

THE GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS OF THE MONTH.

SEPTEMBER.



THE game of La Crosse, which is so popular in Canada, and which is beginning to be well known in England, originated with the North American Indians, and has long been a pastime on the vast western prairies. Without any doubt, it affords plenty of amusement combined with capital exercise, and since as a game for boys it deserves to be more widely practised, a short account of the way in which it is played may with advantage find a place in these pages.

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By way of preface it may be stated that in many points La Crosse resembles Hockey, since a small ball has to be driven between fixed goals, and the implement with which the ball is driven or carried is very much like a hockey-stick, almost the only difference being that the space between the crook and the handle is occupied by a net of laced cat-gut. The *Crosse* is, therefore, a sort of compound of racquet and hockey-stick, as may be seen by the illustration. The ball used should be of india-rubber, not less than eight or more than nine inches in circumference.



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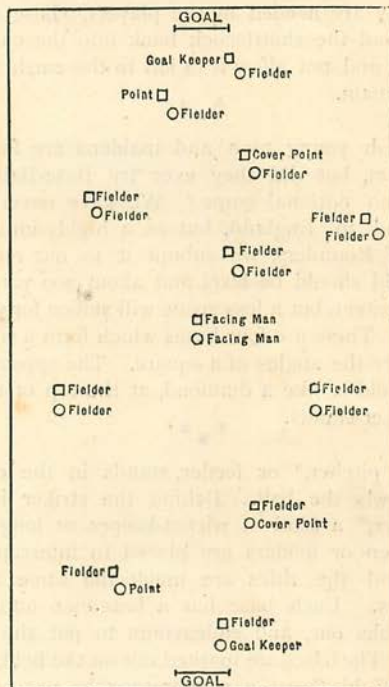
According to the rules, the ground between the goal-posts should be at least a hundred and twenty-five yards in length and eighty yards in width; but for a good game the space between the goals should be at least two hundred yards. The goals should be marked by flags, six feet high and six feet apart, and to score a game the ball must be driven or thrown *between* these flags.

The players on each side should be twelve in number, and are allowed to stand in any position on the field of play; that is to say, there is no such thing as *off-side*, as is the case at football. The players may either strike the ball, as in the case of hockey or golf, or they may carry it on their crosse,

and throw it from the latter whenever they please. Except in the case of the goal-keeper, however, and in one or two special instances, the ball must not be touched with the hands or any part of the body.

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In starting a game of La Crosse, the players should be arranged as shown in the accompanying diagram, each goal being defended by a goal-keeper



supported by "point" and "cover point," and each of these three men being threatened by one of the opposing team. Two players, termed "facing men," are deputed to commence proceedings in the centre of the play, and accordingly they "face" for the ball, that is to say each endeavours to draw it away from his opponent, and pass it on to a friend nearer the desired goal. In no case may a player trip or hold an opponent or strike him with the crosse, but if a player is carrying the ball on his crosse, an opponent may endeavour to strike the crosse with his own, and try to dislodge the ball. To understand the game of La Crosse thoroughly, and to comprehend its variety and interest, a match between two good teams should first be seen, and this is not a difficult matter nowadays.



In autumn there are usually many calm, still days when the wind is at rest; days when no breezes blow, and when even the gentle zephyr does not waft the air. On such quiet, peaceful occasions, the game of Badminton can be thoroughly enjoyed. The requirements of Badminton are more modest than those of Lawn Tennis, which game it resembles. It does not demand a lawn or a very large space, but can be played on a gravel-walk of moderate size. Pegs are driven into the ground, and a narrow net set up. Strong battledores and heavy-headed, large-headed shuttlecocks are the implements of warfare. Quickness and dexterity are needed by the players, whose aim it is to send the shuttlecock back into the enemy's ground, and not allow it to fall to the earth in his own domain.

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English young men and maidens are fond of Rounders, but did they ever try Base-Ball, the American national game? We have never seen it played in England, but as a highly-improved form of Rounders, we submit it to our readers. The field should be level and about 200 yards by 150 in extent, but a less space will suffice for young people. There are four bases which form a square, or rather the angles of a square. The appearance of the field is like a diamond, at the top of which the striker stands.

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The "pitcher," or feeder, stands in the centre and bowls the ball. Behind the striker is the "catcher," a kind of wicket-keeper or long-stop. Base-men or fielders are placed to intercept the ball, and the rules are much the same as in rounders. Each base has a base-man attached, who looks out, and endeavours to put the base down. The bases are marked out on the field, and, when off his base, a runner may be put out by being touched with the ball in the hand. The ball for this game is about the size of a tennis-ball, and the "bat" is a kind of Indian club. Nine on each side can play Base-ball, so there are a bowler, catcher, four fielders, and three base-men on each side. Nine innings are played by either party; the number of runs count towards victory. The third ball bowled must be hit, and if the "striker" fail, he must run just the same. The fielders are placed to stop the balls beyond the bases, but one man usually stands between the centre and third base, as a "short stop" to catch weak hits. The game is very popular in America, though unknown to English lads.

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Notwithstanding certain objections which have been made to Tricycle-riding, we maintain it

is a good exercise for both boys and girls. But they must be cautious not to commence too fiercely, or to continue until tired. The beginner should sit quite steadily, and work the lower limbs independently. The front part of the foot only need be used on the pedal. This was our own first difficulty. The attention should be always directed in front, and the rider should go carefully, hand and eye upon the alert. In turning corners the greatest care should be taken, and the bell kept going. Many errors may be made in steering, so care is requisite, and any rider who has learnt the make of the machine will have an advantage in riding it.

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In case of accident a knowledge of the details of the Tricycle will be found extremely useful, and the way to use the tools once mastered will make all the difference between riding and walking home after an accident, trifling in itself, perhaps, but serious because no assistance is at hand. In descending a hill keep hold of the "break," and beware of going too fast. In the event of the machine then getting beyond your control, sit quite quietly and steer steadily. Be careful not to turn round, or sideways too suddenly, or a sharp fall will surely result, with serious consequences to the rider and the machine. Be sure your lamps are lighted at dusk, and follow "the rule of the road" wherever you ride. In this amusement, as in many others, care, good temper, and coolness will enhance the benefits derivable from it.

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A game for autumn is the following:—Select some smooth surface of ground, and supply yourselves with a capital bouncing ball, about the size used at tennis. Five is the best number to play this game, but there is no fixed number of players. All stand round in a ring, several feet apart, and then one begins by bouncing the ball straight down upon the ground about the centre of the circle. As it bounds back into the air, one of the other players advances and strikes it down with the palm of the hand, which creates another perpendicular bound, to be struck by another of the players after the same fashion. The object is to keep the ball from resting upon the ground. Of course one player may strike it two or three times in succession if he sees that it is in danger of falling. The game is very simple, but it is great fun if the players are careful to strike the ball with well-opened palms, so as to keep it bouncing much in the same spot. It can be played both indoors and out. The Malays play a game very much like this, the difference only being that they strike the ball with the *soles of their feet*.