OLD ENGLISH SPORTS; PASTIMES AND CUSTOMS

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Old English Sports; Pastimes and Customs by P. H. Ditchfield

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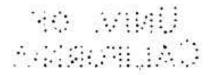
BY

P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A.

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1891

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"For Sports, for Pagentrie and Playes
Thou hast thy Eves and Holydayes;
On which the young men and maids meet,
To exercise their dancing feet:
Tripping the comely country round
With Daffodils and Daisies crown'd.
Thy Wakes, thy Quintals, here thou hast,
Thy Maypoles too with garlands grac't:
Thy Morris-dance: thy Whitsun Ale;
Thy Sheering-feast which never fail."
HERRICK'S Hesperides.

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TO

Kady Bussell

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED WITH THE AUTHOR'S
KINDEST REGARDS.



PREFACE.

ENCOURAGED by the kind reception which his former book, Our English Villages, met with at the hands of both critics and the public, the author has ventured to reproduce in book-form another series of articles which have appeared during the past year in the pages of The Parish Magazine. He desires to express his thanks to Canon Erskine Clarke for kindly permitting him to reprint the articles, which have been expanded and in part rewritten. The Sports and Pastimes of England have had many chroniclers, both ancient and modern, amongst whom may be mentioned Strutt, Brand, Hone, Stow, and several others, to whose works the writer is indebted for much valuable information.

The object of this book is to describe, in simple language, the holiday festivals as they occurred in each month of the year; and the sports, games, pastimes, and customs associated with these rural feasts. It is hoped that such a description may not be without interest to our English villagers, and perhaps to others who love the study of the past. Possibly it may help forward the revival of the best features of old village life, and the restoration of some of those pleasing customs which Time has deprived us of. The writer is much indebted to Mr. E. R. R. Bindon for his very careful revision of the proof-sheets.

BARKHAM RECTORY, 1891.





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