#### CHRISTMAS SPORTS AND PASTIMES

Christmatide has ever been characterized by a large indulgence in mertiment; and consequently, many have been the amuse-ments and innovations on them introduced at different periods in the history of its obbervance both as a pagan and a christian many private and public games of a very interesting nature were carried on for days. We shall give a thort outline, of the more noteworthy of these. The most celebrated

#### Circensian Games.

so called, from being exhibited in the Circus Maximus, a noble building, situated between the Palentine and Aventing kills, about a mile in circumference, and capable of holding 250,000 spectators. These games consisted, first, of horse and charlot races, for which every accommodation was provided within the circus. At one extremity were openings whence the horses started; and along the middle ran a low brick wall, twelve fect broad, at the ends of which were the coals round which the charicts turned. When the charioteers were ready to begin the race, the manager of the games dropped a capkin, after which the horses started; and these that outstripped their competitors for seven times in completing the course cuined the prize. There were also exhibited in the circus contents in running, leaping, boring, wrestling and throwing the discus, in which the champions engaged with great derterity; and those who proved fictorious were crowned with laurels. In a large field called the Campus Martine, young men, sometimes performed feats of dexterity on. horseback, affording great amusement to the numerous spectators. Frequently the representation of a battle between two armies, the seize of a town, or a naval engagement formed part of the programme. But the most cruel diversions of the Remans were the combats between wild beasts, and often between these and captives or malefactors, in which incredible numbers of the latter perished. Besides these amusements there were others of a very sanguinary nature which; disgraced the character of the Remans as a civilized people. These were the shows of ;

GLADIATORS who were either exptives or condemned criminals, but afterwards thees or freemen who undertook that profession. The gladiators were maintained by the magistrates, and, being trained to the use of arms, were on important occasions and public festivals brought to the amphitheatre, where great numbers of them fought with swords, and continued in the combat in pairs for several days. When a gladiator was wounded, he lowered his sword in token of submission, and humbly begged his life from the spectators, who, if they agreed to grant it, cleached their fists and held down their thumbs ; but if not, turned them upwards, and the gladiator was slain. The victors were bon-

fined ladies, in those days, graced with their presence, to more congenial thoughts. We will, therefore, without further ado, enter upon some of the sports peculiar to our own nation. Comparatively little is known of the particular bent into which the mirthfulness of the incient Britons led them, or much more with regard to the subsequent invaders of their land, the early Saxons, except that they were extremely fond of hunting and other such sports. The Norman Conquest, with its introduction of the Feudal System and knighthood, was the beginning of a new era in the social life of Britain. Then were organized many of the restimes which have since come down to

the pastimes which have since come down to posterity, not merely is connection with Christmas but many other holidays.

It was during this epoch of chivalry that the passion for religious processions and pilgrimages was at its height, and then was nitisted the movement which eventually culminated in the famous crusades of the four-teenth century. Mingled with the observances already recorded as peculiar to the ancient Britons, many games of a varied nature were introduced, one or two of which we shall describe. The we shall describe. The

### TOTENAMENT,

or joust, comes first. It was held within an enclosed space, called the lists. Ladies and nobles sat round on raised galleries, while the lower orders thronged outside the barriers, to witness the sport. At each end of the lists, tents were pitched for the rival

After the clinking of the armourer's hammers ceased, the herulds proclaimed the titler of the knights about to engage in the combat, and these presently rode into the lists on their chargers clad in heavy armour. In the centre, then, shood the challengers awaiting their adversaries. The latter, riding up, touched with their lances the shields of those with whom they chose to contend. If the shield was touched with the sharp point of the lance the combat was to be with sharp weapons, as in battle; while touching with the other end signified the more peaceful intention of using blunted weapons as a trial of skill. At the sound of the trumpet the commatants dashed at full gallop from opposite ends of the lists, and met in the centre with a terrible shock. Sometimes the lances were smashed into splinters, and the horses borne back upon their haunches; but often it imppened, when some of the knights were adepts in the art, that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that one or more of the less skillful were that the order to the more peaceful to the order to the follows the follow After the clinking cithe armourer a ham-

"sport" lasted several days, and "to the victors belonged the spoils" of the vanquished,

in the shape of armour and horses.

over the nation. Passing over a century or prominently in many Christmas feasts.

two, in which time the glor; of the Feudal Brought in by an ancient servitor, upon a by the disestablishment of knight-hood, procession of nobles, knights and ladies Plays at which time the drama assumed a | the head of the table before the host, or high place in the estimation of the people.

We refer particularly to the fourteenth ed up in great pomp, with various condiments. Next to the Boar's Head comes the

ignorance and superstition was scattering before the dawn of a new era of knowledge and enlightenment. It was then that The bird having been killed, the skin, with Christmas was the day of all days; and the feathers still on, was carefully peeled amidst the general license, all kinds of off, and after roasting and when almost cool,

sovereign to the beggar, went in strange dresses and masks." Some dressed covered like a pic, with the exception of themselves in the most grotesque costumes, the breast and tail, was served up by ladies.

Often the pie thus made, was reserved for leer on his countenance, as he drew after him out any mistake in carving. 'After finishhis cloven foot. Those who could not thus | ing he took a solemn oath to risk any peril, aftire themselves blackened their faces, and however great, to rescue woman from danger clad in white, kept the nervous old spinsters | and eppression. of the neighborhood in constant terror. In every parishe a Lord of Misrule was chosen (after the fashion of the Roman slaves, who were allowed to select one of their number as lord during the Saturnalia)

and this person, with a troop of idle fellows, in dresses of a glaring color, covered with ribbons, went about shouting and drumming, sometimes entering churches during divine service. As time sped, how-ever, and the people became educated, these performances disappeared, and Christmas decorations, with holly, bay, rosemary and laurel took the place of these masquerading customs; and simpler and more rational games succeeded the noisy revellings of those ments at the present day are somewhat mul- large capitals, at Christmas time; and not not space to enter upon the details of 'Snap-

lots of other interesting matter, also one full antly bestows, at this season particularly, sixed Piece of sheet music in each number, that hundreds do not receive the bare neribbons, and discharged from further obligations to fight, unless they chose. We would tain turn from such sights, which even recontains besides the fashion illustrations &c., a full size piece of sheet music in each number. If you want a sample number send 5 cents to S. If you want a sample number send 5 cents to S. FRANK WILSON, 33 & 35 Adelaide Street, FRANK WILSON, 33 & 35 Adelaide Street, EROY & Co., 85 King st, West, Toronto.

#### CHRISTMAS FARE.

tore belonged the spoils" of the vanquished, in the shape of armour and horses.

The favorite sports of the lower classes were archery, buil baiting, and guarter staff. The latter game was rather a rough one, in which great strength of nerve and muscle was required. The staff was a pole about six feet long which those engaged in the game grasped in the middle striking, parrying and thrusting with both ends. Tilting at a wooden image, called the Quintain, in later days, absorbed great interest. This image, fixed on a pivot, held in its outstretched arm a wooden sword. The tilter going back a hundred yards or so, rode up at full speed and drove his lance at the image. If he was skilful enough to strike the centre, he passed unharmed; but if the lance struck too much to one side, the image whiled round and the luckless rider received a smart blow from the wooden sword.

These outdoor sports with many others, (even horse-racing) were indulged in freely, and keenly enjoyed by all classes, from year to year, for some centuries, and it those days when gambling and betting were unknown they exercised a healthful influence or two in which time the glor of the Fendal

To the theorem the devent and keenly enjoyed by all classes, from year to year, for some centuries, and it those days when gambling and betting were unknown they exercised a healthful influence.

The staff was a pole about six feet long was their only strength and the legion of honored guests, as well at this season, and numberless was the legion of the favorite dishes which great virtues and redeeming traits of these otherwheat who are determined that the species were the delicacies of the times, which the well stocked larders contained at this season, and numberless was the legion of honored guests, as well at this season, and numberless was the season of the great virtues and redeeming traits of these otherwheat which we have not of the great virtues and redeeming traits of these otherwheat which we have regreated to our readers, some of the favorite dis

System had become somewhat dimmed salver of silver or gold, at the head of a we come to the period of Moral and Miracle blithely singing, it was deposited at

tricks of the wildest nature were practised. this was skilfully sewed on again, and the We are told that "all England, from the beak being gilded, it was declared ready sovereign to the beggar, went for the table. Sometimes the bird was

had their origin to some degree, in the yulc cake and were formerly made in the shape of a manger. The collection of ingredients, gifts brought to the Infant at Bethiehem. A custom long prevailed, of having set out on the table as many mince-pies as the master of the house had been married years, and often was the digestive powers of those gathered to do honor, put to a severe test. In England, at present ROAST BEEF AND PLUM PUDDING

are the articles that are always written in even Goose or Turkey, so popular with troduced in the time of our father. We have Americans and Canadians, could tempt on the bill of fare. Well, what difference Pantomimes, or. in fact, any of the games does it make what direction our inclinations so familiar to everybody in this generation take in the matter of eating and drinking, We may sit down to the richest repast that even tempted the capricious appetite of a You Pail to send Fifty cents king, and turn away dissatisfied; whilst, New for the Ladice Journal on the other hand, our portion may be but a ers, and Heaven's Lord the host. In con-

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## that so puzzle the imagination of souse in JOHN MACDONALD & CO. these days, was supposed to represent the

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crust of bread and a little water, and yet be a banquet in which angels are the waitthe largely increased volume of new business.
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The profit results for the past quinquennium have given the greatest satisfaction to our policy of the Association in the largely increased volume of new business. These profit results have created some jealousy on the part of interested parties, who have

of the bounties which Providence so abundantly bestows, at this season particularly, antly bestows, at this season particularly, that hundreds do not receive the bare necessities of life, and may it cause us to seize every epportunity, of sharing those bounties by which we are favored with our fellow-men.

These profit results have created some jealousy on the part of interested parties, who have adopted the questionable means of attacking this Association through the columns of The Interested that hundreds do not receive the bare necessities of life, and may it cause us to seize every epportunity, of sharing those bounties be afforded ample opportunity to prove their slanderous statements or take the consequences.

These profit results have created some jealousy on the part of interested parties, who have attentions of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that periodical and reprints and other surface. Times of New York, and by the circulation of that The others will have attention in due course.

This Association can afford to submit to the fullest investigation, and the directors are prepared to give good reason for any act of theirs which may be called in question.

As the statements made against the Association will be dealt with before a Court of Law, the Directors, for the present simply state that in every casential particular the charges made by The Insurance Times and circulated in this country, are untrue.

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