

that among some tribes it became "the chief object of their lives."

The great Lacrosse tournaments, held by the Indian tribes, were looked forward to with no little anxiety by the most stoical of warriors. In hundreds they would return from the chase and the war-path to participate in its excitements. Let us for a moment imagine ourselves spectators of one of those grand (for although rude they were unquestionably grand) exhibitions of untutored skill and endurance.

Let us picture to ourselves some grassy glade near an Indian village, shaded on either side by waving forest trees,—at each end are pitched the goals—generally about half a mile apart—seated near the goals are the venerable medicine men of the tribe, whose sagacious noddles are to decide all knotty points of dispute, and whose judgments in all cases are to be considered as final. In the centre of the glade stand the rival captains, generally distinguished by their fleetness and prowess. All is now ready, the rival combatants now advance from either end of the glade, adorned in all the splendour of paint and feathers, and uttering strange whoops and yells, as they near the centre. At a given signal the ball is tossed high in the air, and the game commences in earnest. The players rush *en masse* to catch it; as it descends, the din and confusion, are terrible; very appropriate are the lines of Scott, although he never contemplated the possibility of their being so (mis)applied:

"At once there rose so wild a yell,
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
Had pealed the banner cry of hell."

Now a dusky painted brave, more fortunate than his compeers, has it safely on his crosse, and, as if for dear life, he speeds with it towards the rival goal. He is intercepted, dodges, wheels, turns, and eludes his pursurers until he is so fatigued that he must give it to a friend, or have it taken from him by an enemy.

He choose the former, but in the attempt, he looses it, and now with frantic yells his opponents propel it in a different direction. With varied success the ball speeds hither and thither, like a thing of life. Now one side has it and then the other, until some strapping savage by a lucky shot, succeeds in scoring the game for his side, amidst the acclamations and cheers of his party.

Hour after hour the sport continues, for the match was not, as at present, decided by the best three out of five games; but was composed of from ten to one hundred games, which lasted from two to three days.

The *origin* of Lacrosse like almost everything else connected with the aborigines of this continent, is enshrouded in mystery. There can be little doubt that it did originate with the Indian tribes of America, but by what tribe, or by whom, will always remain a matter for speculation.

Almost all the tribes seem to have played it, however, from the Creeks in Alabama, to the Iroquois of the noble St. Lawrence, and the Lac la Pluie, of the generic Chippewas, to the far west of Lake Superior.