translated from this French version into English, by Caxton, in his "Boke of Chesse," so celebrated among bibliographers. To the age of Jacques de Cessoles belongs an Anglo-Norman metrical treatise on chess, of which several copies are preserved in manuscript (the one I have used is in MS. Reg. 13 A, XVIII. fol. 161, v°), and which presents us with the first collection of games. These games are distinguished by quaint names, like those given to the old dances; such as *de propre confusion* (one's own confusion), *ky perde, sey sauve* (the loser wins), *ky est larges, est sages* (he that is liberal is wise), *meschief fet hom penser* (misfortune makes a man reflect), *la chace de ferce et de chivaler* (the chace of the queen and the knight), *de dames et de damyceles* (ladies and damsels), *la batalie de rokes* (the battle of the rooks), and the like.

It is quite unnecessary to attempt to point out the numerous allusions to the game of chess during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when it continued to be extremely popular. Chaucer, in one of his minor poems, the "Boke of the Duchesse," in-

ON DOMESTIC GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, F.S.A.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

2. Dice, Tables, Draughts, Cards.

At an early period the German tribes, as known to the Romans, were notoriously addicted to gambling. We are informed by Tacitus that a German in his time would risk not only his property, but his own personal liberty, on a throw of the dice; and if he lost, he submitted patiently, as a point of honour, to be bound by his opponent, and carried to the market to be sold into slavery. The Anglo-Saxons appear to have shared largely in this passion; and their habits of gambling are alluded to in different writers. A well-known writer of the first half of the twelfth century, Ordericus Vitalis, tells us that in his time even the prelates of the church were in the habit of playing at dice. A still more celebrated writer, John of Salisbury, who lived a little later in the same century, speaks of dice-playing as being then extremely prevalent, and enumerates no less than ten different games, which he names in Latin, as follows:—*tessera, calculus, tabula* (tables), *urio vel Dardana pugna* (Troy fight), *tricolus, senio* (sice), *monarchus, orbiculi, taliorchus*, and *vulpes* (the game of fox).—"*De Nugis Curialium*," lib. i. c. 5. The sort of estimation in which the game was then held is curiously illustrated by an anecdote in the Carlovingian romance of "*Parise la Duchesse*," where the King of the Hungarians wishes to contrive some means of testing the real character (aristocratic or plebeian) of his foundling, young Hugues, not then known to be the son of the Duchess Parise. A party of robbers (which appears not to have been a specially disreputable avocation among the Hungarians of the romance) are employed, first to seduce the youth to "the chess and the dice," and afterwards to lead him against his will to a thieving expedition, the object of which was to rob the treasury of the king, his godfather. They made a great hole in the wall, and thrust Hugues through it. The youth beheld the heaps of gold and silver with astonishment; but, resolved to touch none of the wealth he saw around him, his eyes fell upon a coffer on which lay three dice, "made and pointed in fine ivory."

> "Garde sor i. escrin, si a veu iij. dez,
> Qui sont de fin yvoire et fait et pointuré."
> *Parise la Duchesse*, p. 94.

Hugues seized the three dice, thrust them into his bosom, and, returning through the breach in the wall, told the robbers that he had carried away "the worth of four cities." When the robbers heard his explanation, they at once concluded, from the taste he had displayed on this occasion, that he was of gentle blood, and the king formed the same opinion on the result of this trial.

During the period of which we are now speaking—the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—the use of dice had spread itself from the highest to the very lowest class of the population. In its simpler form, that of the game of hazard, in which the chance of each player rested on the mere throw of the dice, it was the common game of the low frequenters of the taverns, that class which lived upon the vices of society, and which was hardly looked upon as belonging to society itself. The practice and results of gambling are frequently referred to in the popular writers of the later middle ages. People could no longer stake their personal liberty on the throw, but they played for everything they had—even for the clothes they carried upon them, on which the tavern-keepers, who seem to have acted also as pawnbrokers, readily lent small sums of money. We often read of men who got into the taverner's hands, playing as well as drinking themselves naked; and in a well-known manuscript of the beginning of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 2 B, VII. fol. 167 v°) we find an illumination which represents this process very literally (Fig. 1). One, who is evidently the more aged of the two players, is already perfectly naked, whilst the other is reduced to his shirt. The illuminator appears to have intended to represent them as playing against each other till neither had anything left, like the two celebrated cats of Kilkenny, who ate one another up until nothing remained but their tails.

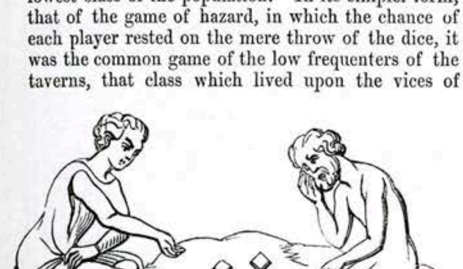

Fig. 1.—Medlæval Gamblers.

A burlesque parody on the church service, written in Latin, perhaps as early as the thirteenth century, and printed in the "*Reliquiæ Antiquæ*," gives us rather a curious picture of tavern manners at that early period. The document is profane,—much more so than any of the parodies for which Hone was prosecuted; but it is only a moderate example of the general laxness in this respect which prevailed, even among the clergy, in what have been called "the ages of faith." This is entitled "The Mass of the Drunkards," and contains a running allusion to the throwing of the three dice, and the loss of clothing which followed; but it is full of Latin puns on the words of the church service, and the greater part of it would not bear a translation.

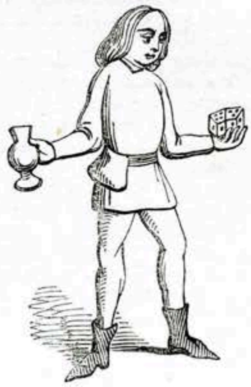

Fig. 2.—A Dice-player.

It will have been already remarked that, in all these anecdotes and stories, the ordinary number of the dice is three. This appears to have been the number used in most of the common games. In our cut (No. 2), taken from the illumination in a copy of Jean de Vignay's translation of Jacobus de Cessolis (MS. Reg. 19 C, XI.), the dice-player appears to hold but two dice in his hand; but this is to be laid solely to the charge of the draughtsman's want of skill, as the text tells us distinctly that he has three. We learn also from the text, that in the jug he holds in his right hand he carries his money, a late example of the use of earthen vessels for this purpose. Two dice were, however, sometimes used, especially in the game of hazard, which appears to have been the great gambling game of the middle ages. Chaucer, in the "Pardonere's Tale," describes the hazardours as playing with two dice. But in the curious scene in the "Towneley Mysteries" (p. 241), a work apparently contemporary with Chaucer, the tormenters, or executioners, are introduced throwing for Christ's unseamed garment with three dice; the winner throws fifteen points, which could only be thrown with that number of dice. A very curious piece of painted glass, now in the possession of Mr. Fairholt, of German manufacture, and forming part, apparently, of a series illustrative of the history of the Prodigal Son, represents a party of gamblers at dice, of the earlier part of the sixteenth century, in which they are playing with two dice. It is copied in our cut (Fig. 3). The original bears the inscription, "*Jan Van Hassell Tryngen in hausfrau*," with a merchant's mark, and the date, 1532. Three dice, however, continued to be used long after this, and are from time to time alluded to during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

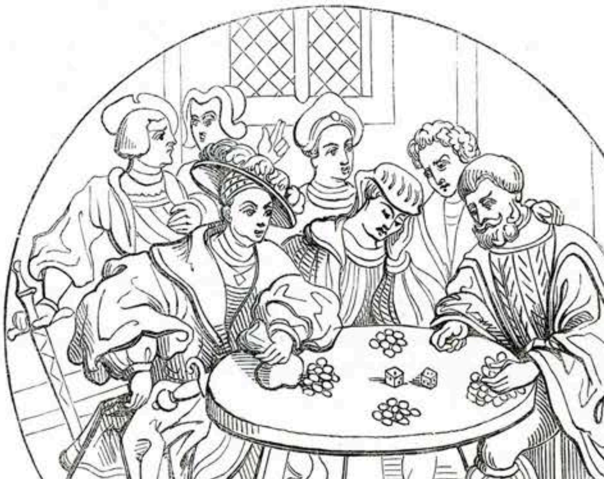

Fig. 3.—A Gambling Party of the Sixteenth Century.

It would not seem easy to give much ornamentation to the form of dice without destroying their utility, yet this has been attempted at various times, and not only in a very grotesque, but in a similar manner at very distant periods. This was done by giving the die the form of a man, so doubled up, that when thrown he fell in different positions, so as to show the points uppermost, like an ordinary die. The smaller example represented in our cut (Fig. 4) is Roman, and made of silver, and several Roman dice of the same form are known. It is singular that the same idea should have presented itself at a much later period, and, as far as we can judge, without any room for supposing

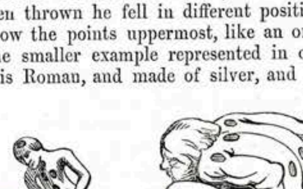

Fig. 4.—Ornamental Dice.

that it was by imitation. Our second example, which is larger than the other, and carved in boxwood, is of German work, and apparently as old as the beginning of the sixteenth century. Both are now in the fine and extensive collection of Lord Londesborough.

The simple throwing of the dice was rather an excitement than an amusement; and at an early period people sought the latter by a combination of the dice-throwing with some other system of movements or calculations. In this way, no doubt, originated the different games enumerated above by John of Salisbury, the most popular of which was that of tables (*tabula* or *tabulæ*). This game was in use among the Romans, and was in all probability borrowed from them by the Anglo-Saxons, among whom it was in great favour, and who called the game *tæfel* (evidently a mere adoption of the Latin name), and the dice *teoselas* and *tæfel-stanas*. The former evidently represents the Latin *tessellæ*, little cubes; and the latter seems to show that the Anglo-Saxon dice were usually made of stones. At a later period, the game of *tables*, used nearly always in the plural, is continually mentioned along with chess, as the two most fashionable and aristocratic games in use. An early and richly illuminated manuscript in the British Museum—perhaps of the beginning of the fourteenth century (MS. Harl. No. 1257)—furnishes us with the group of players at tables represented in our cut (Fig. 5). The table, or board, with bars or points, is here clearly delineated, and we see that the players use both dice and men, or pieces—the latter round discs, like our modern draughtsmen. In another manuscript, belonging to a rather later period of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 13 A, XVIII. fol. 157 v°), we have a diagram which shows the board as composed of two tables, represented in our cut No. 6. It was probably this construction which caused the name to be used in the plural; and as the Anglo-Saxons always used the name in the singular, as is the case also with John of Salisbury in the twelfth century, while the plural is always used by the writers of a later date, we seem justified in concluding that the board used by the Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Normans consisted of one table, like that represented in our cut No. 5, and that this was afterwards superseded by the double board. It is hardly necessary to point out to our readers that these two pictures of the boards show us clearly that the mediæval game of tables was identical with our modern backgammon, or rather, we should perhaps say, that the game of backgammon, as now played, is one of the games played on the tables.

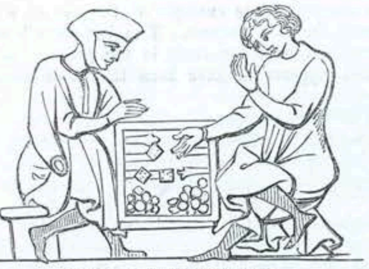

Fig. 5.—A PARTY AT TABLES.

In the manuscript last quoted (MS. Reg. 13 A, XVIII.) the figure of the board is given to illustrate a very curious treatise on the game of tables, written in Latin, in the fourteenth, or even perhaps in the thirteenth, century. The writer begins by informing us, that "there are many games at tables with dice, of which the first is the long game, and is the game of the English, and it is common, and played as follows: *multi sunt ludi ad tabulas cum taxillis, quorum primus est longus ludus et est ludus Anglicorum, et est communis, et est talis naturæ*," meaning, I presume, that it was the game usually played in England. From the directions given for playing it, this game seems to have had a close general resemblance to backgammon. The writer of the treatise says that it was played with three dice, or with two dice, in which latter case they counted six at each throw for the third die. In some of the other games described here, two dice only were used. We learn from this treatise the English terms for two modes of winning at the "long game" of tables—the one being called "lympoldyng," the other "lurchyng;" and a person losing by the former was said to be "lympolded." The writer of this tract gives directions for playing at several other games of tables, and names some of them—such as "paume carie," the Lombard's game (*ludus Lumbardorum*), the "imperial," the "provincial," "baralic," and "faylys."

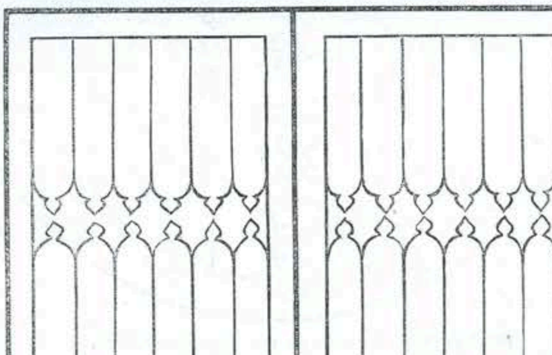

Fig. 6.—A TABLE-BOARD (BACKGAMMON) OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

This game continued long to exist in England under its old name of *tables*. Thus Shakespeare:—

> "This is the ape of form, monsieur the nice,
> That, when he plays at *tables*, chides the dice."
> *Love's Labour's Lost*, act v. sc. 2.

The game appears at this time to have been a favourite one in the taverns and ordinaries. Thus, in a satirical tract in verse, printed in 1600, we are told of—

> "An honest vicker, and a kind consort,
> That to the alehouse friendly would resort,
> To have a game at *tables* now and than,
> Or drinke his pot as soone as any man."
> *Letting of Humours Blood*, 1600.

And one of the most popular of the satirical writers of that period, Dekker, in his "Lanthorne and Candle-Light," printed in 1620, says, punningly,—"And knowing that your most selected gallants are the onelye *table-men* that are plaid withal at ordinaries, into an ordinarye did he most gentleman-like convay himselfe in state." We learn from another tract of the same author, the "Gul's Hornbooke," that the table-men at this time were usually painted.

We hardly perceive how the name of tables disappeared. It seems probable that at this time the game of tables meant simply what we now call backgammon, a word the oldest mention of which, so far as I have been able to discover, occurs in Howell's "Familiar Letters," first printed in 1646. It is there written *baggamon*. In the "Compleat Gamester," 1674, backgammon and ticktack occur as two distinct games at what would have formerly been called tables; and another similar game was called Irish. Curiously enough, in the earlier part of the last century the game of backgammon was most celebrated as a favourite game among country parsons.

Another game existing in the middle ages, but much more rarely alluded to, was called *dames*, or ladies, and has still preserved that name in French. In English, it was changed for that of *draughts*, derived no doubt from the circumstance of *drawing* the men from one square to another. Our cut (Fig. 7), taken from a manuscript in the British Museum of the beginning of the fourteenth century, known commonly as Queen Mary's Psalter (MS. Reg. 2 B, VII.), represents a lady and gentleman playing at dames, or draughts, differing only from the character of the game at the present day in the circumstance that the draughtsmen are evidently square.

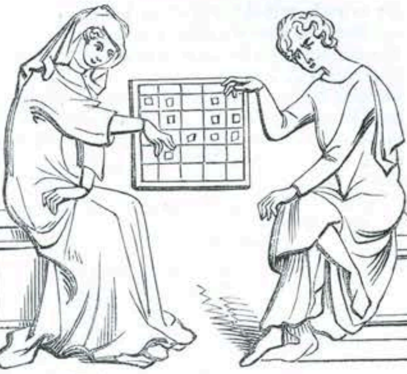

Fig 7.—A GAME AT DRAUGHTS.

The mediæval games were gradually superseded by a new contrivance, that of playing-cards, which were introduced into Western Europe in the course of the fourteenth century. It has been suggested that the idea of playing-cards was taken from chess—in fact, that they are the game of chess transferred to paper, and without a board, and they are generally understood to have been derived from the East. Cards, while they possessed some of the characteristics of chess, presented the same mixture of chance and skill which distinguished the game of tables. An Italian writer, probably of the latter part of the fifteenth century, named Cavelluzzo, author of a history of Viterbo, states that "in the year 1379 was brought into Viterbo the game of cards, which comes from the country of the Saracens, and is with them called *naib*." Cards are still in Spanish called *naipes*, which is said to be derived from the Arabic: but they were certainly known in the west of Europe before the date given by Cavelluzzo. Our cut (Fig. 8) is taken from a very fine manuscript of the romance of Meliadus, in the British Museum (MS. Addit. 12,228, fol. 313 v°), which was written apparently in the south of France between the years 1330 and 1350; it represents a royal party playing at cards, which

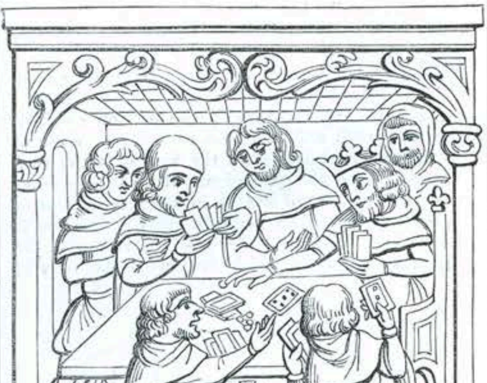

Fig. 8.—CARDS IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

were therefore considered at that time as the amusement of the highest classes of society. They are, however, first distinctly alluded to in history in the year 1393. In that year Charles VI. of France was labouring under a visitation of insanity; and we find in the accounts of his treasurer, Charles Poupart, an entry to the following effect:—"Given to Jacquemin Gringonneur, painter, for three packs of cards, gilt and diversely coloured, and ornamented with several devises, to deliver to the lord the King for his amusement, fifty-six sols of Paris." It is clear from this entry that the game of cards was then tolerably well known in France, and that it was by no means new, though it was evidently not a common game, and the cards had to be made by a painter—that is, as I suppose, an illuminator of manuscripts. We find as yet no allusion to them in England; and it is remarkable that neither Chaucer, nor any of the numerous writers of his and the following age, ever speak of them. An illuminated manuscript of apparently the earlier part of the fifteenth century, perhaps of Flemish workmanship (it contains a copy of Raoul de Presle's French translation of St. Augustine's "*Civitas Dei*"), presents us with another card-party, which we give in our cut (Fig. 9). Three persons are here engaged in the game, two of whom are ladies. After the date at which three packs of cards were made for the amusement of the lunatic king, the game of cards seems soon to have become common in France; for less than four years later—on the 22nd of January, 1397—the provost of Paris considered it necessary to publish an edict, forbidding working people to play at tennis, bowls, dice, *cards*, or ninepins, on working days. By one of the acts of the synod of Langres, in 1404, the clergy were expressly forbidden to play at cards. These had now made their way into Germany, and had become so popular there, that early in the fifteenth century card-making had become a regular trade.

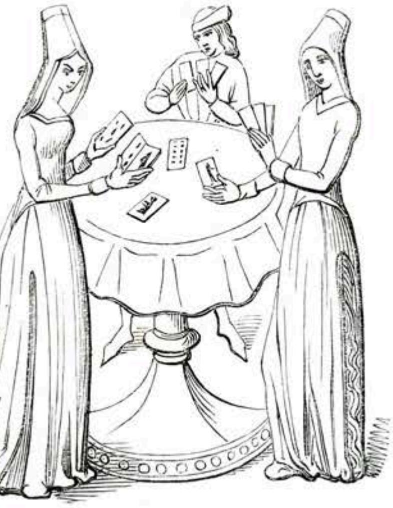

Fig. 9.—CARDS IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

In the third year of the reign of Edward IV. (1463), the importation of playing-cards, probably from Germany, was forbidden, among other things, by act of parliament; and as that act is understood to have been called for by the English manufacturers, who suffered by the foreign trade, it can hardly be doubted that cards were then manufactured in England on a rather extensive scale. Cards had then, indeed, evidently become very popular in England; and only twenty years afterwards they are spoken of as the common Christmas game, for Margery Paston wrote as follows to her husband, John Paston, on the 24th of December in that year,—"Please it you to weet (know) that I sent your eldest son John to my Lady Morley, to have knowledge of what sports were used in her house in the Christmas next following after the decease of my lord her husband; and she said that there were none disguisings, nor harpings, nor luting, nor singing, nor none loud disports, but playing at the tables, and the chess, and *cards*—such disports she gave her folks leave to play, and none other. . . . . I sent your younger son to the Lady Stapleton, and she said according to my Lady Morley's saying in that, and as she had seen used in places of worship (*gentlemen's houses*) there as she had been."

From this time the mention of cards becomes frequent. They formed the common amusement in the courts of Scotland and England under the reigns of Henry VII. and James IV.; and it is recorded that when the latter monarch paid his first visit to his affianced bride, the young Princess Margaret of England, "he founde the quene playing at the cardes."

In Germany at this time card-playing was carried to an extravagant degree, and it became an object of attack and satire to the reformers among the clergy. Our cut (Fig. 10) represents a German card-party in a tavern, taken from an early painted coffer in the Museum of Old German Art at Nuremberg. The design of the cards is that of packs of fancifully ornamented cards made in Germany at the close of the fifteenth century. The German satirists of that age complain that the rage for gambling had taken possession of all classes of society, and levelled all ranks, ages, and sexes; that the noble gambled with the commoner, and the clergy with the laity. Some of the clerical reformers declared that card-playing as well as dice was a deadly sin; and others complained that this love of gambling had caused people to forget all honourable pursuits.

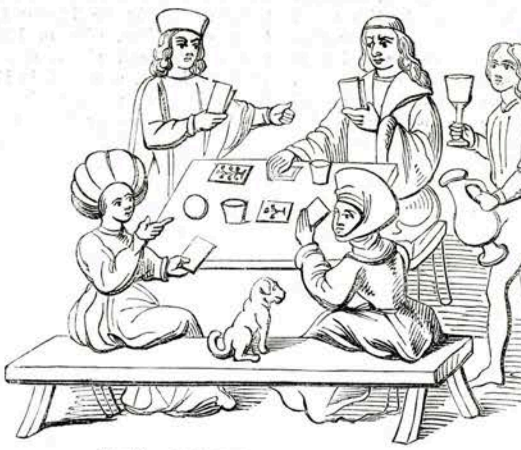

Fig. 10.—CARDS EARLY IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

A similar outcry was raised in our own country; and a few years later it arose equally loud. A short anonymous poem on the ruin of the realm, belonging apparently to the earlier part of the reign of Henry VIII. (MS. Harl. No. 2252, fol. 25 v°), complains of the nobles and gentry:—

> "Before thys tyme they lovyd for to juste,
> And in shotynge chefely they sett ther mynde,
> And ther landys and possessyons now sett they moste,
> And at *cardes* and dyce ye may them ffynde."

"Cardes and dyce" are from this time forward spoken of as the great blot on contemporary manners; and they seem for a long time to have driven most other games out of use. Roy, in his remarkable satire against Cardinal Wolsey, complains that the bishops themselves were addicted to gambling:—

> "To play at the cardes and dyce
> Some of theym are no thynge nyce,
> Both at hasard and mom-chaunce."

The rage for cards and dice prevailed equally in Scotland. Sir David Lindsay's popish parson, in 1535, boasts of his skill in these games:—

> "Thoch I preich nocht, I can play at the caiche;
> I wot there is nocht ane amang yow all
> Mair ferylie can play at the fute-ball;
> And for the cartis, the tabels, and the dyse,
> Above all parsouns I may beir the pryse."

The same celebrated writer, in a poem against Cardinal Beaton, represents that prelate as a great gambler:—

> "In banketting, playing at cartis and dyce,
> Into sic wysedome I was haldin wyse,
> And spairit nocht to play with king nor knicht
> Thre thousand crownes of golde upon ane night."

It must not be forgotten that it is partly to the use of playing-cards that we owe the invention which has been justly regarded as one of the greatest benefits granted to mankind. The first cards, as we have seen, were painted with the hand. They were subsequently made more rapidly by a process called stencilling—that is, by cutting the rude forms through a piece of pasteboard, parchment, or thin metal, which, placed on the cardboard intended to receive the impression, was brushed over with ink or colour, which passed through the cut out lines, and imparted the figure to the material beneath. A further improvement was made by cutting the figures on blocks of wood, and literally printing them on the cards. These card-blocks are supposed to have given the first idea of wood-engraving. When people saw the effects of cutting the figures of the cards upon blocks, they began to cut figures of saints on blocks in the same manner, and then applied the method to other subjects, cutting in like manner the few words of necessary explanation. This practice further expanded itself into what are called block-books, consisting of pictorial subjects, with copious explanatory text. Some one at length hit upon the idea of cutting the pages of a regular book on so many blocks of wood, and taking impressions on paper or vellum, instead of writing the manuscript; and this plan was soon further improved by cutting letters or words on separate pieces of wood, and setting them up together to form pages. The wood was subsequently superseded by metal. And thus originated the noble art of PRINTING.

◆

THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

PROGRESS OF THE DECORATIONS.

IN the Queen's Robing Room, on the walls of which Mr. Dyce is painting incidents from the life of King Arthur, nothing has been done since our last notice; nor has Mr. Herbert advanced his works in the chamber appropriated to him. The lower parts of the Prince's Chamber are not, it may be supposed, to be left as they now are; some change in the bas-reliefs has been effected since we saw it last, but the whole looks extremely heavy, and the more so since the upper part has been fitted with the series of full-length portraits on diapered gilt grounds, and these show what is wanting below. We are glad that the monkish bas-relief, that was placed experimentally over the fire-place, has been removed—long ago did we condemn the taste that essayed the introduction of the rude contorted manner of the very infancy of oak carving. For years have we closely watched the progress of these works, and we are justified in saying that a very large proportion of the decorations are but costly experiments, which have failed. The difficulty of obtaining a full broad light in all these rooms and corridors is sufficiently obvious; but in many cases the coloured glass might have been spared. The honourable members of the lower chamber found their house too dark with the painted glass windows, which have been removed, a lighter glass having been substituted. But we fear that we must despair of a similar improvement in those dark corridors wherein are already placed some of the pictures of the historical series. As in the Prince's Chamber there cannot be thrown a stronger light, there must be reflection. We know not what may be contemplated, but the breadths of gilding in the upper panels suggest, for the sake of harmony and composition, a downward continuation of a like manner of enrichment. The chamber is small, therefore the light from the high windows falls directly on the opposite walls, the lower parts of the room being lighted only by a subdued reflection, which is further reduced by the brilliancy of the upper gilded leather panels on which the light directly falls. It is, therefore, desirable that the compartmental divisions be gilded, or that the bas-reliefs themselves be gilded, a treatment which would realize two worthy results—they would compose with the upper panelling, and would thus be brought out so as to be seen, for they are at present invisible. Gibson's enthroned statue of the Queen, when all the doors are closed, looks too large for this room. It falls, however, into just proportions when seen from the corridor, with the doors open, but it is doubtful if this compensates for the disadvantage. The portraits which decorate this chamber are all painted upon diapered leather gilt, the figure cutting the gilding very sharply without any painted background. The impersonations are of the size of life, and represent principally the Tudors and their connections. There are Mary Queen of Scots, Francis II., Darnley, Henry VII., Elizabeth of York, Prince Arthur, Katherine of Arragon, Henry VIII., and all his wives; Mary, Philip, Elizabeth, &c.

The greater number of the frescoes in the Poets' Hall may be considered as destroyed by damp, which has affected these works in a way to show the great diversity of manner in which they have been executed. Some passages of the flesh, especially the shaded and lower tints, are stained and discoloured with the most unwholesome hues, and entire fields of microscopic fungi have their annual cycles of seasons—perish, revive, and again die, bequeathing fresh strength to their posterity, which must in the end equal mushrooms in growth, unless in the mean time this *hortus humidus* fall under the notice of some unusually inquisitive committee of the honourable house. In Horsley's "Satan at the ear of Eve," a small portion of the leg of Adam looks as if scraped off, showing the white plaster, and the left hand corner is discoloured. Tenniel's "St. Cecilia" looks as yet free from injury, but "The Thames and the English Rivers," by Armitage, is much stained, and appears mildewed, and in the "Death of Marmion," by the same painter, the shaded parts show the progress of decomposition, but the lighter breadths of the flesh seem as yet intact. In Cope's "Death of Lara," parts of the flesh, and also of the draperies, are discoloured, and in the "First Trial of Griselda" the surface is just beginning to break. The "Red Cross Knight," by Watts, is in a condition worse than that of any of the series, a portion of the surface of the left leg of the knight having fallen off. In Herbert's "Disinheritance of Cordelia" there is no appearance of discolouration. Some of these frescoes are painted upon outside walls; had the place been even moderately aired during the winter months, the works would have been preserved. The place is at present warmed by hot air, but during a great portion of the winter it is abandoned to the discretion of the fogs of Thorney Isle. It is vain to argue that our frescoes, being housed, ought thenceforward to take care of themselves, since frescoes in Italy have withstood the exterior influences for centuries. It is, we believe, only lately that the charming works in the vestibule of the Santissima Trinita have been glazed, and we cannot conceive that they could have ever been more brilliant than they now are. To us experience is worth nothing unless purchased at the greatest cost. The fate of these frescoes teaches us that we must not paint upon an outside wall without due precaution. The pictures in the corridors will escape the mouldy mortality which has overtaken the works in the Poets' Hall, because they are painted on slate and ventilated at the back. The series of statues is complete in St. Stephen's Hall, and the windows have been filled with the stained glass which was removed from the windows of the House of Commons, each pane containing the arms of one of the cities or boroughs of Great Britain and Ireland. The light here for frescoes, with plain glass, was better than that of any other part of the edifice, with the exception of, perhaps, the robing rooms, but what it may be with the stained glass cannot yet be seen.

THE ROYAL PICTURES.

THE MONASTERY.

O. Achenbach, Painter. E. Goodall, Engraver.
Size of the Picture, 5 ft. $3\frac{5}{8}$ in. by 3 ft. $7\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Oswald Achenbach is one of the most promising landscape painters of the Dusseldorf School, in which his brother André, also a landscape painter, has for many years held a high position. The Dusseldorf Academy of Arts now ranks among the best schools in Germany; it is, in fact, second to none. Originally founded in 1700, by the Elector Palatine, John William, it derived additional importance and renewed vigour from the fostering care and patronage given by the Elector Palatine of Bavaria, Charles Theodore, who, in 1767, caused it to be reconstructed and placed under the direction of Lambert Krahe, who died in 1790. He was succeeded by Langer, who retained the post till 1806, when the gallery—for it was still regarded as little more than a place of exhibition—was transferred to Munich: Langer followed it to the latter city and became director of the Munich Academy. From 1806 till 1819 the Art-school, which remained at Dusseldorf, had no director, but only three professors or masters, to teach drawing, architecture, and engraving. In 1819, however, Cornelius was charged with its reorganization, and was named Director; yet it will not till 1821 that he commenced actually the functions of his office, and it is from this period we should date the re-creation of the institution. During the period intervening between the years last mentioned, Professor Mosler presided over all the preparatory arrangements in the absence of Cornelius, who passed the summer months at Munich, executing the frescoes which he was commissioned to paint for the Prince Royal of Bavaria; during the winter months Cornelius resumed his duties. In 1825, the latter artist, finding the directorship of the Academy interfered too much with his own professional practice, resigned the post, and was succeeded in 1827 by Schadow, Mosler acting as director in the interim. Schadow was accompanied to Dusseldorf by several of those who had been his pupils—Hubner, Hildebrandt, Lessing, and Sohn—who consulted together as to the best means of remodelling the school, or rather of forming the nucleus of a new one, for the majority of Cornelius's pupils had followed their master to Munich. When the latter entered upon his duties at Dusseldorf, the number of scholars attending the course of instruction did not exceed forty; during the first six months it greatly increased; under Schadow the numbers were augmented in a much larger proportion. At the expiration of ten years from Schadow's assumption of the director's chair, the names of more than 140 pupils appeared on the books of the Academy; among them were many who have now become famous throughout Europe.

Landscape-painting, as practised by the living artists of Dusseldorf, is, as we saw in a recent visit to the exhibition of the present year, making rapid advances—has, in fact, become eminently distinguished throughout Germany; much of this excellence is derived from the influence of Lessing and Schirmer, two of the old associates of the regenerated school: the latter artist has recently quitted Dusseldorf, after many years' residence there. The elder Achenbach is one of the chief supporters of its renown, while his younger brother, Oswald, is fast following in his footsteps. The tendency of the Dusseldorf landscape-painters is towards naturalism rather than idealism; their works are carefully studied, and as carefully painted; but, as one generally finds in the continental schools, they are deficient in that brilliancy, freshness, and beauty of colouring which is so attractive in the pictures of our own.

The picture of "The Monastery" affords an example of these critical remarks: as a composition it is very skilfully put together, and the scene altogether appears a veritable copy from nature; but in tone it is not pleasant to the eye of one accustomed to look upon English landscape: it shows two predominant colours—red, where the objects catch the evening sunlight; and an opaque grey, for the shadows. Those who remember the pictures of John Glover will be able to realize the general effect of this work, which forms a portion of the collection at Osborne.

THE BRITISH INSTITUTION.

Again the Art-season commences: the British Institution is open, its walls are covered with pictures on every available space where they can be seen, and even where they cannot be seen. The number of exhibited works does not each year vary much; and sometimes the number of rejected pictures approximates. The number of returned works is this year five hundred, and it has been the same before. The exhibited works amount to five hundred and ninety-two, among which are amply represented every department of Art except one, and that one is (the old story) what is called *history*. That which we know as "high Art" is denounced as ungrateful to the painter; but it is not that "high Art" is ungrateful, but that it demands for its themes the rarest gifts of the painter and the poet. Mediocrity in the highest walk of painting is intolerable; but mediocrity in low Art sells readily. On looking round on these walls, the eye is met by declarations of the most fearful depravity of taste in the choice of subject; and right earnestly do the painters devote themselves to the consecration of their unworthy themes. The expenditure of energy and thought which we often see thrown away upon some rustic driveller, would ennoble a passage of sentiment or poetry, that certainly would be more precious both as to money value and the increase of the painter's reputation. But to turn to the Institution itself, the changes all but immediate with reference to the Royal Academy ought to be followed by some "revision" of the space in Pall Mall; for the Directory is rich and independent, and year by year they turn away works which find honourable place in other institutions. They must move sooner or later, and it would only be graceful to do so while their space is so much prized by our rising school.

No. 1. 'Sardis,' **Harry Johnson**. Daylight, with its vulgarity of detail, would have mocked the desolation of this scene; it is therefore set forth in tones generally subdued, and shaded by the thickening veil of night. The silence of the place is broken only by the rise of a bittern, alarmed by a fox worrying a bird. There is little material in the subject. What there is may be good for Persepolis or Heliopolis, or any other city *quæ exeat in polis*, and has been upwards of two thousand years in process of entombment.

No. 2. 'The Sand-pit Road,' **R. Redgrave**, R.A. A most truthful title. The subject is especially a clay or gravel bank, with a network of fissures and minute incident; to all the eccentric reticulation of which the painter has given his best attention. Verily, truth in Art is something to strive for.

No. 3. 'Bragozzi—Fishing Craft of Venice off the Giardini Publici,' **E. W. Cooke**, A.R.A. We observe some change in the convictions of this painter. Look into that sky, ye who are philosophic in airy expression, and tell us if that be anything more than the thinnest wash of turpentine. We notice it simply because we fear it will not stand. The boats are certainly much less severe, and therefore, in execution, more agreeable than others that have gone before them.

No. 7. 'The Bird's Nest,' **C. Dukes**. A rustic group: round, firm, and very pleasantly coloured.

No. 8. 'West Front of the Cathedral of Abbeville,' **L. J. Wood**. The building is not to be mistaken; but we cannot endure to see those dear, dirty old houses, which we know to be severely grizzled by the wear and tear of centuries, to be flaunting in these false and gaudy hues. The best view of the building is from the river.

INDOORS AMUSEMENTS AND OCCUPATIONS OF THE LADIES IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, F.S.A.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

EQUALLY in the feudal castle or manor, and in the house of the substantial burgher, the female part of the family spent a great part of their time in different kinds of work in the chambers of the lady of the household. Such work is alluded to in mediæval writers, from time to time, and we find it represented in illuminated manuscripts, but not so frequently as some of the other domestic scenes. In the romance of the "Death of Garin le Loherain," when Count Fromont visited the chamber of fair Beatrice, he found her occupied in sewing a very beautiful *chainsil*, or petticoat:—

> "Vint en la chambre à la bele Beatriz;
> Ele cosoit un molt riche chainsil."
> *Mort de Garin*, p. 10.

In the romance of "La Violette," the daughter of the burgher, in whose house the Count Girard is lodged, is described as being "one day seated in her father's chambers working a stole and amice in silk and gold, very skilfully, and she made in it, with care, many a little cross and many a star, singing all the while a *chanson-à-toile*," meaning, it is supposed, a song of a grave measure, composed for the purpose of being sung by ladies when weaving:—

> "I. jor sist es chambres son pere,
> Une estole et i. amit pere
> De soie et d'or molt soutilment,
> Si i fait ententevement
> Mainte croisete et mainte estoile,
> Et dist ceste chanchon à toile."
> *Roman de La Violette*, p. 113.

Embroidery, indeed, was a favourite occupation: a lady thus employed is represented in our first cut, taken from a richly illuminated manuscript of the fourteenth century, in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 2 B, VII.) The ladies, too, not only made up the cloths into dresses and articles of other kinds, but they were extensively employed in the various processes of making the cloth itself. Our cut (Fig. 2), taken from a manuscript of about the same period (MS. Reg. 10 E, IV.), represents the process of carding the wool; and the same manuscript furnishes us with another cut (Fig. 3), in which a lady appears in the employment of spinning it into yarn.

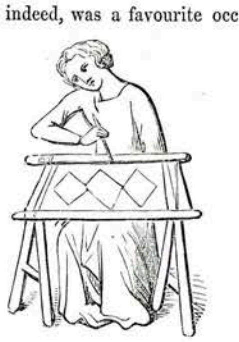

Fig. 1.—EMBROIDERY.

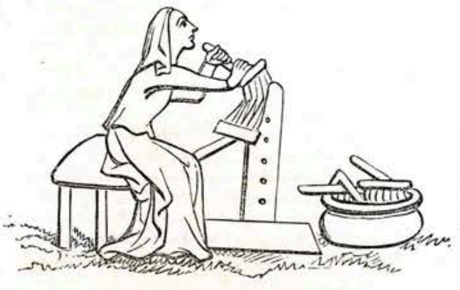

Fig. 2.—A LADY CARDING.

The ladies and maidens were at times released from these serious labours, and allowed to indulge in lighter amusements. Their hours of recreation followed the dinner and the supper, when they were often joined by the younger portion of the gentlemen of the castle, while the older, and more serious, remained at the table, or occupied themselves in some less playful manner. In the romance of "La Violette," already quoted (p. 159), we read of the father of a family going to sleep after dinner. In the same romance (p. 152), the young ladies and gentlemen of a noble household are described as spreading themselves over the castle, to amuse themselves, attended by minstrels with music. From other romances we find that this amusement consisted often in dancing, and that the ladies sometimes sang for themselves, instead of having minstrels. Sometimes, as described in a former paper, they played at sedentary games, such as chess and tables; or at plays of a still more frolicsome character. These latter seem to have been most in vogue in the evening, after supper. The author of the "Ménagier de Paris," written about the year 1393 (tom. i. p. 71), describes the ladies as playing, in an evening, at games named *bric*, and *qui fery?* (who struck), and *pince-merille*, and *tiers*, and others. The first of these games is mentioned about a century and a half earlier by the *trouvère* Rutebeuf, and by other mediæval writers; but all we seem to know of it is that the players were seated, apparently on the ground, and that one of them was furnished with a rod or stick. We know less still of *pince merille*. *Qui fery* is evidently the game which was, at a later period, called hot-cockles; and *tiers* is understood to be the game now called blindman's buff. These, and other games, are not unfrequently represented in the fanciful drawings in the margins of mediæval illuminated manuscripts; but as no names or descriptions are given with these drawings, it is often very difficult to identify them. Our cut (Fig. 4), which is given by Strutt, from a manuscript in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford, is one of several subjects representing the game of blindman's buff, or, as it was formerly called in England, hoodman-blind, because the person blinded had the eyes covered with the hood. It is here played by females, but, in other illuminations, or drawings, the players are boys or men (the latter plainly indicated by their beards). The name hoodman-blind is not found at an earlier period than the Elizabethan age, yet the name, from its allusion to the costume, was evidently older. A personage in Shakespeare ("Hamlet," Act iii. scene 4), asks—

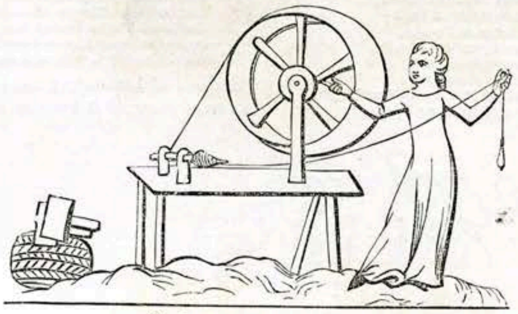

Fig. 3.—A LADY SPINNING.

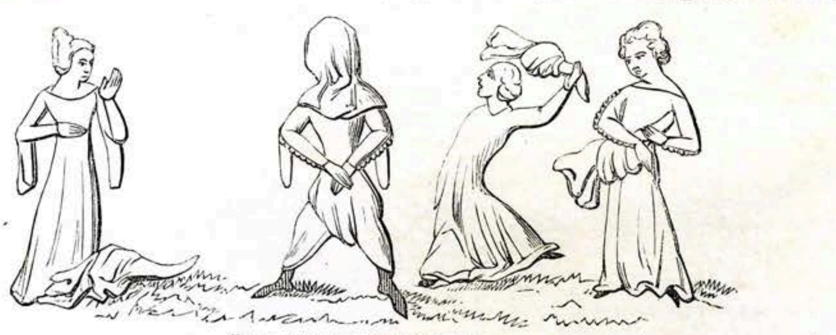

Fig. 4.—THE GAME OF HOODMAN-BLIND.

> "What devil was't
> That thus hath cozen'd you at *hoodman-blind*?"

Hot cockles seems formerly to have been a very favourite game. One of the players was blindfolded, and knelt down, with his face on the knee of another, and his hand held out flat behind him; the other players in turn struck him on the hand, and he was obliged to guess at the name of the striker, who, if he guessed right, was compelled to take his place. A part of the joke appears to have consisted in the hardness of the blows. Our cut (Fig. 5), from the Bodleian manuscript (which was written in 1344), is evidently intended to represent a party of females playing at hot-cockles, though the damsel who plays the principal part is not blindfolded, and she is touched on the back, and not on the hand. Our next cut (Fig. 6), which represents a party of shepherds and shepherdesses engaged in the same game, is taken from a piece of Flemish tapestry, of the fifteenth century, which is at present to be seen in the South Kensington Museum. Our allusions to this game also are found in the writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Among the "commendatory verses" to the second edition of "Gondibert," (by William Davenant), printed in 1653, is the following rather curious piece of wit, which explains itself,

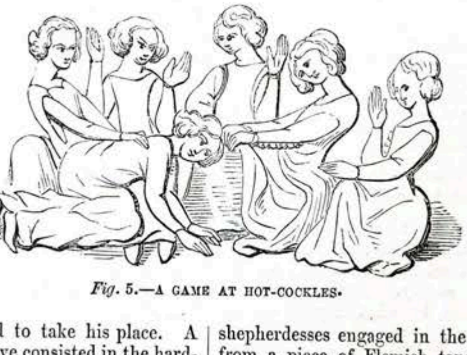

Fig. 5.—A GAME AT HOT-COCKLES.

and is, at the same time, an extremely good description of this game:—

The Poet's Hot-Cockles.

> "Thus poets, passing time away,
> Like children, at *hot-cockles* play;
> All strike by turn, and Will is strook,
> (And he lies down that writes a book).
> Have at thee, Will, for now I come,
> Spread thy hand faire upon thy bomb;
> For thy much insolence, bold bard,
> And little sense, I strike thus hard.
> 'Whose hand was that?' 'Twas Jaspar Mayne.'
> 'Nay, there you're out; lie down again.'
> With Gondibert, prepare, and all
> See where the doctor comes to maul
> The author's hand, 'twill make him reel;
> No, Will lies still, and does not feel.
> That book's so light, 'tis all one, whether
> You strike with that or with a feather.
> But room for one, new come to town,
> That strikes so hard, he'll knock him down;
> The hand, he knows, since it the place
> Has toucht more tender than his face;
> Important sheriff, now thou lyst down,
> We'll kiss thy hands, and clap our own."

The game of hot-cockles has only become obsolete in recent times, if it be even now quite out of use.

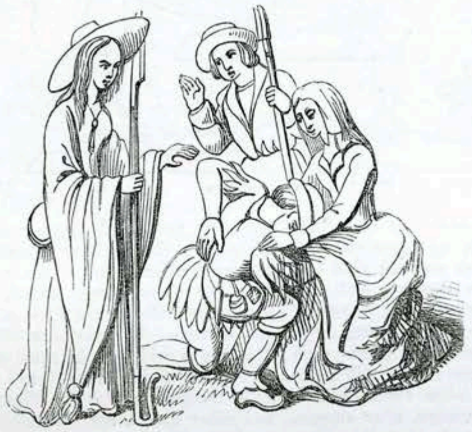

Fig. 6.—SHEPHERDS AND SHEPHERDESSES.

Most readers will remember the passage in Gay's "Pastorals."

> "As at *hot-cockles* once I laid me down,
> And felt the weighty hand of many a clown,
> Buxoma gave a gentle tap, and I
> Quick rose, and read soft mischief in her eye."

This passage is aptly illustrated by the cut from the tapestry given above. The same Bodleian manuscript gives us a playful group, reproduced in our cut (Fig. 7), which Strutt believes to be the game called, in more modern times, frog-in-the-middle. One of the party, who played frog, sat on the ground, while his comrades surrounded and buffeted him, until he could catch and hold one of them, who then had to take his place. In our cut, the players are females.

Games of questions and commands, and of forfeits, were also common in mediæval society. Among the poems of Baudoin and Jean de Condé (poets of the thirteenth century), we have a description of a game of this kind. "One time," we are told, "there was play among ladies and damsels; there were among them both clever and handsome; they took up many games, until, at last, they elected a queen to play at *roy-qui-ne-ment* (the king who does not lie); she, whom they chose, was clever at commands and at questions."

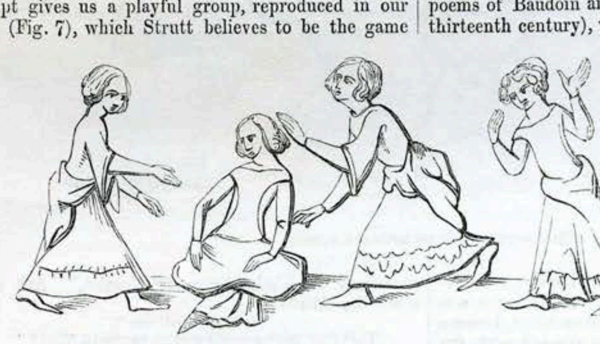

Fig. 7.—THE GAME OF FROG-IN-THE-MIDDLE.

> "Une foi ierent en dosnoi
> Entre dames et damoiselles;
> De cointes i ot et de belles.
> De plusieurs deduits s'entremistrent,
> Et tant c'une royne fistrent
> Pour jouer au *roy-qui-ne-ment*.
> Ele s'en savoit finement
> Entremettre de commander
> Et de demandes demander."
> *Barbazan Fabliaux*, tom. i. p. 100.

The aim of the questions was, of course, to provoke answers which would excite mirth; and the sequel of the story shows the great want of delicacy which prevailed in mediæval society. Another sort of amusement was furnished, by what may be called games of chance; in which the players, in turn, drew a character at hazard. These characters were generally written in verse, in burlesque and often very coarse language, and several sets of them have been preserved in old manuscripts. They consist of a series of alternate good and bad characters, sometimes only designed for females, but at others for women and men: two of these sets (printed in my *Anecdota Literaria*) were written in England; one, of the thirteenth century, in Anglo-Norman, the other, of the fifteenth century, in English. From these we learn that the game, in England, was called Rageman, or Ragman, and that the verses, describing the character, were written on a roll called Ragman's roll, and had strings attached to them, by which each person drew his or her chance. The English set has a short preface, in which the author addresses himself to the ladies, for whose special use it was compiled:—

> "My ladyes and my maistresses echone,
> Lyke hit unto your humbylle wommanhede
> Resave in gré (*good part*) of my sympille persone
> This rolle, which withouten any drede
> Kynge Ragman me bad mesoure in brede,
> And cristyned yt the meroure of your chaunce;
> Draweth a strynge, and that shal streight yow leyde
> Unto the verry path of your governaunce."

i. e. it will tell you exactly how you behave yourself, what is your character. This game is alluded to by the poet Gower in the "*Confessio Amantis*:"—

> "Venus, whiche stant withoute lawe,
> In non certeyne, but as men drawe
> Of *Ragemon* upon the chaunce,
> Sche leyeth no peys (*weight*) in the balaunce."

The ragman's roll, when rolled up for use, would present a confused mass of strings hanging from it, probably with bits of wax at the end, from which the drawer had to select one. This game possesses a peculiar historical interest. When the Scottish nobles and chieftains acknowledged their dependence on the English crown in the reign of Edward I., the deed by which they made this acknowledgment, having all their seals hung to it, presented when rolled up much the appearance of the roll used in this game; and hence no doubt they gave it in derision the name of the *Ragman's roll*. Afterwards it became the custom to call any roll with many signatures, or any long catalogue, the various headings of which were perhaps marked by strings, by the same name. This game of chance or fortune was continued, under other names, to a late period. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the burlesque characters were often inscribed on the back of roundels, which were no doubt dealt round to the company like cards, with the inscribed side downwards.

Sometimes the ladies and young men indulged within doors in more active games—among which we may mention especially different games with the ball, and also, perhaps, the whipping-top. We learn from many sources that hand-ball was from a very early period a favourite recreation with the youth of both sexes. It is a subject not unfrequently met with in the marginal drawings of mediæval manuscripts. Our cut (No. 8) is taken from one of the carvings of the *miserere* seats in Gloucester Cathedral. The long tails of the hoods belong to the costume of the latter part of the fourteenth century. The whipping-top was also a plaything of considerable antiquity; I think it may be traced to the Anglo-Saxon period. Our cut (Fig. 9) is taken from one of the marginal drawings of a well-known manuscript in the British Museum (MS. Reg. 2 B. VII.) of the beginning of the fourteenth century. It may be remarked that the knots on the lashes merely mark a conventional manner of representing a whip, for every boy knows that a knotted whip would not do for a top. Mediæval art was full of such conventionalities.

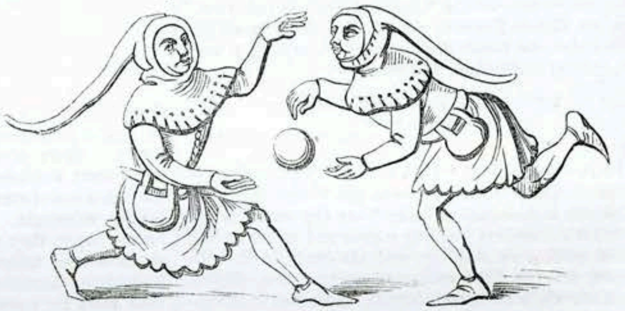

Fig. 8.—A GAME AT BALL.

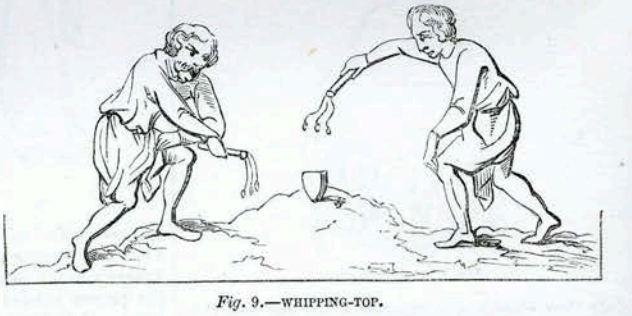

Fig. 9.—WHIPPING-TOP.

A subject closely connected with the domestic amusements of the female part of the household is that of tame or pet animals. Singing-birds kept in cages were common during the middle age, and are both mentioned by the popular writers and pictured in the illuminated manuscripts. In the romance of "La Violette" a tame lark plays rather an important part in the story. Our cut (Fig. 10), where we see two birds in a cage together, and which is curious for the form of the cage, is given by Willemin from a manuscript of the fourteenth century at Paris. The hawk, though usually kept only for hunting, sometimes became a pet, and persons carried their hawks on the fist even in social parties within doors. The jay is spoken of as a cage-bird. The parrot, under the name of *papejay*, *popinjay*, or *papingay*, is also often spoken of during the middle ages, although, in all probability, it was very rare. The favourite

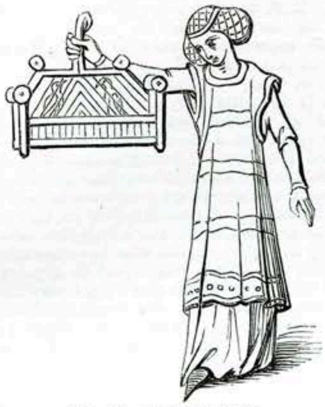

Fig. 10.—BIRDS ENCAGED.

talking-bird was the pie, or magpie, which often plays a very remarkable part in mediæval stories. The aptness of this bird for imitation led to an exaggerated estimate of its powers, and it is frequently made to give information to the husband of the weaknesses of his wife. Several mediæval stories turn upon this supposed quality. The good Chevalier de la Tour-Landry, in his book of counsels to his daughters, composed in the second half of the fourteenth century, tells a story of a magpie as a warning of the danger of indulging in gluttony. "I will tell you," he says, "a story in regard to women who eat dainty morsels in the absence of their lords. There was a lady who had a pie in a cage, which talked of everything which it saw done. Now it happened that the lord of the household preserved a large eel in a pond, and kept it very carefully, in order to give it to some of his lords or of his friends, in case they should visit him. So it happened that the lady said to her female attendant that it would be good to eat the great eel, and accordingly they eat it, and agreed that they would tell their lord that the otter had eaten it. And when the lord returned, the pie began to say to him, 'My lord, my lady has eaten the eel.' Then the lord went to his pond, and missed his eel; and he went into the house, and asked his wife what had become of it. She thought to excuse herself easily, but he said that he knew all about it, and that the pie had told him. The result was that there was great quarrelling and trouble in the house; but when the lord was gone away, the lady and her female attendant went to the pie, and plucked all the feathers from his head, saying, 'You told about the eel.' And so the poor pie was quite bald. But from that time forward, when it saw any people who were bald or had large foreheads, the pie said to them, 'Ah! you told about the eel!' And this is a good example how no woman ought to eat any choice morsel by gluttony without the knowledge of her lord, unless it be to give it to people of honour; for this lady was afterwards mocked and jeered for eating the eel, through the pie which complained of it." The reader will recognise in this the origin of a much more modern story.

One of the stories in the celebrated mediæval collection, entitled "The Seven Sages," also turns upon the talkative qualities of this bird. There was a burgher who had a pie which, on being questioned, related whatever it had seen, for it spoke uncommonly well the language of the people. Now the burgher's wife was a good for nothing woman, and as soon as her husband went from home about business, she sent for her friend out of the town; but the pie, which was a great favourite of the burgher, told him all the goings on when he returned, and the husband knew that it always spoke the truth. So he became acquainted with his wife's conduct. One day the burgher went from home, and told his wife he should not return that night, so she immediately sent for her friend; but he was afraid to enter, for "the pie was hung up in his cage on a high perch in the middle of the porch of the house." Encouraged, however, by the lady, the friend ventured in, and passed through the hall to the chamber. The pie, which saw him pass, and knew him well on account of some tricks he had played upon it, called out, "Ah, sir! you who are in the chamber there, why don't you pay your visits when the master is at home?" It said no more all the day, but the lady set her wits to work for a stratagem to avert the danger. So when night came, she called her chamber-maiden, and gave her a great jug full of water, and a lighted candle, and a wooden mallet, and about midnight the maiden mounted on the top of the house, and began to beat with the mallet on the laths, and from time to time showed the light through the crevices, and threw the water right down upon the pie till the bird was wet all over. Next morning the husband came home, and began to question his pie. "Sir," it said, "my lady's friend has been here, and stayed all night, and is only just gone away. I saw him go." Then the husband was very angry, and was going to quarrel with his wife, but the pie went on—"Sir, it has thundered and lightened all night, and the rain was so heavy that I have been wet through." "Nay," said the husband, "it has been fine all night, without rain or storm." "You see," said the crafty dame, "you see how much your bird is to be believed. Why should you put more faith in him when he tells tales about me, than when he talks so knowingly about the weather?" So the burgher thought he had been deceived, and turning his wrath upon the pie, drew it from the cage and twisted its neck; but he had no sooner done so than, looking up, he saw how the laths had been deranged. So he got a ladder, mounted on the roof, and discovered the whole mystery. If, says the story, he had not been so hasty, the life of his bird would have been saved. In the English version of this series of tales, printed by Weber, the pie's cage is made to hang in the hall:—

> "The burgeis hadde a pie in his halle,
> That couthe telle tales alle
> Apertlich (*openly*), in French langage,
> And heng in a faire cage."

In the other English version, edited by the author of this paper for the Percy Society, the bird is said to have been, not a pie, but a "popynjay" or parrot, and there are other variations in it which show that it had been taken more directly from the Oriental original, in which, as might be expected, the bird is a parrot.

Among the animals mentioned as pets we sometimes find monkeys. One of the Latin stories in the collection printed by the Percy Society, tells how a rustic, entering the hall of a certain nobleman, seeing a monkey dressed in the same suit as the nobleman's family, and supposing, as its back was turned, that it was one of his sons, began to address it with all suitable reverence; but when he saw that it was only a monkey chattering at him, he exclaimed, "A curse upon you! I thought you had been Jenkin, my lord's son."[*] The favourite quadruped, however, has always been the dog, of which several kinds are mentioned as lady's pets. The Chevalier de La Tour-Landry warns his daughters against giving to their pet dogs dainties which would be better bestowed on the poor. I have printed in the "*Reliquiæ Antiquæ*" a curious Anglo-Norman poem, of the beginning of the fourteenth century, written as a satire on the ladies of the time, who were too fond of their dogs, and fed them delicately, while the servants were left to short commons. (*Reliq. Antiq.* vol i. p. 155). Cats are seldom mentioned as pets, except of ill-famed old women. There was a prejudice against them in the midde ages, and they were joined in peoples imagination with witchcraft, and with other diabolical agencies. The accompanying group of an old lady and her cats is taken from a carving on one of the *misereres* in the Church of Minster in the Isle of Thanet.

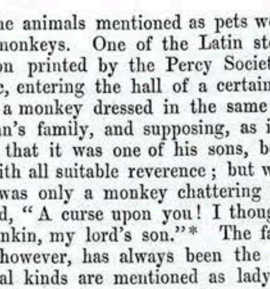

Fig. 11.—THE LADY AND HER CATS.

◆

THE

CRYSTAL PALACE ART-UNION.

If the ultimate success of any project is to be measured, at an early stage of its career, by a prosperous beginning, and by a popularity far exceeding what had even been hoped for, the CRYSTAL PALACE ART-UNION may be already pronounced successful. This is the more satisfactory, because this Art-Union possesses strong claims upon the public for sympathy and support. It is a good thing—aiming at really beneficial results, ably and judiciously conducted, and calculated to realize even more than it holds forth to its subscribers. It, therefore, *ought* to become popular. And, accordingly, it is with satisfaction we record the fair promise it already gives of success.

It will be borne in remembrance that this association has not been formed for the purpose of giving effect to any commercial enterprise. On the contrary, it is strictly what it professes to be—an *Art*-Union. It has been formed for the purpose of developing, amongst all classes of our social community, the love for works of true Art, and for leading to the general "advancement of Art-appreciation." The association has allied itself to the Crystal Palace, because its own objects it declares to be identical with those of that wonderful institution. "The resources of the Crystal Palace," the council of this Art-Union affirm, to "supply a means of aiding in a comprehensive educational progress, especially in reference to Art, altogether without precedent." It is, indeed, a just inference from such a conviction, that the Crystal Palace should be made to assist in the dissemination of works of Art, and productions of Art-manufacture, that will "confirm and enlarge the value of its own system of action." Once assume that the Crystal Palace is a great—the greatest—popular Art-teacher, and it follows of necessity that it must take that practical step in advance, which renders it the centre from which educational works of Art of a popular character should radiate. We rejoice to find the Directors of the Crystal Palace Company taking up a decided position as teachers of Art. They possess abundant resources in that capacity; and, since they have come forward with this Art-Union, we feel encouraged to look to them for a full development of the educational powers of the Crystal Palace. But this is too comprehensive a matter by far to be considered as incidental to an Art-Union, or, indeed, to any other subject; and, besides, it is our present object to place briefly before our readers what the "Crystal Palace Art-Union" is doing, and to invite for it their cordial and zealous co-operation.

"The works proposed to be included within the sphere of the society's operations comprise pictures, drawings, engravings, sculptures, bronzes, carvings, photographs, enamel and porcelain paintings, glass, as well as selected examples of the higher branches of ornamental art;" and "the distribution of these objects will be effected, first, by the selection of a work of Art, by the subscriber himself, from among those executed expressly for this purpose, and, secondly, by the annual drawing, within the palace, of the prizes, which will be carefully selected by the council, whose duty it will be to secure for the prizeholders objects of a varied character and of the highest excellence." These plans speak for themselves; and it can be easily understood that they are calculated to exert an unusual influence. Subscriptions may be either of one, two, three, or five guineas; and the objects to be selected, and the chances of prizes, are adjusted to the proportionate claims of those amounts. Amongst the works already prepared and awaiting selection by subscribers

---

[*] The Latin original of this story is so quaint that it deserves to be given *ipsissimis verbis*. "*De rustico et simia.* Quidam aulam cujusdam nobilis intrans, vidensque simiam de secta filiorum vestitum, quia dorsum ad eum habebat, filium credidit esse domini, cui cum reverentia qua debuit loqueretur. Invenit esse simiam super eum cachinnantem, cui ille, 'Maledicaris!' inquit, 'credidi quod fuisses Jankyn filius domini mei.'"—*Latin Stories*, p. 122.

OUT-OF-DOORS
AMUSEMENTS AND RECREATIONS
IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY THOMAS WRIGHT, F.S.A.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

When we consider the confined and dark character of most of the apartments of the feudal dwelling, we cannot be surprised if our mediæval forefathers loved the recreations which brought them into the open air. Castles and country mansions had always their gardens and pleasure grounds, which were much frequented by all the different branches of the household. The readers of Chaucer will remember the description of the "noble" knight January—

> "Amonges other of his honest thinges,
> He had a gardyn walled al with stoon,
> So fair a gardyn wot I no wher noon."

It is implied, at least, that this garden was extensive, and—

> "This noble knight, this January the olde,
> Such deynté hath in it to walk and pleye,
> That he wold no wight suffre bere the keye,
> Save he himself."
> CHAUCER, *The Marchaundes Tale.*

So, in the curious popular collection of mediæval stories, entitled the "Seven Sages," we are told of a rich burgess who

> "Hadde, bihinden his paleys,
> A fair gardin of nobleys,
> Ful of appel-tres, and als (*also*) of pirie (*pear-trees*);
> Foules songe therinne murie.
> Amideward that gardyn fre,
> So wax (*grew*) a pinnote-tre,
> That hadde fair bowes and frut;
> Ther under was al his dedut (*pleasure*).
> He made ther under a grene bench,
> And drank ther under many a sschench (*cupful*)."
> WEBER's *Metrical Romances*, vol. iii. p. 23.

And again, in the same collection of stories, a prudent mother, counselling her daughter, tells her—

> "Daughter, thi loverd (*lord*) hath a gardin,
> A wel fair ympe (*young tree*) is tharin;
> A fair harbeth (*arbour*) hit overspredeth,
> All his solas therinne he ledeth." *Ibid*, p. 69.

In the "Frankeleynes Tale," Chaucer tells how her friends sought to cure the melancholy of the Lady Dorigen:—

> "They leden hire by rivers and by welles,
> And eke in other places delightables;
> They dauncen, and they pley at ches and tables.
> So on a day, right in the morwe (*morning*) tide,
> Unto a gardeyn that was ther beside,
> In which that they had made her ordinance
> Of vitaile, and of other purveance,
> They gon and plaie hem al the longe day;
> And this was on the sixte morwe of May,
> Which May had painted with his softe schoures
> This gardeyn ful of leves and floures;
> And craft of mannes hond so curiously
> Arrayed had this gardeyn trewely,
> That never was ther gardeyn of suche pris,
> But if it were the verray paradis.
> The odour of floures and the fresshe siht
> Wold han ymaked any herte light
> That ever was born, but if to (*too*) gret sikeness
> Or to gret sorwe held it in distresse,
> So ful it was of beauté and plesaunce.
> And after dinner gan thay to daunce,
> And singe also."

In these extracts we have allusions to the practices of dancing and singing, of playing at chess and tables, of drinking, and even of dining, in the gardens. Our engraving (Fig. 1), taken from the romance of "Alexander," in the Bodleian Library, represents a garden scene, in which two royal personages are playing at chess. Dancing in the open air was a very common recreation, and is not unfrequently alluded to. In the "Roman de Geste," known by the title of "La Mort de Garin," a large dinner party is given in a garden—

> "Les napes metent pardeanz un jardin."
> *Mort de Garin*, p. 28.

And, in the "Roman de Berte" (p. 4), Charles Martel, is represented as dining similarly in the garden, at the midsummer season, when the rose was in blossom.

> "Entour le saint Jehan, que la rose est fleurie."

There is an early Latin story of a man who had a cross-grained wife. One day he invited some friends to dinner, and set out his table in his garden, by the side of a river (*fecit poni mensam in hortu suo prope aquam*). The lady seated herself by the water-side, at a little distance from the table, and cast a very forbidding look upon her husband's guests; upon which he said to her, "Show a pleasant countenance to our guests, and come nearer the table;" but she only moved further off, and nearer the brink of the river, with her back turned to the water. He repeated his invitation, in a more angry tone, in reply to which, to show her ill-humour, she drew further back, with a quick movement of ill-temper, through which, forgetting the nearness of the river, she fell into it, and was drowned. The husband, pretending great grief, sent for a boat, and proceeded up the stream in search of her body. This excited some surprise among his neighbours, who suggested to him that he should go down the stream, and not up. "Ah!" said he, "you did not know my wife—she did everything in contradiction, and I firmly believe that her body has floated against the current, and not with it."

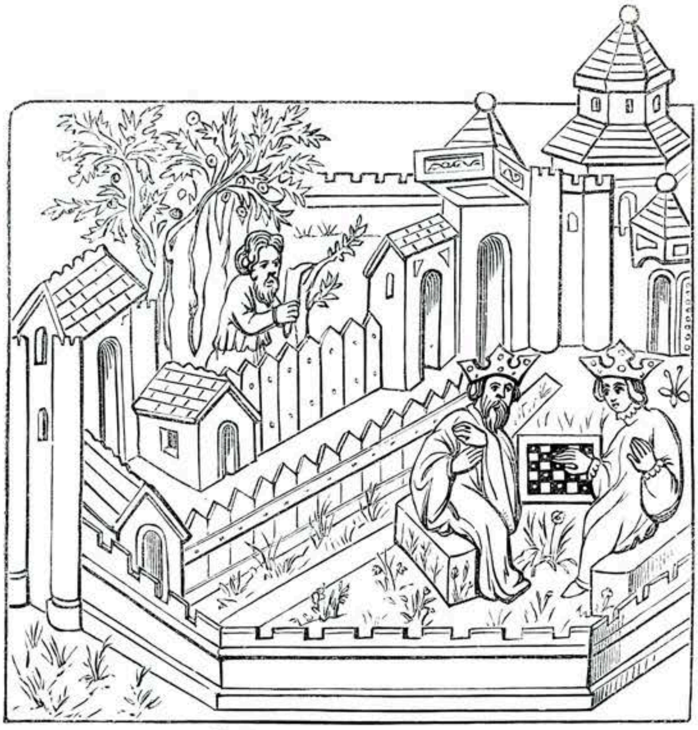

Fig. 1.—A MEDIÆVAL GARDEN SCENE.

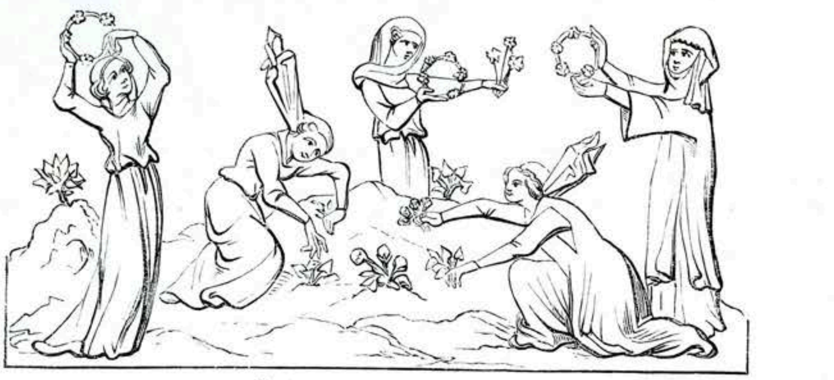

Fig. 2.—LADIES MAKING GARLANDS.

Even among the aristocratic class the garden was often the place for giving audience and receiving friends. In the romance of "Garin le Loherain," a messenger sent to the Count Fromont, one of the great barons, finds him sitting in a garden with his friends.

> "Trouva Fromont seant en un jardin;
> Environ lui avoit de ses amins."
> *Roman de Garin*, vol. i., p. 282.

A favourite occupation of the ladies in the middle ages was making garlands and chaplets of flowers. Our cut (Fig. 2), taken from a well-known manuscript in the British Museum, of the beginning of the fourteenth century (MS. Reg. 2 B, VII.), represents a party of ladies in the garden, gathering flowers, and making garlands. The love of flowers seems to have prevailed generally among our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, and affectionate allusions to them occur, not unfrequently, in the literary remains of that early period. In one of the Anglo-Saxon religious poems in the Exeter Book, the fragrance of flowers furnishes the poet with a comparison:—

"swecca swetast,	sweetest of odours,
swylce on sumeres tid	such as in time of summer
stincath on stowum,	send forth fragance in places,
stathelum fæste,	fast in their stations,
wynnum æfter wongum,	joyously over the plains,
wyrta geblowene	plants in blossom
hunig-flowende."	flowing with honey.

Exeter Book, p. 178.

And so again, in one of the riddles in the same manuscript (p. 423):—

"Ic eom on stence	I am in odour
strengre thonne ricels,	stronger than incense,
oththe rosa sy,	or the rose is,
on eorthan tyrf	which on earth's turf
wynlic weaxeth;	grows pleasant;
ic eom wræstre thonne heo.	I am more delicate than it.
theah the lilie sy	Though that the lily be
leof mon-cynne,	dear to mankind,
beorht on blostman,	bright in its blossom,
ic eom betre thonne heo."	I am better than it.

Many of our old favourite garden-flowers are, I believe, derived from the Anglo-Saxon gardens. Proofs of a similar attachment to flowers might be quoted in abundance from the writings of the periods subsequent to the entrance of the Normans. The wearing of garlands or chaplets of flowers was a common practice with both sexes. In the romantic

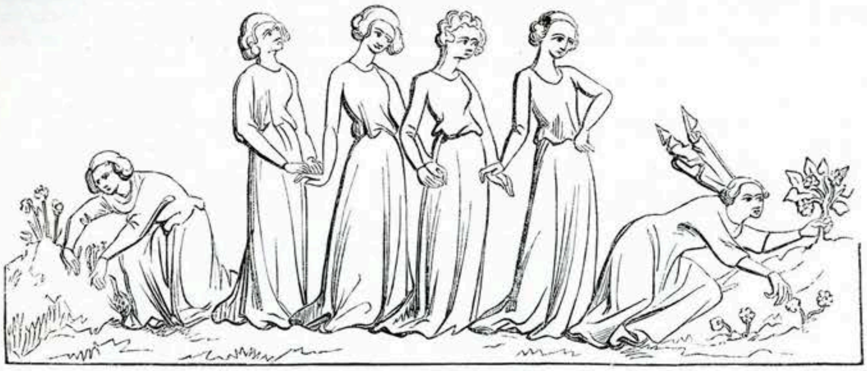

Fig. 3.—LADIES WALKING IN THE GARDEN.

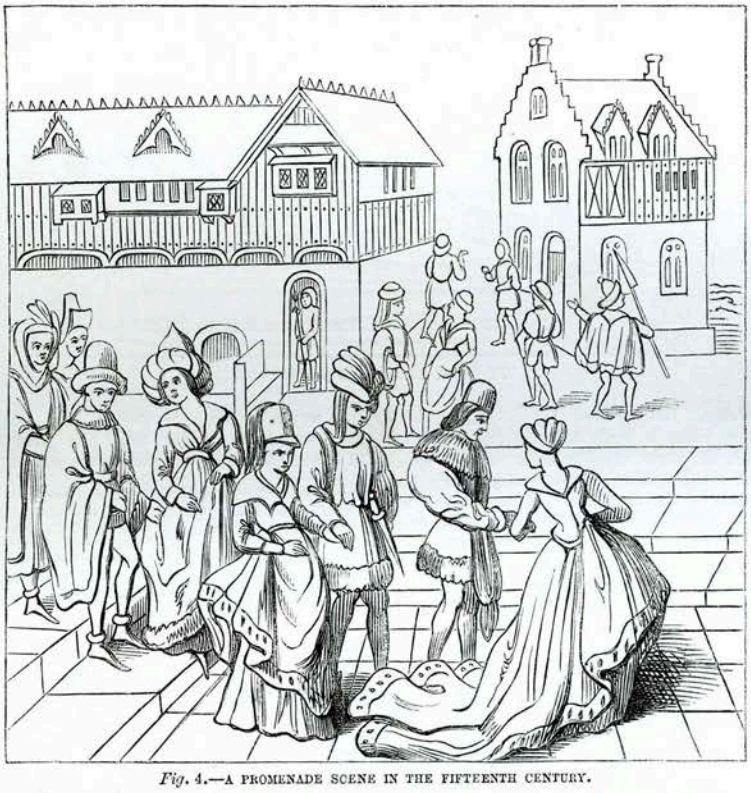

Fig. 4.—A PROMENADE SCENE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

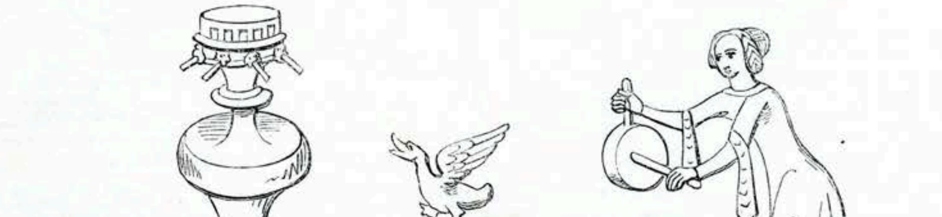

Fig. 5.—ROUSING GAME.

history of the Fitzwarines, written in the thirteenth century, the hero, in travelling, meets a young knight who, in token of his joyous humour, carries a chaplet of flowers on his head. In the later English romance of the "Squyer of Lowe Degree," when the "squyer" was preparing to do his office of carver in the hall—

> "There he araied him in scarlet red,
> And set a chaplet upon his hed;
> A belte about his sydes two,
> With brod barres to and fro."

Garlands of flowers were also the common rewards for success in the popular games.

All these enjoyments naturally rendered the garden a favourite and important part of every man's domestic establishment; during the warmer months of the year, it was a chosen place of resort, especially after dinner. In the romance of "Garin le Loherain," Begues is represented as descending from his palace, after dinner, to walk with his fair wife Beatrice in his garden.

> "En son palais fu Begues de Belin;
> Après mangier entra en un jardin,
> Aveuc lui fu la belle Biatris."
> *Roman de Garin*, vol. ii. p 97.

In another part of the same romance, Begues de Belin and his barons, on rising from the table, went to seek recreation in the fields.

> "Quant mangié ont et beu à loisir,
> Les napes ostent, et en prés sunt sailli."
> *Ibid*, vol. i. p. 203.

The manuscript in the British Museum, from which we took our last illustration, furnishes the accompanying representation of a group of ladies walking in the garden, and gathering flowers (Fig. 3.)

In the "Ménagier de Paris," compiled about the year 1393, its author, addressing his young wife, treats briefly of the behaviour of a woman when she is walking out, and especially when passing along the streets of a town, or going to church. "As you go," he says, "look straight before you, with your eye-lids low and fixed, looking forward to the ground, at five toises (thirty feet) before you, and not looking at, or turning your eyes, to man or woman who may be to your right or left, nor looking upwards, nor changing your look from one place to another, nor laughing, nor stopping to speak to anybody in the street" (vol. i. p. 15). It must be confessed that this is, in some points, rather hard counsel for a lady to follow; but it is consistent with the general system of formalities of behaviour in the middle ages, upon which the ladies gladly took their revenge when removed from constraint. When two or more persons walked together, it was the custom to hold each other by the hands, not to walk arm-in-arm, which appears to be a very modern practice. In the romance of "Ogier le Danois," the Emperor and Ogier, when reconciled, are thus represented, walking in a friendly manner hand in hand. The ladies in our last engraving are walking in this manner; and in our next (Fig. 4), taken from a copy given in M. du Sommerard's "Album," from a manuscript in the library of the arsenal at Paris, written and illuminated for a prince of the house of Burgundy, in the fifteenth century, the lords and ladies of a noble or princely household are represented as walking out in the same manner. It is well-known that the court of Burgundy, in the fifteenth century, offered the model of strict etiquette. This illustration gives us a very good picture of a street scene of the period to which it belongs. The height of gentility, however, at least, in the twelfth and thirteen centuries, seems to have been to hold the lady by the finger only. It is in this manner that, in the romance of "Ogier le Danois," the hero holds the Princess Gloriande.

> "Donques enmainne le bon Danois Ogier,
> E Gloriande, *qui par le doit le tient*."
> *Roman d'Ogier*, p. 110.

So, in the romance of "La Violette," at the festivities given by the king, the guests "distributed themselves in couples in the hall (*i. e.* a gentleman with a lady), *one taking the other by the finger*, and so they arranged themselves two and two."

> "Quant il orent assés deduit,
> Par la sale s'acoinsent tuit;
> Li uns prent l'autre par le doi,
> Si s'arangierent doi et doi."
> *Roman de la Violette*, p. 10.

As a mark of great familiarity, two princes, Pepin's son, Charles, and the Duke Namles, are represented in the romance of Ogier as one, Charles, holding his hand on the duke's shoulder, while the duke held him by his mantle, as they walked along; they were going to church together:—

> "Kalles sa main li tint desus l'espaule;
> Namles tint lui par le mantel de paile."
> *Roman de Ogier*, p. 143.

The ladies often engaged in exercises out-of-doors of a more active kind than those described above. Hawking was certainly a favourite diversion with them, and they not only accompanied the gentlemen to this sport, but ladies alone frequently engaged in it. It would appear that on such occasions the ladies were in the habit of riding astride their horses—at least, so they are commonly represented in the illuminations of manuscripts. The favourite hawking of the ladies, however, appears to have been that of herons and water-fowl; and this was called going to the river (*aller en rivière*), and was very commonly pursued on foot. It may be mentioned that the fondness of the ladies for the diversion of hawking is alluded to in the twelfth century by John of Salisbury. The hawking on the river, indeed, seems to have been that particular branch of the sport which gave most pleasure to all classes, and it is that which is especially represented in the drawings in the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. Dogs were commonly used in hawking to rouse the game in the same manner as at the present day, but in hawking on the river, where dogs were of course less effective, other means were adopted. In a manuscript already quoted in the present paper (MS. Reg. 2 B, VII.), of the beginning of the fourteenth century, a group of ladies hawking on the banks of a river are accompanied by a man, perhaps the falconer, who makes a noise to rouse the water-fowl. Our cut, Fig. 5, is taken from a very interesting manuscript of the fourteenth century, made for the monastery of St. Bartholomew, in Smithfield, and now preserved in the library of the British Museum (MS. Reg. 10 E, IV.); it is part of a scene in which ladies are hawking on a river, and a female is rousing the water-fowl with a drum, or rather with a tabour. The fountain is one of those conventional objects by which the mediæval artist indicated a spring, or running stream. This seems to have been a very common method of rousing the game; and it is represented in one of the carved seats, or misereres (as they have been termed technically), in Gloucester Cathedral, which is copied in our cut, Fig. 6. The tending of the hawks used in these diversions was no little occupation in the mediæval household, and was the subject of no little study; they were cherished with minutious care, and carried about familiarly on the wrist in all places and under all sorts of circumstances. It was a common practice, indeed, to go to church with the hawk on the wrist. One of the early French poets, Gaces de la Buigne, who wrote, in the middle of the fourteenth century, a metrical treatise on hunting, advises his readers to carry their hawks with them wherever there were assemblies of people, whether in churches or elsewhere.

> "Là où les gens sont amassés,
> Soit en l'église, ou autre part."

This is explained more fully by the author of the "Ménagier de Paris (vol. ii. p. 296), who wrote especially for the instruction of his wife and of the female members of his family. "At this point of falconry," he says, "it is advisable more than ever to hold the hawk on the wrist, and to carry it to the pleadings (courts of justice), and among people to the churches, and in other assemblies, and in the streets, and to hold it day and night as continually as possible, and sometimes to perch it in the streets, that it may see people, horses, carts, dogs, and become acquainted with all things. The annexed engraving, Fig. 7, taken from the same manuscript last quoted (MS. Reg. 10 E, IV.), represents a lady tending her hawks, which are seated on their "perche."

The author of the "Ménagier de Paris," a little farther on than the place last quoted (p. 311), goes on to say, "At the end of the month of September, and after, when hawking of quails and partridges is over, and even in winter, you may hawk at magpies, at jackdaws, at teal, which are in river, or others . . . . at blackbirds, thrushes, jays, and woodcocks; and for this purpose you may carry a bow and a bolt, in order that, when the blackbird takes shelter in a bush, and dare not quit it for the hawk which hovers over and watches it, the lady or damsel who knows how to shoot may kill it with the bolt." The manuscript which has furnished us with the preceding illustrations gives us the accompanying sketch (Fig. 8) of a lady shooting with her bolt, or *boujon* (as it was termed in French), an arrow with a large head, for striking birds; but in this instance she is aiming not at birds, but at rabbits. Archery was also a favourite recreation with the ladies in the middle ages, and it no doubt is in itself an extremely good exercise, in a gymnastic point of view. The fair shooters seem to have employed bolts more frequently than the sharp-headed arrows; but there is no want of examples in the illuminated manuscripts in which females are represented as using the sharp-headed arrow, and sometimes they are seen shooting at deer. We learn from Leland's "Collectanea," (vol. iv. p. 278), that when the Princess Margaret, daughter of Henry VIII., was on her way to Scotland, a hunting-party was got up for her in the park at Alnwick, and that she killed a buck with an arrow. Similar feats were at times performed by Queen Elizabeth; but she seems to have preferred the cross-bow to the long-bow. The scene represented in our cut, Fig. 9, is from the same manuscript; the relative proportions of the dog and the rabbit seem to imply a satirical aim.

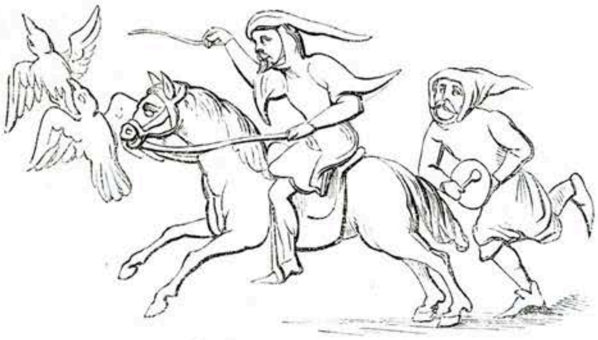
Fig. 6.—FOLLOWING THE HAWK.

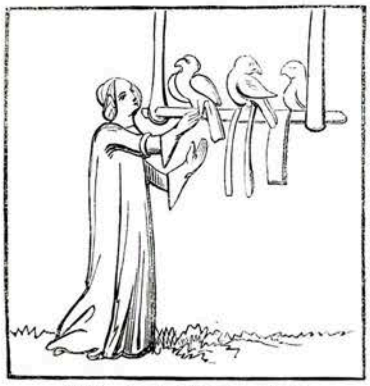
Fig. 7.—A LADY AND HER HAWKS.

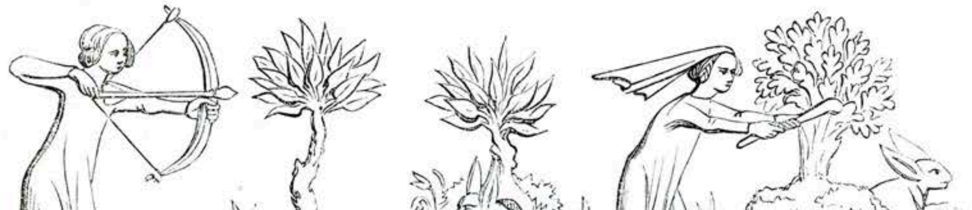
Fig. 8.—LADIES SHOOTING RABBITS.

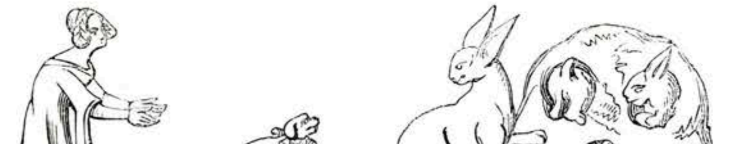
Fig. 9.—THE LADY AT THE RABBIT-WARREN.

I fear the fact cannot be concealed that the ladies of former days assisted not unfrequently at pastimes much rougher, and less feminine, than these. There can be no doubt that they were customary spectators of the baiting of bulls and bears. Henry VIII.'s two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, witnessed this coarse amusement, as we are assured by contemporary writers, with great satisfaction. The scene represented in our cut (Fig. 10), which is copied from one of the carved seats, of the fourteenth century, in Gloucester Cathedral, is chiefly remarkable for the small degree of energy—the quiet dignity, in fact—displayed by the actors in it.

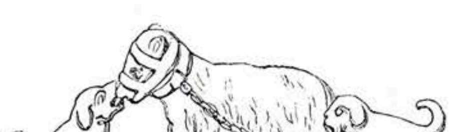
Fig. 10.—BAITING THE BEAR.