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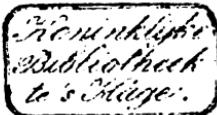
Op Eos

MISCELLANIES.

IN
TWO VOLUMES.

BY
RICHARD TWISS.

VOL. I.



*Tres mihi conviva prope dissentire videntur,
Poscentes vario multum diversa palato
Quid dem? Quid non dem? Renuis tu, quod jubet alter:
Quod petis, id sane est invisum, acidumque duobus.*

HOR.

How various, Taste! what you may disapprove,
I relish; and what I dislike, you love.
Say, what to please each palate, can I find?—
Herculean toil, to chuse for all mankind.

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1805.

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MISCELLANIES.

IN
TWO VOLUMES.

BY
RICHARD TWISS.

VOL. II.

*Tres mihi concorde prope dissentire videntur,
Poscentes vario multum diversa palato.
Quid dem? Quid non dem?*—

HOR.

How few the guests united in one wish!
A different palate asks a different dish.
What can I give those guests, or what omit?—
How hard the labour every taste to hit!

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KOLF-PLAY.

OF all the Travellers who have visited *Holland*, and published their observations on that Country, no one has mentioned the *Kolf-baanen*, or Kolf-grounds ; probably because they, being ignorant of the Dutch Language, never noticed this remarkable Game, not known in any other country, and of which I shall give a short account, but less perfect than may be wished, because I have not been in *Holland* since the year 1780.

The only publication on the subject is a Dutch pamphlet of 64 pages, printed at

Amsterdam, in 1792, entitled, “*Treatise on the origin of KOLVEN, with a list of the Kolf-grounds.*”

The Author says that the first mention of any thing relative to this game is in *Halma's Dutch and French Dictionary*, 1708, wherein the French word *Crosseur* is interpreted, *a Boy who plays with a Kolf*; and that *Veneroni* has given the same explanation of the word in his Dictionary.

In this he is, however, mistaking; for in *Kilian's Dutch, Latin, and French Dictionary augmented*, printed in Black Letter at Amsterdam in 1642, I find *Kolf, Kolve; Clava; Croce, Masse; a Kolf, or Club.—Kolven; Ludere clava; Crocher; to kolve.—Kolf-bal; Pila clavaria; Esteuf; Kolf-ball.*

I know not how to render *Kolf-baan* properly.

In *Sewel's Dutch and English Dictionary*, 1727, may be found the five following *Baanen*:

Ys-Baan, a path on the ice, from which the snow is cleared, for the convenience of scaters and sliders

Kaats-Baan, a Tennis-court

Loop-Baan, a Race-ground

Lyn-Baan, a Rope-walk

Malie-Baan, a Mall.

In the modern Dutch Dictionaries, *Kolven* is explained, *a kind of bowling-game*.

In *Luiken's* works is a print of Boys playing on the ice with balls and clubs. *Richelét* likewise mentions children playing in the same manner.

By degrees, grounds were appropriated to this amusement, which may not unaptly be termed a kind of ground Billiards, and of which the following is a description, in its present state:

A piece of ground is made perfectly horizontal; the foundation is of bricks, covered with fine clay, and rendered as smooth and hard as Plaster of Paris.—These grounds are of various sizes, the largest being 130 feet in length. The size usually chosen for the best is 70 feet, and 21 feet in breadth.—This Parallelogram is enclosed in wooden bounds, exactly perpendicular, and with accurate right angles, three or four feet in height. At 10 feet from each end is a Post generally made of hard wood, sometimes of marble, or of metal, of 3 feet high, and 6 inches in diameter.

The Balls are of worsted or silk, covered with fine glove-leather, generally 4 inches in diameter, sewed with brass wire; the best cost about a Ducat each. Every Player brings his own Ball. The Sticks are of wood, 3 or 4 feet in length, with a brass club at bottom, 4 or 5 inches long, an inch and a half broad, and an

inch thick, forming a slightly obtuse angle with the stick, and with these the balls are struck against the posts.

It is not necessary here to give a minute description of the method of playing, nor of the laws of the game, but I can only say it is as bewitching as Billiards, requires as much skill and dexterity to play well, and has the advantage of being at the same time a very pleasant salutary exercise, and not attended with the fatigue of *Tennis*. Most of the society-grounds are covered, and surrounded with windows, and many with lamps, so that they may be frequented at all hours and in all seasons.

The cost of one of these perfect grounds, with the necessary and appropriate buildings, including a room at one end, for the spectators, and those who are not playing, may be about £200.

Many grounds are in the open air; these are chiefly publick, but can only be used in dry weather, neither are they so level and accurate as those which are roofed.

I have seen two of these latter at Bourdeaux; and one at Lisbon belonging to a Dutch Merchant; and I know of no other out of the province of Holland. The book says there are some at the Dutch Settlements in the East and West-Indies.

There is one *Baan* at *Gouda*, with a wooden floor, which is perhaps the only one of the kind in being.

Here follows a short list of the grounds in Holland, which amount to 394, of which 167 are covered. This list affords a striking instance of the carelessness and neglect of our modern tour-writers, in

not having attended to this very popular national Play.

At Amsterdam and in the environs, 213, of which 53 are covered.

At Rotterdam 53 covered or roofed.

At Leyden 24 open and 22 covered.

At the Hague 5 ditto and 20 ditto.

And the rest in various other towns.

Many more have probably been made since the book from whence this is taken was published.

In a Tavern at Amsterdam is a small *Kolf-baan*, like a very large Billiard-table, the Posts are of Copper, and the Balls of Ivory. It is raised a few inches from the floor, and the Players walk round it.

Perhaps this short account may be the means of something of the kind being erected in the environs of London. The

posts, clubs, and balls, might easily be imported from Holland, and a proper person procured for laying the ground, and directing the edifice.

THIS relation was to have ended here, but I have just been favoured with a book which has furnished the following additional matter.

In the *Catalogue raisonné* of *Rembrandt's Prints*, (to the number of 341) Paris, 1751, is an account of one called, *Le jeu de Kolf*; " it represents on the left fore-ground a man striking a ball with the instrument appropriated to that game. On the right is another man sitting, with one leg extended on a bench, his hands crossed, and his elbow leaning on a table, on which is a pot. In the middle of the back-ground are two other figures. This piece although badly en-

graven, and without much effect, is rarely to be met with. Its height is three inches and a half, and its breadth five inches. Underneath is written, *Rembrandt f. 1654.*"

A long note, describing the *Kolf*-play, accompanies this account, which was probably written by *M. Gersaint*, an Auctioneer, who compiled the Catalogue, about the year 1736, as may be gathered from the Preface. From this note the following particulars of the game in its *earliest* stage is taken.

" The game of *Kolf* is very common in Holland. Private persons frequently have Grounds for the purpose, in their gardens; and similar ones are constructed behind most of the houses of public Entertainment in the environs of the Dutch towns. Their length is from forty-eight to seventy-two feet, and their breadth *nine or ten*. These grounds are usually

sanded, and enclosed like our *Malls*. Four or five persons may play at a time ; or in Parties of four against four alternately ; two against two ; or two singly. Near each end of the ground in the middle of the breadth, is a round wooden Post of about *two feet* in diameter, and two feet and half in height. The balls, (of the size of our *Tennis-balls*) are struck with a stick of which the extremity is bent like a crook, and armed with lead ; they are placed on the floor at one end, and the Art of the game consists in hitting the two Posts in as few strokes as possible."

The modern improvements are ; doubling the breadth of the Floor ; making it perfectly hard and horizontal ; reducing the Posts to a quarter of their ancient diameter ; using sticks armed with *brass* crooks ; and balls as hard and as round as can be made. The additions are the roofing, and placing windows all round the court or ground, preserving the floor,

which is always kept as neat and clean as the rooms in the houses.

The best Players in the most perfect Courts, besides playing with their own ball, generally use the same stick, which is locked up, as some *Queues (Cues)* are in Billiard-rooms. They seldom fail hitting both the Posts in four or five strokes, sometimes in two, and instances now and then happen, wherein one stroke (possibly the very first) hits one Post and rebounds on the other.

THERE is another sport wherein Balls are struck with Clubs, chiefly practised in Scotland, called GOLF. I know not any thing of this game except that I have seen it played at, on the *Links* near *Leith*; and on *Black-heath*. *Strutt's Book of Games and Sports* contains little or no informa-

tion on the subject, neither does the last edition of *Hoyle's Games*, except the Rules and Laws. It appears to be a violent exercise or Sport, requiring great strength, agility, and dexterity, in the Players, and is noticed here, by reason of the name which bears so great an affinity to that of the *Dutch* game. Sometimes it has been written *Goff*, but perhaps erroneously, as the proper term is probably derived from the *German* and *Dutch* names, which mean likewise the But-end of a Musket; a Club with which balls are struck; and even a Cricket-bat. The word may have been pronounced in the manner of *Calf*, or *half*, instead of being spoken like *Wolf*, and thus originated the Error.