LONDON
STREET
GAMES

By the same Author

FOUNTAINS IN THE SAND

OLD CALABRIA
(*Published by Martin Secker*)

SIREN LAND
(*Published by J. M. Dent & Sons*)

LONDON
STREET GAMES

By

NORMAN
DOUGLAS

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TO HIS FRIEND
L·K
THIS BREATHLESS
CATALOGUE

LONDON
STREET GAMES

There's not much for *us* to do, down our way—in the way of sports, I mean. Nothing at all, in fact. When we come home from work we generally go straight indoors and have a lay-down, and a cup of tea and a pipe; or else we go out and watch a match somewhere. There's always the "Three Swans", of course....

But the youngsters get on all right—seem to, at all events. Some of them have got bats and stumps or footballs, and off they go into the park; and some of the girls have got shuttlecocks, and off *they* go. But most of them haven't, you know; so they just lark about where they are. PAPER-CHASE and ROUNDERS, for instance; you know those? They're plain sailing. But some of these games, like EGG-IN-CAP (also called EGGET), are rather complicated; and as to MONDAY-TUESDAY (or NUMBERS; another kind of egg-in-cap)—it would take me till next Saturday *week* to explain it. Perhaps you can make it out from this description:

> "After clipping the throer calls out the name of the day in the weke and the chap whats taken that day has to catch if he misses it they all run away and shout no Egg if I move—becose if they dont the throer can say a egg if you move—& that helps to make the quantity of the Eggs. The Misser of the ball throes it at one of the player and if he misses it is a egg to him and if he hits its a egg to the one he hit. After the throer has hit his man—the man has to throw it up again. If one of the player catch the Ball they throw it up again and call out the name, the total of egg to get you out is three. After the game is over the winner has clockwork on the Losers; they each stand up against a wall wile the winner throes at their heads with the ball. They can also claim 3 Hard throes or six soft ones."

Now you know how it's done.

Then there's QUEENIE, which is really a girls' game. One boy stands on the kerbstone with his back to the street, and they call him Queenie. He throws a ball backwards over his shoulders into the street, where four others are standing to catch it. As soon as one of them has it, they all hold their hands behind their backs, and then Queenie has to turn round and face them and guess who has the ball. If he guesses right, he goes on being Queenie; if not, the boy who has the ball takes his place.

Why they call it QUEENIE? Because that happens to be its name. Aunt Eliza, who has travelled all over the place and can explain mostly everything (or thinks she can) tells me that QUEENIE is a Chinese game and that she has seen it played there and that it must have come to London over the docks. I daresay it did. But the worst of Aunt Eliza is that you never know whether—

There are other ball-games, such as HOT RICE and FRENCH CRICKET and FOOTBALL-CRICKET and FIDDLE-DE-DEE and PALM OVER (a rough game) and CATCH (also called TEASER), which goes not as you think it does, but like this—

> "Two boys stand at each side of the road and one in the middle, that's Hee. One of them tries to get the ball over middle's head for the other to get it but if middle gets it the throer goes Hee"—

and WALL-BOUNCING and KING and MISSINGS OUT and FRENCH FOOT and KNOCKING UP THREE CATCHERS and SWOLO (rather like hockey) and DAYS OF THE YEAR and PUNCH-BALL and BOUNCE-BALL and TOUCH IT RUN and HUNDRED WINS (where you knock bricks out of a ring with a ball) and ONE-TWO-THREE-AND-A-LAIRY (I wish I knew what a-lairy meant) and ALONG THE ROW and UNDER THE ROW and ACROSS THE ROW and RABBIT IN THE HUTCH and FIVE-TEN and BASE (or DOLL) and WALLIE (because played against a wall) and STRIKE UP KNOCK DOWN and IN THE HAT and DUSTHOLES, and no doubt many more. But however many I might tell you, there are not nearly as many as there ought to be.

Why not?

Well, Mr. Perkins—he works with the firm of Framlingham Brothers (Limited), a likeable well-spoken gentleman, and he often watches the children playing and sometimes we have a talk about things at the "Three Swans"—Mr. Perkins says, speaking of ball-games, exactly what I always say, which is this: that there's a difficulty about ball-games, which is this: that most of them generally need a ball; meaning you can't play with a ball unless you have a ball to play with. And you generally haven't got one—meaning the children. And then the trouble begins. Because then you have to start thinking about something that doesn't need a ball.

Somebody or other may have a top, for those who care about this kind of game. Top-games are not as fashionable as they used to be; still, there are a good many of them left. You can play TOP-FOOTBALL, and SKATING, and GRULLEY (also called GROWLEY, or GROWLING KEEPS, or PLACING), and GETTING IN THE RING, and SENDING MESSAGES, and GULLEY HOLE (or HULLY-GULLY) and FLY DUTCHMAN and BACK SCALINGS and TRACING and RAILWAY LINE and MOUSETRAP (where you have to get the string wound round the top as it spins) and CHUCKING and GRUDGES and GULLEY KEEP TOP and GULLEY KNOCK ABOUT and FETCHING HOME, and PEG IN THE RING, and BOAT-RACE, and PEGGING, and LIVE O'S, and CHIPSTONE. For CHIPSTONE you need hard smooth ground and some pebbles and this is how you play it:

> "Two lines about 6 ft apart are drorn. A boy first puts his stone on a place half-way between the two, he spins his top picks it up and makes it spin in the palm of his hand and chips his stone towards the line. The first boy who gets his stone beyond the line he wins."

I used to know quite a good deal about tops, but it's quite a while since I played, and I have forgotten half their names, and couldn't describe them if I tried. I can only remember peg-tops, whipping-tops, mushrooms, klondykes, tomtits, boxers (made of boxwood), racing tops, corkscrews, clodhoppers, humming tops, Russian tops, Jews' tops, Japan tops (rather flatter at the end than the usual kind), French tops (red and white on the top, with a little thing for tying a piece of string on, to spin with), and window-breakers, which are rather like mushrooms.

And the dumb-bargee.

Ever heard of a dumb-bargee? It's a kind of top after the style of a klondyke. It's too heavy to rise from the ground like a racer. You simply can't get a rise out of a dumb-bargee. Perhaps that accounts for the name. Because it's easy enough to get a rise out of an ordinary bargee, isn't it? And when you do, he's not exactly what you call "dumb", is he? Not the bargees I've known.

And if you have no tops, you can make up games with your caps or boots or jackets. DEAD MAN'S RISE (also called DEAD MAN'S DARK SCENERY or COAT) is one of these jacket-games, where one party has to hide, covered up in their coats. Shoe-games are rather commoner—there's SIZE OF YOUR BOOT (one boy has to be blindfolded for this), and BOOT IN THE TUB, and NAILS, and COBBLER COBBLER MEND MY SHOE. But the commonest are the cap-games. Here are some of them: CHIMNEY-POTS (or UPSETTING THE CHIMNEY); HAT UNDER THE MOON; MOUSE IN TRAP; SAUSAGE; KNOCK HIM DOWN DONKEY; PULL FOR THE SHORE SAILOR; SUGAR AND MILK; HOP O' MY THUMB; TOUCH-CAP. In the three last you have to go "through the mill", if you fail. NUTS IN CAP is played with caps and crackers (Spanish nuts); in HITTING THE SUN you must throw your cap at your opponent's at about twelve yards distance; other cap-games are QUOITS (with folded-up caps), and FIRE ENGINES, and SHYING OVER THE MOON, and SHOOTING THE STARS, and PILING THE DONKEY, and CAP IT, and WHERE'S THIS LITTLE HAT TO GO, and SALLY ROUND THE JAM-POT (with piled-up caps), and BALL IN CAP, and RUN A MILE FOR A HALF-PENNY, and HOOK AND CAP, and HOT SOUP, and FOX COME OUT OF YOUR DEN, and THROW OVER, and MILLER'S SACK, and WHACK CAP, and HATCHING EGGS, and UNDER THE GARTER. All these are played with caps, and some of them, such as FLIES (or SALLY) ROUND THE JAM-POT, are really duty-games, of which I must tell you later on.

And if you have no caps, which you sometimes haven't, you must just find something else to play with. Buttons, for instance—everybody knows the old game of BUTTONS (or BANG-OUT, or BANGINGS) where you pitch them against a wall and have to measure the intervals between them with the span of your fingers and always end up with a row about cheating distances. You can make a fine gamble out of BUTTONS if you play the same game with halfpennies; you can win quite a lot, when there are no coppers about....

But nobody need play for money unless they like, and, anyhow, I don't care to talk about these things. Because, of course, our boys don't gamble, and there's an end to it. They never try to make money, like some do, out of silly tricks like BRAG, and BOOKS, and SPIN UP THE PENNY, and RAPS ON THE BUGLE, and NAP, and TRUMP, and BEAT YOUR NEIGHBOUR OUT OF DOORS, and MY BIRDIE WHISTLES, and POLISH BANKER, and DONKEY, and TUPPENCE YOU HEAD IT, and PITCHING UP THE LINE (double or single), and SHOVE HA'PENNY, and NEAREST THE LINE TAKES, and CHUCK-FARDEN, and PONTOON,[A] and PIEMAN, and ODD MAN SPINS, and ON THE STICK, and GUESSING WITH THREE CARDS, and GUESSING WITH SIX CARDS, and ANCHOR-CROWN-HEAD, and PITCH AND TOSS and BLIND SAM and OVERS KEEPS—or whatever all these things are called; no, not *our* boys. They never climb down to the cut[B] on a Sunday afternoon like some people do—although, as a matter of fact, it's a pretty safe place just now, because only three weeks ago a couple of peelers were chucked into the water for interfering.

Many of these sports are played with cigarette-cards or with ordinary playing cards, or with either; and I might tell you the names of some of those of the first kind, seeing that the lads have to play their card-games out of doors, hereabouts, if—if it weren't for the gambling they lead to. For instance, there's KNOCKING DOLLY OUT O' BED where you lay down three for a king, two for a jack, one for a queen and none for an ace, and —well, there you are! You must just come and ask some of the boys higher up the street; maybe they've heard of the game[C]. Ours are respectable. Gambling is forbidden by law, and they know it. That's why you have to be so darned careful not to get copped.

Or you can play with tins, or bits of metal and wood, or with nuts. In THROWING THE NICKER (or TIN ON THE LINE) you really ought to use a piece of lead or tin, or an old key, but sometimes you haven't got one, and then you must put up with a slate; and the same with NIXIE and PITCH OUT and PITCHING ON THE HAT and PITCHING IN THE HAT and BULLS EYE and ONE, TWO, THREE and OVER THE LINE. There are many tin-can games, such as TIN-CAN BUMP and TIN-CAN JUMP and TIN-CAN CATCH and TIN-CAN FISHING and TIN-CAN FETCH IT and TIN-CAN RACING and TIN-CAN GO IT and TIN-CAN TOUCH and TIN-CAN HIDE IT and TIN-CAN HAVE IT and COCK-SHY and CATCH THE RIDER and PITCHING UP THE WALL. The best of all of them is TIN-CAN COPPER (or KICK-CAN POLICEMAN) which goes like this:—

> "You get a tin and place it on the road. You then toss up who is to be tin-can copper. After the one is found you throw it up the street & then go and hide. The one who has to go after the can must not turn round and must come back backwards. When he has got back he puts the tin down & then looks to see if he can see you—if he see you he points were you are and shout your name & Bangs the can down three times, if he does not see you you can creep up and steal the can & fling it up the road again and all of them can hide. The last one caught is the Tin-can-Copper".

There are different ways of playing TIPPIT and I can't stop to explain them; one is played with sticks, and one without, and another with tin; and you can play tippit with a top and a coin; in fact, it's one of those names, like "fire-engines" or "pitching up the line", that don't mean anything in particular and are used for all kinds of sports. With sticks you can also play CUNJER, and CATCHING THE FALLING WAND (a ring-game for children) and SEIZING STICKS (or SCOTCH AND ENGLISH):—

> "One of A.'s side tries to rush and get a stick from B.'s side without being caught. If he is caught he remains a prisoner, unless touched by one of his own side again. But no sticks can be taken by any one while there are prisoners. The game is won by the side who get all the sticks"—

and WAND BALANCE RACE and different kinds of TIBBY-CAT (or NIBBY-CAP) such as SETS and RUNS and WOGGLES and CATCHERS and SINGLES. You can't play TIBBY-CAT if there are any blue boys hanging around; they're down on the game, because people sometimes get their windows smashed or their eyes bunged up.

HITTING THE MUMMY is played with nuts—

> "You throw nuts against a wall and let them lay there till one of them is hit, then he who hits has the lot. But if he doesn't leave Mummy laying down he has to pay six."

With nuts (or cherry-stones or date-stones) you can also play YOU HAVE ALL YOU GET and KNOCK HIM DOWN HAVE HIM and TIP-TAP and MOP CHERRY-STONES and UP THE GUTTER-SPOUT; as well as another game for which you need nuts and an old tobacco-tin. I can't tell you its name, because I don't know it; and the lads can't tell you either, because it hasn't got one—not yet. It's quite a new game.

But some of the best sports are those which they make up without anything at all, just out of their heads, like STAGS, and FOX-HUNTING, and SHOEING THE WILD HORSE (you need confederates for this, and a fresh boy; but it's quite a respectable game), and TOMMY ALL ROUND, and BLIND DONKEY, and SAILOR, and HORSE-SOLDIERS. HORSE-SOLDIERS (also called FLYING ANGELS) is rather rough, and so is COCK AND HEN FIGHT. Or hide-and-seek games like I SPY—SPIT IN YOUR EYE, which goes like this:—

> "Five or ten can play, one has to hide wile the Others hide. If he sees you you have to come out of your Crib & twig & get home. The one that hides can only come a little way from home—to get home you have to run and touch the piller or Post where he was hiding".

POINT is like I spy; but you need a lamp-post for it. MONKEY IN THE WOOD is the same kind of game, but without a lamp-post; FORTY and INNER AND OUTER are other hide-and-seek games. Or hunting sports like WIDDY, which you play in winter to get warm with. There are different ways of playing WIDDY; one is this:

> "Say there's ten of you, one is widdy, that's Hee. He runs after the others till he catches his one then there's two that must hold hands then they run after the eight till they catch another and so on till there all cort and the last one to be cawt is widdy for next go".

Or you can make WIDDY into a hopping game. One is "he", they all gather round him and sing—

Widdy Widdy way, I shan't play,
Kick your post and run away—

and then he kicks his lamp-post and hops after them on one leg. I don't know what "Widdy" means, but I should think that all these hunting "he" games are rather old (other "he" games are sometimes new). FISHING (or FAG-OUT) is another of them, and COALER another, and LAST ONE HOME another.

To play DELIVER UP THOSE GOLDEN JEWELS (or DELIVER UP THE BLACK PUDDING) you need confederates. You go up to a soft boy and say "Let's have a game of Deliver up those Golden Jewels *and you shall be judge*." So the softy gets very keen about being judge, and sits down "in Court" on a step or somewhere; then they lead up the prisoner who is in the know, you know, and they ask him a lot of sham questions; and as soon as the judge says "Therefore deliver up them golden jools", the prisoner—no, I can't tell you any more about that game. It's rather rude. None of our boys are caught at it more

than once—not at playing the judge, at least. There are other games of this sort, like WHITE MICE and HIGH TREASON and THREE GOLDEN BALLS and FARMER LEFT HIS HAT BEHIND and SCORING and RUNNING TOO FAST and HIDE AND SEEK (*not* the usual kind); they can all be played in a respectable fashion, but the worst of it is, they generally aren't. Another is called P.....E. That's worse. I can't say anything whatever about it except that you need good confederates and a boy who is quite new to the quarter. And some of them are still worse; not at all nice, in fact. If you want to find out about them, you must come yourself and talk to a few of our rough chaps. You might ask them about TOUCHING THE KING'S SCEPTRE. If you can get that out of them, you can get anything....

FOOTNOTES:

[A] The French "Vingt-et-un."

[B] The cut is the canal.

[C] One of *them* tells me that OVERS KEEPS goes like this: "Make a line, pitch up ha'pennies, if they go over, they are kept by the man whose coin is nearest to the line under. He keeps all those what are over, and spins up those what are under."

Now I daresay you've heard of leap-frog, and maybe you think there's only one way of playing it. Well, if you want to see how our boys can invent things out of their heads because, and only because, they have no bats or other things to play with, you should come and watch them at their leap-frog and duty games. (In leap-frog and overbacks they go in certain fixed orders over each others' backs; in duty one man stays down until another fails in the duty and takes his place). Always inventing new kinds, too. You could write a whole book about sports of this kind, each with its separate rules and separate name—fancy names they are, some of them—and each with its "showman" or "duty-man" or "namer" who decides what things are to be done. There's ALL THE WINKLES, a grand game for as many as you like; and HOPPING TO LONDON and ALL THE WAY TO LONDON and RACING TO LONDON and FOUR WAYS TO LONDON and HOT PIES and COLD PIES and HERE COMES MY SHIP FULL SAIL and BUNNY RABBIT (rather difficult) and HOP, STEP AND JUMP and HOPPING ROUND BIG BEN and ALL HANDS ON DECK (also called FINGER ON THE BLOCK). CUT-A-LUMP (or CUTTER)—that's another kind. Bill bends down in the gutter, while the others stand up behind him in a row; the first of them is called cut-a-lump. He goes over Bill's back, and where his feet touch the ground—there he makes a mark; then the next boy, without moving from his old place, has to jump over Bill and touch the same mark; then the next, and the next—over they go! Of course, it becomes more difficult with each jump, as the distance gets wider. Whoever first misses the mark must take the place of Bill, who then becomes cutter in his turn. That's cut-a-lump: see?

Why it's called cut-a-lump?

Because he cuts a lump off the distance in front of Bill.

Then there's FROG IN FIELD and FROG IN THE MIDDLE and FROG IN THE WATER and INCH IT UP and SHRIMPS (where you have to go over a boy's back with your cap doubled up on your head—many duty-games have to be played with caps) and LOBSTER (also called EGGS AND BACON, where you have to throw down your cap while going over his head and pick it up with your teeth without rolling off his back) and EGG IN A DUCK'S BELLY (holding the cap between your legs) and CAT O' NINE TAILS and SPUR THE DONK and OVER THE MOON and FOOT IT (where you jump sideways) and CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE and CAT ON HOT BRICKS (about as good as any) and POSTMAN and HOPPING ALL THE WAY TO CHURCH and MUSSENTOUCHET—

> "In mussentouchet one boy flies over back and then he puts the boys hats anywhere he likes [on their bodies] and tells them to run to certain spot and they must not touch their hats the one whose hat falls off is down"—

and NEWSPAPERS (or PAPERS) and TWO FOOT FLY and STIFF-LEGGED COPPER (also called POLICEMAN or STIFF BLOATERS or SHOWING NO IVORY, because, after jumping over, you have to stand stock still and not show either your teeth or your finger nails) and WHITEWASH and PLATES AND DISHES and FLYING THE GARTER and WRITING LETTER TO PUNCH and SENDING LETTER TO CANADA, which is played like this:

> "When all the boys have gone over the boy who they call namer calls out sending a letter to Canada. Then the boy who is down has to bend down

> again then all the boys write the letter on his back then they put it up his coat then stamp it then they hit him with their knees on the...."

or perhaps you can understand it better from this:

> "One boy bends down and then you pretend to write on his back then you bang for the Stamp and then put it under his coat and push him first leap over his back and say Sending a Letter to Canada."

Perhaps you think these are all the duty-games they play, but there are a good many more, such as FLIES ROUND THE JAM-POT and HOT COCKLES AND HOT MUSTARD (rather like BUNNY RABBIT) and SHOOTING THE MOON (played with caps and spittle) and YANK HIM OVER and UPSETTING THE APPLE-CART and WEAK HORSES (played against a lamp-post where you pile yourselves as high as possible) and STEPPING-STONES (difficult) and GLORY and FISHING FOR OYSTERS and TICKLERS and COUNTRY (or NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST) and BUMPER (or BUMPUMS) and SMASHING YOUR GRANDMA'S WINDOWS and BACKY-O and ROMAN CANDLES (or THUMBS UP: very difficult) and CHINESE ORDERS and CHINESE YUM-YUM and KING JOHN SAYS SO and DEAD SOLDIERS and SALMON FISHING and MISCHIEF and PULLING LEGS and FOLLOW MY LEADER (yes; duty) and PIGGY BACKS and WHEELBARROWS and JOCKY WHACK and SWIMMING IN BLUE WATER. SWIMMING IN BLUE WATER is played like this:

> "One boy stoops down in bending attitude, and another boy lays on his back crossways, and does the action of swimming, if the boy who is swimming falls off he has to be down"—

and CARRYING THE OLD WOMAN'S WASHING and MESSENGERS (or MESSAGES) and ELEPHANTS' TRUNKS AND TAILS and SKINNING A RABBIT and MOGGIES[D] ON THE WALL and SOPPY SOLDIER and TAILOR.

And if you're not yet tired of duty-games, I will tell you one or two more. There's PICKING LEAVES and SCISSORS and THROUGH THE MOON and PULLING BONES OUT OF FISHES and PORTER COLLECTING TICKETS (or TICKET PUNCHING) and HOP THERE AND BACK AGAIN and UP SIDES DOWN MIDDLE and NELSON and HIDING HATS IN THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT and POLLY TELL ME THE TIME (duty) and BUCK, BUCK, HOW MANY FINGERS HAVE I GOT UP and SOLOMON SILENT READING. SOLOMON SILENT READING—queer name, isn't it? This is how the game goes:

> "First of all a boy bends down and each boy flies over and the Duty man being last shouts out a game while flying over such as Solomon silent reading. A boy must bend down, then the Duty man thinks of a word and writes it on the boy's back with his finger, then the one who is bending down gets up and tells the Duty man what he wrote, then all the other boys stoop down one at a time and the Duty man repeats the writing [on their backs] and the last one to get it wrong has to give down"—

and BULL-DOG RACE and EATING FISH AND POTATOES and UPSETTING MOTHER'S GRAVY and HANDS OFF and CAP TELLING and WHO WILL TAKE THE PIG (or the UGLY BEAR) TO MARKET and ARM'S LENGTH and LAUGH AND CRY and BRASS BAND and CANNON BALLS and FOOT IT and DEAF AND DUMB MOSES (also called DUTY FOUR, where you have to pretend to be deaf and dumb) and FIRE ENGINES (or FIREMAN: duty) and STICK IN THE MUD (or STICKUMS) and

BRITISH WORKMAN and SUGAR CANES and CARRYING CROCODILES' FOOD. You play CROCODILES' FOOD like this:

> "All the boys leap over one's back and then run to end of street and then you all come back with your hands and feet on the ground and your chest above the ground and then you place your hat on your chest and walk along and the boy who falls over has to go down"

in other words, the cap (the crocodiles' food) has to lie on your stomach, which is sometimes called chest, while you move forwards with your back to the earth supporting yourself on hands and feet, as you can see perfectly well from this other description:

> "Have to run to top of street then the boy who is down shouts out carrying crocodiles food, then the other boys have to come back with their hats on their chests and their hands behind and running along on their backs"

and GAMMON RASHER and CATCHING STONES and RACE FOR A LEAF and CARRIAGES and ALL SORTS and PULLING UP FATHER'S RHUBARB and HAYSTACK and KING'S DINNER and MOUSE IN THE TRAP and PUNCTURED TYRE and COBBLER and DRUMS and FOOT AND LEE and FINGER IN THE BIRD'S NEST and BABBLE and OVER GARDEN WALL and THREE AND ON and HOW FAR CAN YOU RUN and BUNG THE BARREL and PICKING THE BLOATER and SIFT THE GRAPES and HOT ROLLS and WARNIE I'M A COMING—and that's just a few of them.

WARNIE has to be played against a wall, and this is what they say to it:

Hi Jimmy Nacko, one, two, three—Obobé,
Obobé-all-y-over!

Warnie, I suppose, means "I warn ye", because they say it just before they jump. But I can't even make a guess at Obobé—wish I could. It's quite possible that it never meant anything at all, to begin with. The boys sometimes call it High Bobbery—it's a way they have, of working the old names round into a sort of sense, when they've forgotten their real meaning. I must write and ask Aunt Eliza; she knows everything (thinks she does). As to Jimmy Nacko—they sometimes call it Jimmy Wagtail, but one of the lads tells me it means "Neck, ho!" which only shows how they like twisting the names about. (That's why they now say shuttlecock instead of shuttlecork, because they forget it's played with a cork). What I think about Jimmy Nacko is this: judging by his name, he was just an old shonk[E] of some kind....

And now I must tell you about RELEASE. There is one game of this kind played by small children, and not worth talking about. But the real RELEASE (or ROBBERS AND COPPERS) is quite another thing altogether. In release you take sides and catch prisoners; you have to touch their heads and "crown" them; that's what makes them prisoners. And that's what makes them so wild—because the other chaps can't always release them; and that's why the old people bar the game—because you always get your clothes torn; and that's why it's also called BEDLAM—because there are so many rows while it's going on. You see, they don't like being made prisoners and being "crowned" and having their heads touched—not at all, at all. Just mad, it makes them.

“D’ye want a claht over the jor?” says one. “’Cos yer never did touch me ’ead, so there.”

“Ole Ikey see’d me doos it.”

“Liar. ’Cos ’e wos t’ovver side o’ the street.”

“’E never. Yer wos on the grahnd when I crahned yer napper.”

“Liar. Yer sez I wos a-layin dahn when all the time I wos on me stumps. Yer finks I’m up the pole to ’ear yer tork. Knock ’arf yer fice orff.”

“Not ’arf. Yer knows I touched yer nut ’cos don’t yer remember me a-standin on yer arms?”

“Ef yer want an eye bunged up or a punch on the snaht—”

“Well ef I’m a liar yore the biggest. So yer lumps it. I’m goin to be blowed ef I play wiv a lahsy blisterin blitherin blinkin blightin bloomin bleedin blasted baastard wots got a movver wots got a bloke wots—”

“’Ere, d’ye want a clip on the Kiber-pass?”

“Garn! P.....,[E] an play wiv the steam.”

FOOTNOTES:

[D] Moggies are cats.

[E] A shonk is a foreigner, generally a Jew.

[F] Four words censored.

Girls' games? Bless you, dozens of them.

They play sports together with the boys: ball-games like ROUNDERS ("FOUR CORNERS") and HEAD GAME and DAGGLES and BROKEN BOTTLE (yes; BROKEN BOTTLE is a ball-game, and is also called PASSING ROUND) and THREE CATCHES OUT and ROTTEN EGG (or CRACKED EGG) and A AND B, where they have to stand in four rings marked in chalk on the pavement; and some without balls such as FOOL, FOOL, COME TO SCHOOL (rather like DUNCE, DUNCE, DOUBLE D.) and WRINKLE-SHELLS and HARK THE ROBBERS COMING THROUGH—an old catch game—and STEPS, and SLY FOX, and LET GO MUST GO (a wall game) and HONEY-POTS.

HONEY-POTS is very respectable, but a little old-fashioned. Aunt Eliza says she used to play it, and I can quite believe that. I can just see her playing HONEY-POTS.

PLEASE WE'VE COME TO LEARN A TRADE (also called GUESSING WORDS or DUMB MOTIONS)—another game for boys and girls. There are two parties, one on each side of the street. One of them has to think of a trade, such as picking hops, for instance; then they take the first letters, P and H, and go over to the others and say "We have come to work a trade." When the others ask, "What's your trade?" they must answer "P. H.", and pretend to be picking hops with their hands. If the others guess what trade they mean, they must shout it out and chase them across the street; and if they catch one of them —why, then they, the hop-pickers, must do the guessing instead. CATCH-IN-THE-ROPE is also for boys and girls, and so is PUSSY CAT, and so is STATUES. There are UGLY STATUES and PRETTY STATUES. When you play this game you have to line yourselves up against a wall or a house; then the judge comes along and pulls one of you forwards and in that moment you have to make a posture and a face, sometimes pretty but mostly ugly, and pretend to be a statue. It spoils everything if you laugh over this game, as you may understand from this description:—

> "A lot of players stand on a form. One person in front tells the person to form a statue if she move or laugh she is hee—"

Another of them is HERE WE GO UP THE MULBERRY TREE, where they form two parties who challenge each other and try to pull each other across the street. And they have handkerchief games together such as I SENT A LETTER TO MY LOVE ("and on the way I dropped it", a decent game for boys and girls, also called LOST LETTER; and if you haven't got a handkerchief, which you generally haven't, you can take any old rag); and NICK NACK TOLLY WHACK, which is rather rough and goes like this:—

> "Pick up for sides and one side says nick nack tolly wack. Then if the other side does not move they rush and each one has to have a wack with the tolly wack (a handkerchief with a knot in it)."

There are several more of these games for boys and girls—such as LOOKING GLASS and GOOSE-GANDER and SNOW-WHITE (where they go on hands and knees and get very dirty) and PET POST—but not as many as there might be, because they don't play together as much as they might....

Then the girls have games to themselves: ball-games like MACKINTOSH, and BASKET-BALL, and CROSS-BALL, and EMPEROR BALL, and CENTRE BALL, and CORNER CATCH BALL, and

CIRCLE STRIDE BALL, and HAND BALL, and ONE IN THE MIDDLE, and QUEEN MAB (a ball-hiding game, also called QUEEN ANNE); and hand-clapping games such as ONE-TWO-THREE and ORANGES, ORANGES, FOUR A PENNY, and TWISTERS AND CLAPS; and ring games like UP TO THE RING, and RUNNING IN AND OUT THE BLUEBELLS, and FIRE, and WALKING ROUND THE VILLAGE, and THIEF, PRINCE, KING, QUEEN, BEGGAR, and THROWING THE BEAN-BAGS, and PRETTY AND UGLY—where one girl stands in the centre of the ring and picks out another one who has to make a face, and if she's satisfied with the face, she allows her to stand in the centre instead.

Other girls' games are MOTHER I'M OVER THE WATER and BOX NUTS and VICTORIA and TURNING MOTHER'S WRINGER and WE THREE KINGS and JOHN BROWN'S KNAPSACK and FILLING (or PUSHING THROUGH) THE GAP and WHEN I WAS A SCHOOLGIRL and BREAD AND BUTTER (shuttlecock game) and COME TO SEE POOR MARY and WE ARE ROMANS (two parties of girls) and WHAT IS IT and WHO KNOWS and HOW, WHEN AND WHERE and HEAD AND SHOULDERS and BEAST, BIRD, FISH, FLOWER and POLLY GOES TO BED and POOR POLLY CAN'T SEE and TAG and RAILWAY RACE and ON THE MOUNTAIN and HOOK AND EYE and EGG IN THE SPOON and HAWK AND DOVE and BORROW A LIGHT and PEASE CODS and GOLDEN GOOSE and TREACLE PUDDING and WHO'S AFRAID OF BLACK PETER and JENNY PLUCK PEARS and WALKING-STICKS and LOOKING FOR MOTHER'S THIMBLE and TIME and LADYSMITH and PUSHY BACK and PASS OVER and WE ARE BRITISH SOLDIERS and L. S. D. and the WHITE SHIRT. THE WHITE SHIRT is an old ghost game, played like this:

> "You have a lot of girls standing against a wall, one of them being the mother of the others. She tells them to go and see if father's shirt's dry (the shirt being a girl in white, standing at a distance). They go in turn to see if it is dry & each time the "ghost" in father's shirt catches one. At last the mother alone is left, she goes and is caught; then another "shirt" is picked, and so the game goes on."

I don't think Aunt Eliza ever played THE WHITE SHIRT; she wouldn't care about the name—

and MERRY MONTH OF MAY and CON-STANT-I-NO-PLE and BLACK AND BLUE and FOLLOW YOUR MOTHER TO MARKET and PUSS and MY SISTER JANE and TWO LITTLE PEOPLE WENT OUT ONE DAY ("As they went out they were heard to say") and OLD DEVIL IN FIRE (or LIGHT MOTHER'S COPPER FIRE), which is played so:

> "About one dozen girls can play. They select one who has to be the devil, she's to stand against a wall, with a girl hid behind her. All the children have to try and light the fire, and each time the girl behind pinches them and they say "Oh, mother, the devil's in fire." Then the mother tries to light the fire and the devil chases them, and the one who is caught has to become devil, next time."

It's perfectly certain Aunt Eliza never played OLD DEVIL.

And other girls' games are JACOB AND RACHEL (where two of them have to chase each other blindfolded) and BUSHEL BASKET and MRS. BROWN and WOODEN LEG and ROLLING PIN (two parties of girls who decide which of them has to chase the other by the red or

blue colour marked on a rolling pin which is rolled between them) and PORK AND GREENS—

> "One player asks a question and the next says pork and greens. If she says anything else she is out—"

and TWO'S AND THREE'S—

> "A double ring is formed. Then two children are out, they chase each other & one runs in front of a child then the back one is hee—"

and BUZZ—

> "One player count one then the next says two and so on. Every 5 the player instead says buzz—"

and PARSON'S CAT—

> "Children sit down in a ring and begin saying something about the cat such as Abomnerble Cat. Then B and so on."

I SPY WITH ONE EYE and BLACK IN TOPPER and LOOKING THROUGH THE KEY-HOLE and PEEPING BEHIND THE CURTAIN are hiding games for girls. For SWINGS you need a lamp-post and a piece of rope; it's not exactly a game, but you can spend a nice Sunday afternoon over it, if there are no coppernobs about. In POLLY TELL ME THE TIME they wind a skipping-rope round a girl's waist a certain number of times, and then unwind her.

And that reminds me that some of the best girls' games are with skipping ropes.

They have SWING-SWONG, and DOUBLE DUTCH, and AMERICAN JUMP, and HIGHER AND HIGHER, and RUN AND SKIP, and HOOP AND SKIP, and INNERS AND OUTERS, and TOUCH TAIL, and NEBUCHADNEZZAR, and HIGH WATER, and NEVER LEAVE THE ROPE EMPTY, and OVER THE MOON, and ONE-TWO, and TIPPERARY (new), and ONE AND OUT, and SNAKES, and BIG BEN STRIKES ONE, and WHAT O SHE BUMPS (a new one), and ALL IN THE ROPE, and FOLLOW THE LEADER (yes; a skipping game) and FULL-STOP, and COLOURS, and HAREM SKIRT, and NAUGHTY GIRL, and THROWING UP GIRLS, and CATCH IN THE LONG ROPE, and EIGHTS, and DIFFICULTY, and THREE BETWEEN, and THREE AND ALL ON and SITTING ON THE STAR, MARY and I AM A LITTLE SHADOW and ROCK THE CRADLE and GIRLS' NAMES, and BOYS' NAMES, and goodness only knows how many more....

Some of the hand-clapping and ring and skipping games—most of them, in fact, and other ones too, in which the boys used to join—have songs that go with them; BOYS' NAMES, for instance, begins like this:

Black-currant—red-currant—raspberry tart:
Tell me the name of your sweetheart,

and then they begin with A. B. C., and all through the alphabet, a skip with each letter; and when they have found the sweetheart's name they have to discover when they are to be married, and how many rings, and how many brooches, and in what clothes, and in what carriage, and how many kisses, and in what house they will live, and how many children—all in the same alphabetical manner; so that, if this game were ever properly finished, it would take at least a month's hard skipping. Others of them end either with the numbers 1, 2, 3, etc.; or with penny, tuppence, threepence, etc.; or with the things in the cruet-stand (salt, mustard, vinegar, pepper); or with the days of the week, or the months of the year.

Here are a few of these chants:[G]—

I had a dolly dressed in green,
I didn't like her—I gave her to the Queen—
The Queen didn't like her—she gave her to the cat—
The cat didn't like her, because she wasn't fat.

or

Sally go round the moon, Sally,
Sally go round the sun.
Sally go round the ominlebus
On a Sunday afternoon.

or

Dancing Dolly had no sense,
She bought a fiddle for eighteen pence—
And all the tune that she could play
Was "Over the hills and far away."
(*Or*: "Sally get out of the donkey's way.")
(*Or*: "Take my dolly and fire away.")

or

Eaper Weaper, chimbley-sweeper,
Had a wife but couldn't keep her,
Had anovver, didn't love her,
Up the chimbley he did shove her.

or

Do you like silver and gold?
Do you like brass?
Do you like looking through
The looking-glass?
Yes I like silver and gold,
Yes I like brass, etc.

or (an old one)

As I was walking through the City,
Half past eight o'clock at night,
There I met a Spanish lady
Washing out her clothes at night.
First she rubbed them, then she scrubbed them,
Then she hung them out to dry,
Then she laid her hands upon them,
Said: I wish my clothes were dry.

or

Policeman, policeman, don't touch me,
I have a wife and a family.
How many children have you got?
Five and twenty is my lot,
Is my lot, is my lot,
Five and twenty is my lot.

or

Pounds, shillings and pence,
The monkey jumped over the fence.
The fence gave way, and the man had to pay
Pounds, shillings and pence.[H]

or

I went down the lane to buy a penny whistle,
A copper come by and pinch my penny whistle.
I ask him for it back, he said he hadn't got it—
Hi, Hi, Curlywig, you've got it in your pocket.

or

I'll tell Ma when I get home
That the boys won't leave me alone.

They pull my hair and break my comb,
I'll tell Ma when I get home.

or (for a shuttlecock-game)

Sam, Sam, dirty old man,
Washed his face in a frying pan,
Combed his hair with the leg of a chair—
Sam, Sam, dirty old man.

or

Look upon the mantle-piece,
There you'll find a ball of grease,
Shining like a threepenny-piece—
Out goes she!

or

Piggy on the railway, picking up the stones,
Up came an engine and broke Piggy's bones.
Oh, said Piggy, that's not fair—
Oh, said the driver, I don't care.

or

I had a black man, he was double-jointed,
I kissed him, and made him disappointed.
All right, Hilda, I'll tell your mother,
Kissing the black man round the corner.
How many kisses did he give you?
One, two, three, etc.

or

Charlie, Arlie, stole some barley,
Out of a baker's shop.
The baker came out and gave him a clout,
And made poor Charlie hop, hop, hop.

or

Up the ladder, down the wall,
Ha'penny loaf to feed us all,
I'll buy milk and you buy flour,
There'll be pepper in half an hour.

or

Lay the cloth, knife and fork,
Bring me up a leg of pork.
If it's lean, bring it in,
If it's fat, take it back,
Tell the old woman I don't want that.

or (an old one)

Green gravel, green gravel,
Your grass is so green, (or: Your voice is not heard)
I'll send you a letter
To call (Florrie) in.
I'll wash you in milk, and dress you in silk,
And write down your name with a gold pen and ink.

or

Two in the rope, and two take end,
Both are sisters, both are friend,
One named (Maudie), one named (Kate)—
Two in the rope and two take end.

or (evidently made up of different bits)

The woods are dark, the grass is green,
All the girls I love to see
Excepting (Rose Taylor), she's so pretty,
She belongs to London City.

or

Callings in and callings out—
I call (Rosie) in.
Rosie's in and won't go out—
I call (Maudie) in.

or

All the boys in our town, eating apple-pie,
Excepting (Georgie Groves), he wants a wife—
A wife he shall have, according he shall go
Along with (Rosie Taylor), because he loves her so.
He kisses her and cuddles her, and sits her on his knee,
And says, my dear, do you love me?
I love you, and you love me.
Next Sunday morning, the wedding will be,
Up goes the doctor, up goes the cat,

Up goes a little boy in a white straw hat.

or

Vote, vote, vote for (Billy Martin),
Chuck old (Ernie) at the door—
If it wasn't for the law,
I would punch him on the jaw,
And we won't want (Billy Martin) any more.

or

I know a washerwoman, she knows me,
She invited me to tea,
Guess what we had for supper—
Stinking fish and bread and butter.

or

Half a pint of porter,
Penny on the can,
Hop there and back again
If you can.

or

Down in the valley where the green grass grows,
Dear little (Lily) she grows like a rose.
She grows, she grows, she grows so sweet—
Come little (Violet) and grow at her feet.

or

Sweete, sweet Carroline,
Dipt her face in Terpentine,
Terpentine, made it shine,
Sweet, sweet Caroline.

or

Monday night, Band of Hope,
Tuesday night, pull the rope,
Wednesday night, Pimlico,
And out comes (Ethel Rowe).

or

I had a bloke down hopping,

I had a bloke down Kent.
I had a bloke down Pimlico,
And this what he sent:
O Shillali-tee-i-o.

or

Mary had bread and jam,
Marmalade and treacle,
A bit for me and a bit for you,
And a bit for all the people.

or

Mrs. Brown went to town,
Riding on a pony,
When she came back she took off her hat,
And gave it Mrs. Maloney.

or

Light the fire, blacksmith, show a pretty light,
In comes (Nellie), dressed in white,
Pretty shoes and stockings, pretty curly hair,
Pretty beads around her neck, but no chemise to wear.

or

One, two, three, four, five,
I caught a fish alive.
Why did you let him go?
Because he hurt my finger so.

or

The black man said (or: My mother said)
That you are A.,
If you do not want to play,
You can sling your hook away.

or (skipping)

One, two, buckle my shoe,
Three, four, knock at the door,
Five, six, breaking up sticks,
Seven, eight, Mary at the gate....

(I forget the rest)

or

One fair maid a-dancing (repeat twice),
All on a summer's day.
All go round and curtsey (repeat)
All on a summer's day.
Two fair maids a-dancing etc.

or (skipping)

Rat a tat tat, who is that?
Only grandma's pussy-cat.
What do you want?
A pint of milk.
Where is your money?
In my pocket.
Where is your pocket?
I forgot it.
O you silly pussy-cat.

or

Our boots are made of Spanish (or *of leather*)
Our stockings are made of silk,
Our pinafores are made of cotton
As white as white as milk.
Here we go around, around,
And we all must touch the ground.

or

Rosy apples lemon and a pear
A bunch of roses she shall wear.
Gold and silver by her side,
I shall make her my bride,
Take her by the hand,
Lead her across the water,
Give her kisses one, two, three,
And call her a lady's daughter.

or (for a ball-game)

Queen Anne, Queen Anne, she sits in the sun,
As fair as a lily, as white as a swan.
We bring you ten letters, pray can you read one?
We cannot read one, unless you bring all,
So pray Master Willie give up the ball,

The ball is ours, it is not yours—
So we have a right to keep it.

or (for an action game)

We are washing linen, linen,
We are washing linen clean (repeat)
This way, tra la la,
That way, tra la la (repeat).
We are rinsing linen, linen etc.
We are mangling linen, linen etc.
We are hanging linen, linen etc.

or

The big ship sails on the holly holly ho,
Holly holly ho
Holly holly ho
The big ship sails on the holly holly ho
On the last day of December.

or (for skipping)

Lady, lady, drop your purse,
Lady, lady, pick it up,
Lady, lady, touch the ground,
Lady, lady, turn right round,
Lady, lady, show your foot,
Lady, lady, sling your hook.

or (ring game)

There was once a king of York
Who had ten thousand men,
He led them up to the top of a hill
And led them down again,
And when they were up they were up
And when they were down they were down,
And when they were only half way up
They were neither up nor down.

or

Lady, lady on the sea-shore,
She has children one to four,
The eldest one is twenty-four,
Then she shall marry a tinker, tailor etc.

or

There come six Jews from Juda Spain
In order for your daughter Jane—
My daughter Jane is far too young
To marry you, you Spanish Jew—
Farewell, farewell, I'll walk away,
And come again another day—
Come back, come back, you Spanish Jew,
And choose the fairest one of us—
The fairest one that I can see
Is (Dolly Hayes), so come to me—

or

The farmer's in his den, (or: ill in bed), the farmer's in his den,
He I Hedy Ho, the farmer's in his den.
The farmer wants a wife etc.
The wife wants a child etc.
The child wants a nurse etc.
The nurse wants a dog etc.
We all pat the dog etc.

or

I-N spells in—
I was in my kitchen
Doing a bit of stitching,
Old Father Nimble
Came and took my thimble,
I got up a great big stone,
Hit him on the belly bone—
O-U-T spells out.

or

Caroline Pink, she fell down the sink,
She caught the Scarlet Fever,
Her husband had to leave her,
She called in Doctor Blue,
And he caught it too—
Caroline Pink from China Town.

or

Hush-a-larly, hush-a-larly
You are a funny girl.

Hush-a-larly, hush-a-larly
Will you give me a kiss?

or

Eight o'clock bells are ringing
Mother, may I go out
My young man's a-waiting
For to take me out.
First he bought me apples,
Then he bought me pears,
Then he gave me sixpence
To kiss him on the stairs.
I don't want your apples,
I don't want your pears,
I don't want your sixpence
To kiss me on their stairs.
Then he tears the leg of my drawers,
And that's the last of all.

or (an old one)

As I was going to Strawberry Fair,
Singing buttercups and daisies,
I met a maiden taking the air—
Her eyes were blue and gold her hair,
As she goes on to Strawberry Fair....[1]

or (skipping)

Who's in the well?
Only the pussy-cat.
Who pulled him out?
Little Tommy Stout.
Oh, you naughty pussy-cat.

or

I am a little beggar-girl,
My mother she is dead,
My father is a drunkard
And won't give me no bread.
I look out of the window
To hear the organ play—
God bless my dear mother,
She gone far away.
Ding-dong the castle bells

Bless my poor mother—
Her coffin shall be black,
Six white angels at her back—
Two to watch and two to pray,
And two to carry her soul away.

Not a very cheerful rope-song, you'll say; but our girls love it; you can't think how it makes them laugh. They laugh more than the boys, anyhow, over their games—

or

Cold meat, mutton pies,
Tell me when your mother dies.
I'll be there to bury her—
Cold meat, mutton pies.

which is also sung like this:

Cold meat, mutton chops,
Tell me when your mother drops.
I'll be there to pick her up—
Cold meat, mutton chops.

or

My name is sweet (Jennie), my age is sixteen,
My father's a father [farmer] and I am a Queen.
Got plenty of money to dress me in silk,
But nobody loves me but (Gladys dear).

or

My mother sent me out a-fishing,
Fishing cockles in the sea.
My foot slipped and I tumbled in—
Two little nigger-boys laughed at me.

or

Charlie likes whisky,
Charlie likes brandy,
Charlie likes kissing girls—
O sugar-de-candy.

or (a new one)

What O she bumps,
She skips and she jumps,
If she don't jump

I'll make her bump.

or (ring game)

There was a jolly miller and he lived by himself,
As the mill went round he made his wealth,
One hand in his pocket and the other in his bag—
As the mill went round he made his grab.

or (ring game)

Wallie, Wallie, Wall-flowers
Growing up so high—
All these young ladies
Will all have to die.
Excepting (Mabel Groves), she is the only one,
She can hop and she can skip,
She can turn the organ—
Hi, Hi, turn again,
Turn your face to the wall again.

or

In and out the windows (repeat twice)
As you have done before.
Stand and face your lover (repeat twice)
As you have done before.
Take her off to London etc.
Bring her back from London etc.
Kiss her before you leave her etc.

or

Here we go Loobeloo, here we go Loobellee,
Here we go Loobelloo, on a Sunday afternoon.
Put your right arm in, put your right arm out,
Shake it a little, a little, then turn yourself about.
Put your left arm in (repeat as before).
Put your right leg in, etc.
Put your left leg in, etc.
Put your noddle in, etc.
Put your whole self in, etc.

or (an old one)

Here comes three duks [dukes] a-riding, a-riding, a-riding,
Here comes three duks a-riding, on a Ransi-tansi-tay.
Please we've come to marry, to marry, to marry,

Please we've come to marry with a Ransi-tansi-tay.
Marry one of us Sir, us Sir etc.
Your all as stiff as pocars, pocars, etc.
We can bend as well as you Sir, you Sir etc.
Your all to black and dirty, dirty, dirty,
Your all to black and dirty, with a Ransi-tansi-tay.

or

Old Roger (or: Poor Robin) is dead and gone to his grave,
He, Hi, gone to his grave.
They planted an apple-tree over his head,
He, Hi, over his head.
The apple grew ripe and ready to drop,
He, Hi, ready to drop.
There came an old woman of Hipertihop,
He, Hi, Hipertihop,
She began a picking them up,
He, Hi, picking them up,
Old Roger got up and gave her knock,
He, Hi, gave her a knock,
Which made the old woman go hipertihop.
He, Hi, Hipertihop.

or (skipping)

I went to the animal show, and what do you think I saw there?
The Elephant sneezed and fell on his knees,
And what became of the monkey—

(Keep saying monkey untill out).

or

Early in the morning at eight o'clock
You may hear the postman's knock,
Up jumps Mabel to open the door—
Letters, one, two, three, four.

or

We lost our cat aweek ago,
But cant tell where to find it
We sometimes hear a tuneful noise
Is daily growing weaker
So Tommy Brown we all must say
That your to be the seeker

(something is hidden and after this is sung they come and look for it.)

or

Caroline Brown from China Town,
Earning all the dollars
Ironing shirts and collars,
Busy as a bee
You can always see
Caroline Brown from China Town.

or

Ener Dena Dinah Doe
Catch a nigger by his toe,
If he hollows let him go—
Ener dena Dinah Doe.

or (one girl in the ring and two outside)

Brave news is come to town,
Polly Dawson's married.
You can tell the parson's wife,
You can tell the people,
You can buy the wedding-gown,
I will thread the needle.
What will you give to her for a loving token?
A piece of soap and an old cart rope,
And a candle-stick that's broken.
Out you get and out you go for a stingy miser,
If you live till forty years I hope you will be wiser.
Brave news is come to town (repeat first six lines)
What will you give to her for a loving token?
A piece of gold and a ring to hold
The sweetest words ere spoken.
In you get and in you go....

(I forget the rest).

or

Old mother roundabout
Knocking all the kids about—
Outside Elsie's door.
Up comes Elsie with a great big stick
And lets her know what for.

or

I was in the garden
A-picking of the peas—
I busted out a-laughing
To hear the chickens sneeze.

or

Mother got the Hooping cough
Father got the gout—
Please (Rosie Milton)
Will you walk out?

or

Half a pound of bacon,
Fry it in the pan—
No one else shall have it
But me and my young man.

or

Who's that walking round my garden?
Only Tommy Jingle.
Don't you steal none of my fat pigs,
Or else I'll make you tingle.

or

My young man is so lively,
Takes me up the Wells[1] every Friday,
Wears brown boots on a Sunday,
With half a dozen buttons on his coat.

or

Here comes our jolly jolly sailors
Just arrived on shore,
We earn our money like ...
And now we'll work for more.

or

I fell into a box of eggs—
All the yellow run down my legs,
All the white run up my shirt—
I fell into a box of eggs.

or (an old one)

Mother buy me a milking-pail, milking-pail, milking-pail,
Mother buy me a milking-pail—one, two, three.
Where's the money coming from (repeat as above)
Sell father's feather-bed, etc.
What's father got to sleep in etc.
Sleep in the pigsty, etc.
What's the pig got to sleep in, etc.
Sleep in the washing-tub, etc.
What have I got to wash in, etc.
Wash in a thimble, etc.
What have I got to sew with, etc.
Sew with a poker, etc.
What have I got to poke the fire with, etc.
Poke it with your finger, etc.
Suppose I burn my finger, etc.
Serve you right.

(The mother then tries to catch her children).

or (this is a sham)

Up you go feathery toy,
Up in the air so lightly—
Children gaze after you,
Watching your movements brightly.
Tap, tap, battledores,
Up once more you spring,
Just like little dicky-birds,
Sporting on the wing.

or (this is the real thing)

Shuttlecock, shuttlecock, if you don't spin,
I'll break your bones and bury your skin.

or

Appletree, peartree, plumtree pie,
How many children before I die?
One, two, three etc.

or

Three little children sitting on the sand,
All, all a-lonely (repeat both lines)
Down in the green wood shady—
There came an old woman, said Come on with me,
All, all a-lonely (repeat both lines)

Down in the green wood shady—
She stuck her pen-knife through their heart,
All, all a-lonely (repeat both lines)
Down in the green wood shady.

or

Goodbye (May), while you're away,
Send a letter, love,
Say you're better, love,
Don't forget your dear old (Nell)

(Call another girl in)

or

I know a girl, sly and deceitful,
Every little tittle tat she goes and tells her people.
Long nose, ugly face, ought to be put under a glass case,
If you want to know her name,
Her name is (Evie Allen).
O (Evie Allen), get away from me,
I don't want to speak to you,
Nor you to speak to me.
Once we were playmates,
But now we can't agree—
O (Evie Allen), get away from me.

or (ring game)

Choose the one you love the best,
Choose the merriest of the lot.
Now you're married I wish you joy—
First a girl and then a boy.
Seven years old and ...
Play and cuddle and kiss together—
Kiss her once, kiss her twice,
Kiss her three times over.

or

There stands a lady on a mountain,
Who she is I do not know,
All she wants is gold and silver,
All she wants is a nice young man.
Madam will you walk it, Madam will you talk it,
Madam will you marry me? No!
Not if I buy you a silver spoon

To feed your baby every afternoon?
Madam will you walk it etc. No!
Not if I buy you a nice silk hat
With seven yards of ribbon hanging down the back?
Madam will you walk it etc. No!
Not if I buy you the keys of Heaven
To let yourself in at half-past seven?
Madam will you walk it etc. Yes!
Go to church, love (repeat)
Go to church, love,—Farewell.
Put your ring on (repeat)
Put your ring on,—Farewell.
What for breakfast, love (repeat)
What for breakfast, love,—Farewell.
Boiled eggs and bread and butter (repeat twice)
On the mountain,—Farewell.
What's for dinner, love (repeat)
What's for dinner love,—Farewell.
Roast beef and plum pudding (repeat twice)
On the mountain,—Farewell.
What's for tea, love (repeat)
What's for tea, love,—Farewell.
Bread and butter, water-cress (repeat twice)
On the mountain,—Farewell.
What for supper, love (repeat)
What for supper, love,—Farewell.
Squashed flies and blackbeetles,
Squashed flies and blackbeetles,
Squashed flies and blackbeetles,
On the mountain,—Farewell.

or

Now I'm off to the butcher's shop,
There I stay no longer.
If I do, mother will say,
Naughty girl to disobey,
And play with the boys down yonder.
Come in my (Ellen) dear,
While I go out.

And if you like these chants, here are the beginnings of a few more:—

Oxford boys are very nice boys,
Cambridge boys are better—

and

Handy-Pandy, sugar-de-candy,
French almond rock—

and

Hoky Poky, penny a lump,
The more you eat, the more you jump—

and

There was an old lady of Botany Bay:
What have you got to sell today—

and (an old one)

All in together—all sorts of (or *frosty*) weather—
When the wind blows we all go together—

and (a very old one)

Here we come gathering nuts in May (they now call it: *and* May)
On a cold and frosty morning—

and (quite a new one)

Soldier, Soldier, you may be
Just come home from Germany—

and

A house to let, enquire within,
And please to call my Nellie in—

and

Hot boiled beans and melted butter:
Ladies and gentlemen, come to supper—

and

Gladys, Gladys, come out tonight,
The moon is shining bright—

and

O tonight is Saturday night,
Tomorrow will be Sunday—

and (a very old one)

Sally, Sally Water—sprinkle in the pan:
Fie, Sally—cry, Sally—for a young man—

and that's really interesting, because the children don't understand the meaning of this song any more, and so they have invented a new one to take its place, like this:

Little Sally Sanders, sitting on the sand,
Weeping and crying for a young man,
Rise Sally, rise so sweet—

I forget the rest; but you can see how they have twisted it about to make sense—

and

You naughty flea,
You bit my knee—

and

Come in my garden,
And give me your hand—

and

Slow skip, what you like,
A dolly or a pepper—

and (a very naughty one)

Mabel, Mabel,
Lay the table—

and

Mother made a seedy cake,
Gave us all the belly ache—

and

I know a doctor, he knows me,
What do you think he brought for tea—

and

Red, white and blue:
I don't speak to you—

and

O dear me, mother caught a flea,
Put it in the tea-pot and made a cup of tea—

and

This house to let, no rent to pay,
Knock at the door and run away—

and

Dolly dear, Dolly dear,
Your sweetheart is dead—

and

Evie, Ivy, over,
The kettle is boiling over—

and

Up in the North, a long way off,
The donkey's got the whooping-cough—

and

Turn your back, you saucy cat,
And say no more to me—

and

Send a letter, send a letter,
Be content in the weather—

and

Crossing the waters one by one,
Crossing the waters two by two—

and

Four little chickens all in white,
Saw some bread and began a fight—

and (skipping and shuttlecock)

Old mother Mason—broke a basin:
What did it cost her? One penny, tuppence, etc.

and

Stockings red and garters blue,
Shoes laced up with silver—

and

Penny on the water, tuppence on the sea,
Threepence on the railway—out goes she—

and

Down by the river where the green grass grows,
There little Sally was washing her clothes—

and

Here comes a little bird through the window,
Here comes a little bird through the door—

and

Willie, Willie, I am waiting, I can't wait no longer for you,
Three times the whistle blows, are you coming yes or no?—

and (skipping)

Little Mary Anne who lives up stairs,
With high legged boots and a feather in her hat—
That's the way she meets her chap—

and

Take a little bird and hop in the corner,
Take a little bird and hop away—

and

Ma she said that this won't do,
To play with the boys at half-past two—

and

On the carpet she shall kneel,
Stand up-right upon your heel—

and

Ching Chang Chinaman had a penny doll—
Washed it, scrubbed it, called it pretty poll.

If you really like these songs, I can tell you the names of one or two more, such as I CAN DO THE TANGO and I'LL TELL MOTHER, MARY ANNE, and MOTHER, MOTHER, FETCH ME HOME and FATHER GIVE (that means *gave*) ME A HA'PENNY and POLLY PUT THE KETTLE ON and JUMBO HAD A BABY and LEAVE THE ROPE and COME ON, AMY and SOME ONE'S UNDER THE BED and PLEASE WILL YOU LEND THE KEY and CINDARELLA-UMBERELLA and THE HOUSE IS EMPTY AND NOBODY IN and HABERDASHER ISHER ASHER OM POM TOSH and R. WHITE'S GINGER-BEER GOES OFF POP and MADEMOISELLE WENT TO THE WELL (which is interesting because they have forgotten what "mademoiselle" means and now call it ADAM AND ELL) and MY SON JOHN WENT TO BED WITH HIS STOCKINGS ON and MY MOTHER SAID THAT I WAS BORN and POOR JENNIE IS A-WEEPING and LONDON BRIDGE IS BROKEN DOWN (two well-known old ones) and WILLIE HAD A LETTER FOR TO GO ON BOARD A SHIP and OATS AND BEANS AND BARLEY GROW and NOW WE'RE ON THE BATTLEFIELD and MY FATHER HAD AN OLD SHOE and I WENT DOWN PICCADILLY.

You can get as many of these songs out of the girls as you like, if you care to come round and ask for them; you'll find the girls far less shy about their games than the boys are. And you'll also notice that they're just as good at inventing sports—the boys show up best in the duty-games, and the girls in their songs. But there's this difference. You'll not find much talk in these songs about sunshine and flowers and things like that—except in the older ones which I think were used by girls and boys together, and perhaps even by grown-ups. The girls don't discover poetic things like "Swimming in Blue Water" or "Dead Man's Dark Scenery"; they're matter-of-fact; they sing about clothes and food and money. That's what makes Aunt Eliza say that women have more common sense than men....

FOOTNOTES:

[G] Not all of them are sung to games.

[H] There is an improper version of this, and of several others.

[I] "has I was goning to strrber far sing butter u cup and dassies I bet a mide take a there forder In the ises were belw but I gend a hir she gose on to strrber far rif rif tola len lile rif rif tale led lile."

[J] Sadlers' Wells.

Then the smaller girls and boys have a number of games together: MOTHERS AND FATHERS, for instance, and TEACHERS, and SCHOOLS, and SOLDIERS, and NURSES, and HOSPITALS, and CARTS AND HORSES, and SHOPS, and CONVICTS AND WARDERS, and RAILWAY STATIONS, and games of that kind; and OLD DADDY WITCHES (also called POLLY WITCH or GRANNY WITCH) and SLEIGHS and I BOUGHT A DONKEY and I BOUGHT A PENNY DOLL and FIRE ENGINES and FROGS and WAR and CAT AND MOUSE and CAT AND DOG and HERE WE GO ROUND THE MULBERRY BUSH and A.B.C.D.F.G.—WHAT HAVE I LEFT OUT?—

> "one silly kid says E., and then all the others says you're *it*!" namely "he" (E.)—

and JACK HORNER and OLD AUNT SALLY and TIP-TOP IS A SWEETS STORE and TOM TIDDLER. You know TOM TIDDLER, of course:

"I'm on old Tom Tiddler's ground,
Picking up gold and silver—"?

There is also another game of this kind where they sort themselves into two parties called ORANGES AND LEMONS to the song of

Oranges and Lemons
Bells of Saint Clement's—

Everybody knows that! In fact, children are not particular what they play at—

> "I Can Play at Whipping top also i Play Hoopla. And i Play at Darts. And have a game at horses. And i Play at hide and seek and i play with Cherry stones. And i Play at skiping rope and Jumping over the rope. And i like a game of Boxing and i like a game of foot Ball and i like a game of Cricket. And i like a game of rounders and i Play a Game of Blow Cards and i play Pigy Backs and i play at Going up on your hands against the wall. i Play at racing. i Play Drawfs i Play with my hoop and Stick i Play at Soldiers...."

And other children's sports are MARY, MARY and WEEK DAYS (a ball-game played by eight of them) and another one called SHEEP, SHEEP COME HOME, where one line of children represents the sheep, and another line the wolves; and behind the wolves stands the sheeps' mother—many of these games are "mother-games"—who calls the sheep; but as they run to her they are caught by the wolves. It goes like this:

"Sheep Sheep come home,
Afraid. What off. The Wolfs.
Wolfs gone to Devenshire
Wont be home for seven year
Sheep Sheep come home—"

and DAN, DAN THREAD YOU NEEDLE and WILL YOU GIVE US BREAD AND WINE and

GRANDMOTHER, GRANDMOTHER GRAY,

May I go out to play?
I won't go near the water
To drive the ducks away—

and

MOTHER MAY I GO OUT?
No, it's raining.
No, it ain't.
Oh, all right then.
Mother, I can't get over the water.
Well, swim.
Can't.
Ride on a duck's back—
Quack! Quack!
Where have you been?
To Grandma's.
What did she give you?
Slice of bread as big as my head,
Lump of cheese as big as my knees,
Glass of wine as big as my eyne,
And a rusty farthing to go home with.
Where's my share?
Up in the air.
How shall I get it?
Stand on a broken chair.
Supposing I fall?
Serve you right,
For getting drunk on a Saturday night

(the mother runs after the children and the first one caught takes her place)—

and TWINKLE TWINKLE LITTLE STAR (ring-game) and MATCH and RING-A-RING O' ROSES and CHERRY-OGS (or CHERRY-BOBS) and CHERRY-PIES.

That reminds me that the last two must not be mixed up with CHERRY-BOB ARCH, a gambling game for bigger lads, quite simple but rather risky, played with cherry-stones and the lid of an old wooden box in which spaces and numbers have been marked out. You throw and—well, you must ask some of the boys higher up the street....

Now small children don't invent games (it's the older ones who do that) and so they carry on a good few which used to be played long ago and which the others don't care for any more. That accounts for the queer sports you see among the kids. One of them is KING OF THE BARBARY, where one party captures a "castle" made of the other children holding their hands together. Another is GREEN MAN RISE-O, a very old game; it goes like this:—

> "A boy has to get don and put some gass over him and run out and call out geren man rays and he got to fine [find] you—"

Perhaps this is clearer:—

> "The way we play the game of greenman one of us lay down and cover his self with grass and the others run out and hide then they say greenman greenman rise up then he gets up and trys to catch them and the last one thats cort goes it—"

For GREEN MAN RISE-O you have to go to the park, nowadays; but if you can't go to the park, and want to play it in the street, this is how you do:—

> "A boy as got to lay down and all the others have to put thier coats on him and then they have to say green man rise up and if he see a boy he as got to say one, two, three, and the last one as to go it—"

—in fact, it becomes like DEAD MAN'S RISE, for lack of grass.

In COCK ROBIN IS DEAD all the children who are playing have to arm themselves with shields (for which they use saucepan-lids) and with bows and arrows; and some of the bows are worth looking at—made of string, they are, and half a barrel-hoop or a whalebone out of their big sister's stays—if she wears any. Another of these sports is an old witch-game called TO BECKLES TO BECKLES (?Beccles in Suffolk). It is played like this:

> "The children form a ring, and two in the middle. One is a witch and the other is a girl. The children dance round once. Then the girl in the ring says, "To Beckles to Beckles to get some wood." Old witch says: "What for." Girl: "To boil the pot." Witch: "What for." Girl: "To cook the fowl." Witch: "Where did you get it?" Girl: "From your yard." At this a race ensues, until the girl is caught by the witch."

GROTTOES—May sport—are built heart-shaped or square or round, with an edge of grass (if you can get it) filled up with picture-cards and oyster-shells and old scent bottles or anything else that looks pretty. It's just a dodge for mumping halfpennies; and not a bad one, either. They come up to you and say "Remember the grotto"—meaning Pay up. Speaking for myself, I generally forget the grotto—meaning Go to blazes. But some people pay up, and I once saw Mr. Perkins give them sixpence! He was a bit all right, that evening—must have been....

By far the best children's games are those played with mud. Of mud you make PIES, and BRIDGES, and STICKING-BRICKS (against a wall), and MUD-CARTS (played with a tin-can), and WELLS, and TUNNELS, and FLOWER-POTS, and CASTLES—in fact, anything you please. There's nothing like mud, when all is said and done, and it's a perfect shame there isn't more mud about, nowadays; or sand, at least. You should see them go for it, when the streets are up. Because the park is too far away for most of them. And then, the fact of the matter is, our boys don't much like playing in the park, anyhow; and the few who care about it aren't allowed to go, because their mothers say "You've got no clothes." They prefer the streets; and that's the truth, though you wouldn't believe it. I can't stop to tell you why. For one thing, the keeper is always coming up in the

park and interfering; next, they can't find kerbs and paving-stones there; next, it makes them wild to see other boys with bats and things, when they have none....

Some of these games used to come in at fixed seasons, as TOPS and MARBLES and PICTURES and BUTTONS still do; they came regularly, like the ice-cream jack or the lavender-boy or the rate-collector or the measles or the hoky-poky man or the carol-singers. But things are changing. SKIPPING used to begin on Good Friday, and now they skip half the year round; HOOPS used to come in at Christmas sharp, and here they are already. Danged if I know the reason why. But there it is. GROTTOES ought to be played on St. James' day, and I've seen them in mid-winter. The same with these MUD-PIES. You would think they belonged naturally to the wet season. Not a bit of it! Not nowadays, at all events. If their clay is too dry in summer, they manage to make it moist again, even without waiting for the rain. Unseasonable, I call it....

What I said about paving-stones reminds me of MARBLES. We used to play them in the winter, on the pavement. But marlies are going down in the world, that's certain. It's a good while since I played, but I still remember the names of a few kinds—Toms, and Alleys, and Glarnies, and Miggies; and Forty-eighter and Twenty-fourer and Twelver and Sixer and Fourer and Three-er. You hardly ever hear of a Forty-eighter nowadays. The smaller stone marbles were called Tich; those you got out of lemonade bottles were Glass-eye; they also had names, which I've forgotten, according to the different coloured marks. We used to play at NOCKS (that is, KNUCKS: because your knuckles had to touch the ground), and MARBLE-BOARD, and SKITTLES, and GLASGOW, and THREE HOLES, and NIXY'S IN THE HOLE: I TAKE, and GUTTER MARBLES, and ROW MARBLES, and UP THE ALLEY, and SPICK AND SPAN, and DOB 'EM, and TIP, and FOUR HOLES, and NEAREST THE WALL, and PICKING THE PLUMS, and GOING UP, and BOWLING IN THE HOLE and HIT IT LEAVE IT and HIT IT HAVE IT and THROWINGS OUT and STAYS and HITS AND SPANS and FIVE TEN and PICKING NUMBERS and BAGATELLE and IN THE RING and PITCHING and FOLLOW ON and KILLING and PORKY and THROW THE FARTHEST and SOME OR NONE and BRIDGE-BOARD. BRIDGE-BOARD was played with a diagram looking like a row of railway arches; and I might explain the game if I could draw diagrams, which I can't. In BOUNCE EYE each player gave a certain number of marbles which were pooled in a ring. Then one of them held a marble to his eye and dropped it among them; if any others were knocked out of the ring, he kept them; if none, his own marble went into the pool. There used also to be games that you played with marbles in a flat iron ring—the rings cost 2d. if you bought them, but you generally got them off the barges for nothing—games like RINGUMS and CHIPPING OUT OF THE RING.

But, as I was saying, marbles are not played as they used to be. The police are getting more interfering every day; they tell the boys to move on and not block up the pavement, and that interrupts them in the middle of a game and makes them half wild; and if you don't clear off at once, they kick your marbles into the gutter where they get lost down a drain, and that makes you altogether mad. Aunt Eliza explains things by saying that marble-games wear out boys' clothes at the knees and that mothers are growing to be "more careful in such matters." More fussy, I call it. And then she says—and I say what she says simply can't be believed, though it would prove what *I* said—she says—and I say she says these things not because she knows them but just because she believes them, or believes she believes them, or believes she ought to

believe them, like some people do; or perhaps not even that; because how is she to *know* them: that's what I want to know?—she says that marbles—and I say it's the worst of Aunt Eliza that when she says a thing you never know exactly where you are; and, upon my word, I don't believe she knows either; nor does anybody else, for that matter; and, what's more, nobody really cares; and it wouldn't much matter if they did, which is just as well—she says that marbles—and I say it all comes from wasting her time running all over the place in a feather hat and silk garters, ever since she came in for that little bit and left off trying to be schoolmistress, and messing about the way she has done with children's homes and a lot of old cranks, instead of doing some honest work at home—she says that marbles, and not only marbles but HOOPS, used to be played by the big boys at the public schools.

Hoops: that's what she says. And I say: hoops be blowed. With all respect to Aunt Eliza, I might have swallowed marbles, but I can't swallow hoops; not on this side of the year after next. I know this, at least, that if a big lad were seen playing, or ever had been seen playing, with a hoop, down our way, except, perhaps, an iron one—why, his own parents wouldn't know him again, when he got home, if he ever did, which I rather doubt; and that's all there is to it. His father would ask whether some poor loony had been trying to box with a traction-engine going at full steam, and his mother would want to know what on earth made somebody put a lot of something through the sausage-machine without sifting out all those buttons first. But that's neither here nor there, except in so far as it shows what Aunt Eliza's explanations are worth. Mr. Perkins, of Framlingham Brothers (a good old firm—and a nice place he's got, too)—he's an understandable kind of gentleman and he gets talking about things after his second pint of Burton and he says, speaking of marbles, that he's noticed the same thing as I have. And when I asked him *why* marbles are going out of fashion, he says:

"Marbles are going out of fashion", he says, "because they're getting unpopular. That's why. And I happen to know this", says he, "because our little Percy he tells me that shopmen don't stock them the way they did because they know that boys don't ask for them the way they did and boys don't ask for them the way they did because they know they couldn't get them the way they did because shopmen don't stock them the way they did. Which proves what I said. Trust me", says he, "when things begin to lose their popularity, they are sure to become unfashionable sooner or later, whether it be games, or clothes, or drinks, *or* religions. For instance", says he, "take Nonconformity". But I wasn't taking Nonconformity just then, and when I tried to keep him to the point, and asked *why* marlies, and just marlies, were getting unpopular, he scratches his chin which hadn't been shaved for the inside of a week, and has another go at his tankard, and puts it down with a bit of a bang, emphatic-like—a sure sign, with Mr. Perkins—and then he looks at me and says:

"Marbles are getting unpopular", says he, "because they're going out of fashion. That's what's the matter with marbles and with a good many other things as well. Take Nonconformity", and when I told him I was only taking bitter that night, he has another pull at his Burton, and at last he says, casual-fashion:

“Marbles are not stimulating enough for modern life. It’s the same with religions, *don’t you see*? Now take Nonconformity”—and God’s truth! I had to take Nonconformity for the better part of an hour, after all.

But Mr. Perkins hit the nail on the head, all the same. For I feel sure that boys need more excitement than they did. Or perhaps I ought to say they want it. That's it: they just want it. And thinking it over, I believe the cinematograph is to blame: it makes them want more excitement, and then it gives it them; and then it makes them want still more, and then it gives them still more; quite restless, in fact, it makes them, and I shouldn't be surprised if sooner or later it weren't responsible for a new kind of boy altogether. And that would mean the end of a number of these old games. Because nowadays the bigger lads, those who used to do most of the inventing—they prefer to go to picture-shows whenever they get a chance, instead of larking about the streets as they used to do. (They get some games out of the cinematograph, by the way, such as COWBOYS—INDIANS, which has lately been re-christened GERMANS—ENGLISH). So the playing-age is growing to be younger and younger, and these small boys are not so good at discovering fresh sports; it's quite true they do make up new ones every day, but I think, on the whole, they forget more than they ought to remember; and this is the reason, if you really want to know, why I'm making up this catalogue: to see whether the next lot of children knows anything about these sports, or even their names.

The "organized games" they make them play in the parks nowadays—they work in the same direction; so does the regular county council schooling; so does the scout movement. The fact is, boys are not left to themselves the way they used to be; everybody goes fussing about and telling them to do this and that, when they want to be doing something else—something of their own; that's why many games are being forgotten. I don't know a single boy who really cares for "organized games" the way a man does; even Aunt Eliza can't bring herself to believe in the system over-much, though she likes to think it keeps the youngsters out of mischief. And it all comes from thinking that boys think the same as we think—which they don't; or ought to learn to think the same as we think—which they oughtn't. Because the right kind of boy thinks differently from the right kind of man about games and everything else. And so he ought.

To prove that they still can invent, you need only watch them at their picture-games—played with cigarette-cards and all of them, of course, absolutely new, seeing that these cards were quite unknown up to a few years ago. These picture games have helped to do away with marbles, for two reasons: firstly, the boys are keener on them because they're more exciting; and secondly, they're cheaper. You have to pay for marbles. But you don't pay for fag-pictures: you mump them, see? And here the difference between our games and those of richer people comes in. The more expensive their games are, the more they like to play them; they don't seem to care about sports that are played with nothing at all—the dearness is what makes everybody want to go in for them; whereas with our boys a game can only be played if it's cheap, and if it costs nothing at all—why, then it becomes really popular, or fashionable—as the case may be. Now fag-cards are cheap, and no mistake. That's why you can play so many games with them—EGGS IN THE BUSH, and SNAP, and BANKER (or BANK), and NEAREST THE WALL TAKES, and NEAREST THE WALL SPINS UP, and SEVENS (quite a new kind), and SCALING UP THE RING, and SCALING UP THE LINE, and UNDER THE HAT, and GETTING IN THE RING (that's a paving-flag, and the game is also called IN THE

SQUARE), and OVERLAPPINGS, and IN THE RING FARTHEST, and POKE IN THE HOLE, and DROP THEM (or DROPS), and SKATE THEM, and PICTURE OR BLANK, and WALLIE (or UP THE WALL), and PITCHING IN THE BLOCK (or PITCHER), and PITCHING UNDER, and SLAP-DAP, and SCRAPINGS, and TIPPING IN THE HOLE, and BLOWINGS (also called BLOWS or BLOWUMS: you need an outside window-sill for this), and TOUCH-CARD, and GETTING ON, and INNERS AND OUTERS, and THUMBS, and SHOWS-UP, and KNOCK 'EM DOWN, and DICINGS, and WATERFALLS (or SNOWFALLS) and SPANS (or SPANNERS)—there's thirty of them, anyhow.

There's this to be said for picture-games: they make the boys uncommonly nimble with their hands and fingers, and this must help them later on, if they go in for certain trades like watch-making. In fact, they require real skill; as I found out the other day when they asked me to play BANKER (just for a lark, they said) and got five coppers out of me in about half as many minutes. No, I've nothing against picture-games except that their names are not as good as those of the duty sports and that they don't give the youngsters any chance of running about and using their legs. And also this: they're really horrible inducements to gambling—especially BANKER. Now I don't like even talking about gambling, because it's forbidden by law, and everybody knows it. And yet, only yesterday I noticed a lot of them at it; evidently at it. I could see they were up to mischief, by the way they cleared. Dam funny it was—how they just melted into nothing, before I could get a proper sight of them. Not our boys, I'm glad to say.

They're so keen on these picture-games that you can see them playing at half-past six in the morning and after nine at night; and in the rain, too; and when they have no fag-pictures they try to play the same games with bus tickets and then, if you're not very careful, you can hear some shocking bad swear-words which they pick up I can't think where, because the bus tickets bend too easily and won't fly as they should.

And that reminds me of some other games of the smaller children—those played with five stones (boys) or gobs and bonsers (girls). Gobs (cobs) are shaped like dice, or ought to be; and a bonser or bonk or buck or bonster is a large marble that bounces from the ground (bouncer), about the size of a forty-eighter. You can buy four gobs and a bonk for a half-penny; you can also make them yourself—the gobs or stones, I mean—out of bits of porcellain and pebbles and winkle-shells; but the bought ones are the best, because, for one reason, you have to pay for them.

With these things you play BUCK AND FOUR of different kinds, such as TELLINGS and SISTERS and STAND UP JACK. For BASKETS you need a diagram on the pavement, which I can't draw. Other games of this sort are ALLEY GOBS and CHANGES and PICKSES and STANDSES—

> "In standses aim the marble up then as the marble is coming down stand one of the stones up till you stand all the four up then you drop them again—"

and SHUFFLES and FULL-STOP AND COMMA and FLY DOBS and BABES IN THE WELL and ONE STAND UP ONES'ES—

> "if one gob stands up when thrown out, the process of ones'es must be taken. After this you must get two to stand up [on their sides, of course], then three and so in the right order"—

and OVER THE WALL ONE TWO THREE and SPANS and LONDON BRIDGE—

> "the bonk is thrown up and while it is descending the two in the middle are caught up, but the bonk must be caught with both stones in the middle then the two stones outside are caught up making a total of three in the hand" (not very clear, is it?)—

and BABES IN BED and PIGEON-HOLE and CROW'S NEST and LAMP-POST—

> "build up four stones, throw up the bonk so that it knocks down one of them; and so on till only one stone is left. Then throw up the bonk and catch it in your hand together with the four stones that are on the ground; if you miss one, you're out"—

and TWOS AND THREES and FOURS and FIVERS and FIVES SIX TIMES and SAVING BABY'S LIFE—

> "The way to play Saving Babies life is like this. First of all you pick out a stone which will be the bonk, then lay the remaining four on the left hand, and then by hitting the hand which holds the stones one of them flies into the air, then when it comes down the player must catch it or else he is out. When all the stones have been caught in this way they are laid on the hand in two's, then in three's, and when that is done all the four are caught, but this time the bonk must be picked up while the others are coming down."

It takes some doing, this game; and it isn't worth doing when you can do it.

Now proper boys won't touch a marble that bounces from the ground—I can't tell you why, but there it is; so they generally use a fifth stone instead of a bonk, as in this last game, which is the boys' way of "Saving Baby's Life". But most of them don't care about these things anyhow, and I don't either; rotten games, I call them, fit for silly little girls and only interesting because they're a sort of half-way (the old FIVE-STONES, for instance, is played both with common stones and with gobs) between marbles which you can't manufacture at any price and real stones which you just pick up anywhere.

Talking of real stones, there's no doubt whatever that games played with them are the oldest in the world, together with the mud-larks—excepting perhaps those that are not played with *things* at all, like hide-and-seek and some of the old "he" games. And it's just wonderful what you can do with stones. But they are dying out, all the same; because the worst of it is, there are not half enough stones about, nowadays; not half enough. You can play DUMPING (or DUMPLING) with stones, and BUNG (also called GO-GULLEY) and NIP (also called TAP or LEG-ALONG—where you hit each others' stones, each hit counting ten) and DUCK; and you can tell from these names how old the games are. Stones for LEG-ALONG—stones of the right kind, of proper shape and weight, flat on both sides and fitting nicely into the hand, are hard to come by and carefully kept. DUCK (or DUCK ON) goes like this:

> "About eight or nine can play; you make a hole in the ground and Duck puts his stone before it, then the Others come up close and have to knock his one into the hole with theirs; if they miss they must pick up there

stones and run back to the Curb before he can catch his One; if he catch him, that man is Duck instead."

Other stone-games are FRENCH PACKET and SHUFFING THE MONEY and FIVE-TEN and HESLING and TWO AND THREE HOLES and KNOCKING THREE'S and PENNY-TUPPENCE and COCK-SHIES and STONE CHASE and THROWINGS OUT and RINGING THE STONE and PUDDING.

Have you ever played DUCKING MUMMY? Probably not. But it's a good old stone-game for small boys. Two of them take a stone each, and with these stones they aim at a third stone. The third stone—that's Mummy. If one of them hits Mummy, he keeps on throwing till he misses; then the other has a turn at it; and so on. In the end they are supposed to count up who has made most hits—the loser paying a peppermint. Of course they try to cheat each other, and so it always ends in a free fight: that's the best part of the whole game. Nobody ever gets the peppermint.

But they sometimes gets a black eye....

And that's about all the games I can think of, just now.

Wait a bit. There are the chalk-games. These are what you see marked out in white or coloured chalk on the pavement or asphalt—summer games, of course, and pretty common everywhere. Ordinary HOP-SCOTCH, for instance, and LONG HOP-SCOTCH, and FRENCH HOP-SCOTCH, and TIDDLEDEWINK, and PUDDING AND BEEF (or STONE HOP-SCOTCH, where you have to keep a stone balanced on your head or open hand as you hop through). Then there's WRIGGLY-WORM (also called WHIRLY-WHIRLY, or WIGGLY-WOGGLY, or SNAIL), and SQUARES, and NUMBERS, and DOT-BOXES (or DOTS) and ALL OVER THE WORLD, and STEPPING-STONES, and ZIG-ZAG. They play NOUGHTS AND CROSSES out of doors (OXEN-CROSSES, they call it; which shows how they twist the names about); other chalk-games are MAPS, and LONDON, and BATTLEMENTS, and SNAKES, and BABY, and BILL BAILY.

They also play BODY-BUILDING of different kinds, and one of the most complicated of these chalk-games is now called GERMANS-ENGLISH. It begins with a design shaped rather like a coffin with fields of squares in the middle and a field of them running along each side, and a field for "lost" at the top and another field at the bottom which I don't remember the use of, and two starting-points at each end of the bottom. Only two boys can play; they throw their nickers by turns into the middle fields, and if they land on a line it counts nothing, but whoever lands in a field can begin building a soldier in the corresponding side-field; first his head; then (for another throw into the right field) his body; then (for another) his legs; then his rifle; then a bullet at the end of his rifle. Once the bullet is there, that soldier stands for good. But while he is still being built, the other boy, if he throws well, can set up another soldier in the corresponding side-field in shorter time, and once that soldier has his bullet—why, he can shoot the other fellow opposite, if he's not complete, and finish him off for good. So there are all the time soldiers building in the different side-fields on both sides, each growing up as fast as he can, and all shooting each other whenever they get the chance; and the winner is the boy who has most soldiers alive at the end. And you can see from this that it's a complicated business and shows what youngsters can think out with a bit of chalk (if somebody didn't think it out for them); but to explain it properly would require at least twenty diagrams to show the game in its different stages, and I can't draw diagrams—never could; which is a pity.

The small children have a chalk-game all to themselves called POLLY POLLY WHAT'S THE TIME, where they draw a sort of clock on the pavement and cover up parts of it with their jackets or anything else.

The girls have another, BOOTS, SHOES, TIPS, OR NAILS, in which one of them draws a square on the pavement containing room for the four letters b. t. s. or n.; she writes one of them down and then covers it up; the others must guess which letter it is, and they score up how many correct guesses each one has had. Boys sometimes play this, but not often.

And then the well-known CHALK-CHASE. There are different kinds of CHALK-CHASE, such as CONVICTS AND WARDERS (or TRACKING THE CONVICTS) and SCOUTS; but the real old CHALK-CHASE, as played by my friends of the "Char-charcoal-chalk-chase-club", goes like this:—

> "You pick parteis and then they clip for First outing. Each player has a peice of chalk which he has to draw arroes the hounds follow & they must cross out the arroes until the Others are caught then its the Others turn".

Played it yourself, maybe?

And there! I nearly forgot some of the best of all these sports: the touch games. There's OFF-GROUND TOUCH and FRENCH TOUCH and TOUCH THE ROAD YOU MUST GO OVER and CROSS TOUCH and HE (called EE; all touch-games are "he" games, and this is the grandfather of the whole family), and ELBOW TOUCH and HELP TOUCH and B—TOUCH and TOUCHING BOOTLEATHER and HOP TOUCH and DOUBLE TOUCH and TOUCH LAST (or HAD YOU LAST) and TOUCHING IRON and TOUCH WOOD AND WHISTLE and NON-STOP TOUCH and STICK-TOUCH, or STICK-HE (touching with sticks) and WATER-HE (played in the baths) and STRING-HE (touch and hold hands: like WIDDY) and TREE-HE (up trees) and SHADOW-HE, which must be played in the sunshine, like this:

> "The one who is he has to try and tread on one of the person's shadders, then he is he."

FRENCH TOUCH is as good as any of those I can remember just now; it is played like this:

> "Fr tutch run after another boy and tutch him any were and the boy you tutched has to keep his hand on the place were you tutched and go ea ("he") and run after another boy and tutch him any were and he has to keep his hand on the place where he tutched and go ea and run after another boy and tutch him any were and he has to keep his hand on the place were he tutched and go ea and run after another boy and tutch him any were etc."—

and OFF-GROUND TOUCH like this:

> "You are not supposed to let your feet touch the ground, if you do, the one who is out can have you"—

but somebody really ought to make a full list of games of this kind. Aunt Eliza might do it (always fussing about with school-children, she is, and seeing that their clothes are properly patched behind) if she weren't so fond of explaining things—so fond that I daresay she'ld mix up B—TOUCH with HOOPS and HONEY-POTS, for the sake of fitting it in with some explanation or other. That's the worst of Aunt Eliza; she's sometimes right, but you never know when....

And now, come to think of it, I believe I can tell you just one or two more of the games they play down our way. There's WILL YOU 'LIST (a recruiting game, very popular just now), and HAMMERS ON, and KICKS, and RED ROVER ("Three steps and I'll be over"), and CARLOW, and FRIED EGGS AND A RASHER, and POSTMAN'S KNOCK, and TEN O'CLOCK POLICE, and SCHOOL-BOYS, and ICKAMY-ICKAMY-CO ("where's the poor man to go?"), and SHUNTING ENGINES and FOLLOW THE LEADER—

It's the only really dangerous game we have, FOLLOW THE LEADER. Because of course the bravest boy is chosen as leader, one who crosses the road just in front of some

heavy van and then goes and raps at all the doors of the neighbours who rush out in a rage to see what's the matter; so that by the time the third man has done the same there's sometimes a smash-up and always a row. A grand old game is DOING EACH OTHERS' DAGS, as they call it; but its bound to end in trouble of some kind, for dead certain; though the "leader" generally comes off without a scratch, as they do in the army—

and STITCH AWAY TAILOR and BOATS and HOOPLA FOR CHOKLITTS and BUS HORSES and REIN HORSES and SCOUTS and PICKING THE CROW'S NEST and KNOCKING DOWN GINGER and KNOCKING GINGER OUT O'BED (rough; played with door-knockers) and WHIRLIGIG and ROBIN SNATCH (with handkerchiefs) and FLAG RACE and POTTY and FIVE HUNDRED MONKEYS UP (the last two are hide-and-seek) and GUARDING THE STAKE and JUPITER. I'm glad I didn't forget to remember JUPITER; it's an old game and goes like this:—

> "One has to be Jubiter and every time he hops out he has to say Jubiter and if he catches one he has to be servant and so on until you catch all except one and he has to be Jubiter"—

and SUNDAY-MONDAY and HIDING STEPS and OUTINGS and HOME IT and WHAT'S THE TIME and TAILOR SAID and LAST MAN STANDING (like OFF-GROUND TOUCH) and RELIEVO (like RELEASE, only chalked dens are used) and POSTMAN RELAY and EGG AND SPOON RELAY and INDIAN CLUB RELAY and DAY AND NIGHT and JUMPING THE BROOK and ONE MORE NO MORE and PARVY and STOLEN NECKLACE and OUT OF BOUNDS and GIVE A JOIN (like WIDDY) and DATE-HOGS—

I must tell you about DATE-HOGS. It's played by small children with date-stones and screws—the stones you find, the screws you pinch or mump; and each boy has a certain number of throws with his date-stones at one of the other chap's screws standing up on end. Now it's quite clear that, getting the screws the way they do, they sometimes get big ones, and sometimes little ones, and have to be jolly glad to get any at all; and it's also clear that, big screws being easier to hit than little ones, the game would be unfair if you always threw from the same distance. Therefore you mustn't always throw from the same distance. But how are you to settle it fairly? Well, everybody knows that big screws have more turns or twists in them than little screws have. So they measure the throwing-distance by the number of these turns. A small screw, which is hard to hit, has (say) five turns, so you have to stand five paces off; a big screw, which is easier to hit, has (say) ten turns, and so you stand ten paces off; and this makes the chances always even. Shows how artful these kids are—

and FOX AND HOUNDS (HARE AND HOUNDS) and BATTLE OF WATERLOO and LAMP AWAY and STICKJAW and PAPER TRUNCHEONS and POTATOE-SHOOTERS and FUEL FOR THE FIRE and TIME GUESSING and ROUND THE BLOCK and HUMBLE-BUMBLE and GO YOUR WAY and A PIN TO LOOK AT THE POPPY-SHOW—

A poppy-show—that's a puppet-show, if the boys hadn't forgotten what a puppet-show was. You need rather a fresh boy for this game, and when you've found him, you get hold of a big book—a Bible, if possible, because it has so many pages and looks respectable anyhow, but chiefly on account of the pages—and anywhere between its pages you put a few transfers; just a few. You hold the book in your hand with the back downwards and press the covers together as tightly as ever you can, and

come up to your lad and say "A pin to look at the poppy-show." Then he, with a pin, has to dab down between the closed pages of the book, and if he strikes a place where a transfer happens to be, of course it's his; otherwise, you keep his pin. You can guess his chances, when there are about three transfers hidden among four hundred pages. If he likes to be a fool, he can get rid of all his pins that way, while you keep your poppy-show for the next fresh boy you come across—

and LAST ACROSS and STEPS ACROSS and PEEP (also called JACK) and HOME FOUR and I SPY EGGS AND BACON (hide-and-seek) and SAVOY (also called SAVELOY) and WATERMAN and LEADING THE BLIND HORSE TO THE KNACKER and FAIRY CHASE and HOPPING JINNY and SKITTLES KNOCK 'EM DOWN and GUESSING WORDS (at shop-windows) and NICKO MIDNIGHT ("Flash your light") and PIG IN THE POT—

> "One person stands in the middle all the rest stand at one end the whole lot have to run to the other side. If you start you must keep on. If one or two are caught you have to join hands and go after the others."

and FIGHT FOR THE FLAG (two parties: played from a mound) and LEARN YOUR A. B. C. and SERVING YOUR COUNTRY A GOOD GAME and LIG-A-LOG and FRENCH BLIND MAN'S BUFF and ANIMAL BLIND MAN'S BUFF—

> "A ring is drawn, in which is a blind man, and the players; the players move about until the blind man strikes on the ground with his wand. He then touches any one (all are standing still) and asks them to imitate an animal's voice. He then tries to recognise them by their voice. If he succeeds the other is the blind man, if not, the game is continued"—

and WILL YOU SURRENDER and TELLING YOUR DREAM and FIVE TEN FIFTEEN TWENTY (catch-game) and JACK AROUND (catch) and SEE YOU ACROSS and LONG RUN and RACE TO BERLIN (new) and BOGIE MAN (catch) and NO MAN STANDING and WALL TO WALL and SAINT GEORGE AND HIS MERRY MEN and DELIVER YOUR LUGGAGE and FISH AWAY JACK (four lamp-posts and eight boys) and PIN, BUTTON OR MARBLE—

In this, you go up to a boy smaller than yourself and take him by the throat and say "Pin, button, or marble". And that's all you have to do. Because then he must turn out his pockets and give you whatever he can find, and thank God if he doesn't get a thrashing into the bargain. It isn't exactly what you'ld call even chances, but it's quite all right, especially if you happen to be the big boy; because the big boy generally wins at this game. Now you may wonder why they collect pins. Well, our boys will collect anything, anyhow, anywhere—even if it's useless; but precious few things, you know, are really useless (I can't think of a single one, just now), and as to pins—I'm not even going to try to tell you in how many ways you need them. Some boys go about with a provision of hundreds of pins stuck in their clothes for different sports; mothers are also very fond of pins, and if you give them a nice handful on a Saturday morning, they'll think you've been quietly thinking about them all the week and collecting pins for them; and maybe that'll mean an extra something for the picture-show later on. They collect buttons the same way, for games like BUTTONS IN THE RING; only the buttons must be of metal, of brass or steel; they must ring like money when you throw them on the pavement: that's the test. All other buttons are simply "toot"—

not worth talking about. The best metal buttons are commissionaires' buttons; they're called "raileys", and a good railey is worth four or even six ordinary metal ones, while a bad one (with a loose shank, for instance) will fetch only two. Many boys are able to stitch themselves full of these buttons, for use in games; the less clever ones, those who keep on losing them, have to cut the buttons from their own clothes and go about from one year's end to another with their trowsers hitched to their braces by means of their sisters' hair-pins, bent double. But that's neither here nor there—

and SINGLE SAY-GO and DOUBLE SAY-GO and QUEEN, KING OR DIRTY RASCAL and MOSCOW and RUGBY SCRUM (introduced by the scouts) and I WILL APPRENTICE MY SON TO A CARPENTER and SAILOR BOY and STORKY and EGGS and THREE IN THREE OUT (the last four are hide-and-seek games) and CROWNINGS (also hide-and-seek) and MOUSE IN THE COPPER and SHOW THREE FACES: GO and MAGIC WRITING and DRAG-LAG (played with sacks) and PICKLE CABBAGE (name-calling) and PUTTING (*not* pulling) THE KAISER'S WHISKERS (new) and BLUE BOY and BACK YOU and KING CAESAR and TING TING THE SPIDER (you need an outside window for this) and PUSS IN THE CORNER and HOP AND CHARGE and TAKING THE CASTLE and DARTS (also called NIBS) and PENNY THREE HALFPENCE TWOPENCE (running) and TWO IN TWO OUT and TUG OF WAR and CHIVY CHASE and DADDY RED-CAP (or GREEN-CAP)—and that's enough for today.

DADDY RED-CAP has a song beginning like this:

"Plaster of Paris has lost his hat—
Some say this, and some say that...."

and that's interesting, because "Plaster of Paris", of course, is all nonsense. And so is "Plaistow Palace", as they sometimes call it. The real song goes:—

"Beadle Palace has lost his hat—
Some say this, and some say that...."

but the boys twist the words about, because they disremember who Beadle Palace was; and I can't tell you either. Mr. Perkins, of Framlingham Brothers (Limited), once told me he knew all about it; he said that "Beadle Palace" stands for the Bishop of London, who *really did* lose his hat one evening; and "some say" it was blown off his head by the wind, and "some say" he gave it to a woman with red hair and a squint, and never got it back again. But he was a bit on, that night, was Mr. Perkins. Or else the Bishop must have been....

These are about a thousand of the outdoor games they play down our way—not a bad number, when you think that our children can only play after they come home from school or work, and that they hardly ever play on Sundays on account of their clothes, or in winter because the evenings are too dark, and that the rain often keeps them indoors anyhow, and that the lads over 14 don't play at all. And yet, no doubt, I must have forgotten to tell you half of them; and I shall never stop forgetting, if I don't stop trying to remember....

Now what I think is this. It doesn't matter how all these sports are played. What matters is that they *are* played. To show how wide-awake our youngsters are, to be able to go on inventing games out of their heads all the time—that's the point: my point, at least. The particular rules of all these different games—they don't strike me as very important, or even interesting.

And you'll agree with me that it's as clear as daylight, and it all comes to this: if you want to see what children can do, you must stop giving them things. Because of course they only invent games when they have none ready-made for them, like richer folks have—when, in other words, they've nothing in their hands. As Mr. Perkins said: "You can't play a ball-game, if you haven't got a ball", meaning that if you want to play, and have nothing to play with, you must play at something that doesn't need anything. Give them bats and balls, and they soon forget their CHINESE ORDERS, and there's an end of SHOWING NO IVORY, and nobody thinks of PULLING OUT FATHER'S RHUBARB, and OLD DEVIL may go to—well, where he came from. That's what keeps them alive and "imaginative" (as Aunt Eliza would say)—having nothing to play with. That's what makes them use up all they can find—clay and kerbstones and nuts and winkle-shells and clothes and empty condensed-milk tins and walls and caps and stones and window-sills and buttons and doorsteps and lamp-posts and rags and anything else that comes handy. And that's how they come to play any number of games and to discover new ones every day, while better-class lads get into grooves and go on with their frowsy old cricket and one or two more all the time, always the same, year after year.

Not that I'm saying anything against CRICKET in particular. You can do many things with a bat. But there are many more things you can't do. And all these other things are bound to be left outside your reach in the long run, if you get taken up by cricket. Because, you see, you don't take up cricket—you think you do, but you don't; you get taken up. You think you are going to do what you please with a bat, but the fact is, the bat does what it pleases with you; you think it's your servant, but in reality it's a master who drives you along the way he means to go—or rather, the only way he can go (that is, hitting a ball). It's perfectly true that you can play well or badly; but, play as you like, you can't help your faculty for inventing something outside bats and balls getting rustier all the time. And it's true that cricket saves you the trouble of inventing those other games; that's just its drawback, I say. No getting out of the rut! With the bat in your hand, you can only do what it allows you to do. Which is a good deal; but not half as much as if your hand were empty.

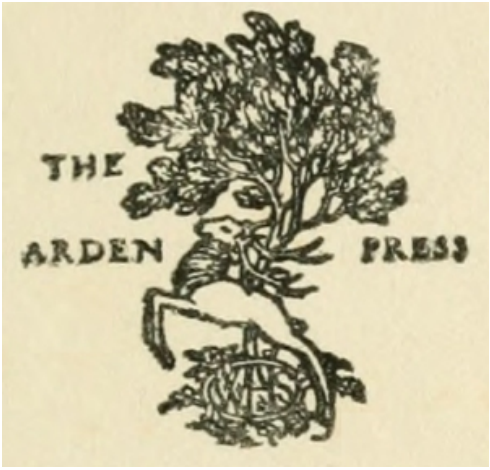
And what Mr. P. said of ball-games applies to all the others that are played with *things*. Say you want to have a go at WRIGGLY-WORM. Right! But you can't mark out a

pattern in chalk if you have no chalk to do it with. That's clear. And you haven't always got a lump of chalk in your pocket; now, have you? And then you feel about and turn them inside out and find you have not only no chalk but nothing else—absolutely nothing at all; not a top or a marble, no, not even a konker or a nicker or a bus-ticket. And then?

Why, then, if you can't invent something different, something jolly well altogether out of your head, where are you? Because, of course, you've got to play something or other—unless you want to be a soppy fathead. And our youngsters don't want to be soppy fatheads. What's more, they aren't. They try a good many things, and often they succeed; but they couldn't be *that*, even if they tried; which they don't.

POSTSCRIPT. Aunt Eliza writes to say that she can't explain what the boys mean when they say "Obobé", but she feels sure it must be "something not quite nice". Thank God, there's one thing she can't explain. For my part, I think these words like Obobé and A-lairy and Widdy are the queerest thing of all, about these sports. And what's queerer still are the names like Salmon Fishing and Cold Pies and Blue Boy, that make sense but have nothing whatever to do with the games.

She also tells me that the song of *London Bridge is broken down* goes back to "bloodthirsty rites of foundation-sacrifice" (read it in some book, I daresay, and so thinks it must be true), and that *Fie Sally, Cry Sally* "originated in early water-worship". Early water-worship be blowed. Late beer-worship is more my style. But Aunt Eliza knows too much, anyhow; so much, that I shall have to ask her about the originating of the game of DUCKING MUMMY, and whether it makes her think of a certain good old custom. Then she says that *Here we come gathering nuts in May* is "a relic of Marriage by Capture", and some more stuff of that kind. No doubt; no doubt. Aunt Eliza thinks a good deal about Marriage by Capture—to judge by her talk, at least. Nobody ever tried to capture *her*, you know. And nobody ever will, I don't think.



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Transcriber’s note

Minor punctuation errors have been changed without notice. Hyphenation has been standardized. Spelling has been retained as in the original except for the following:

Page 69:	“Hush-A-larly, hush-a-larly”	“Hush-a-larly, hush-a-larly”
Page 93:	“did it cost here?”	“did it cost her?”

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