

when he gets on more general ground, and after having disposed of the technicalities of the game, he proceeds: "Men, women, boys and girls are received on the sides which they make up, and they wager between themselves more or less according to their means."

"These games ordinarily begin after the melting of the ice and they last even to seed time. In the afternoon one sees all the players bedecked⁷ and painted. Each party has its leader who addresses them, announcing to his players the hour fixed for opening the game. The players assemble in a crowd in the middle of the field and one of the leaders of the two sides, having the ball in his hands casts it into the air. Each one then tries to throw it towards the side where he ought to send it. If it falls to the earth, the player tries to draw it to him with his cross. If it is sent outside the crowd, then the most active players, by closely pursuing it, distinguish themselves. You hear the noise which they make striking against each other and warding off blows, in their strife to send the ball in the desired direction. When one of them holds the ball between his feet, it is for him, in his unwillingness to let it go, to avoid the blows which his adversaries incessantly shower down upon his feet. Should he happen to be wounded at this juncture, he alone is responsible for it. It has happened that some have had their legs broken, others their arms and some have been killed. It is not uncommon to see among them those who are crippled for life and who could only be at such a game by an

⁷ I translate *apifex*, "bedecked," assuming from the context that the author meant to write "*attifex*." We have, elsewhere, accounts which show that ball-players, even though compelled to play with scant clothing, still covered themselves with their ornaments. J. M. Stanley in his *Portraits of North American Indians*, Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Washington, 1862, Vol. II, p. 13, says that the "Creek" ball-players first appear on the ground in costume. "During the play they divest themselves of all their ornaments which are usually displayed on these occasions for the purpose of betting on the result of the play."