

The Croquet Revival

By W. E. Hill

[Copyright: 1929: By The Chicago Tribune.]



The young intellectuals take their croquet sets into parks and vacant lots and hold tournaments, being very scientific about each and every play.



Croquet has not been revived for everybody! Because the Victorians have been playing right along through the gay nineties and the roaring nineteen hundreds. Mrs. Baloil Puffer is complaining of her late opponent, Mrs. Cleveland Crisswell. "I don't mind Cora's winning the game," she is saying to her paid companion and yes-girl, Miss Minna Trodden, "but I will not have her telling me I was 'skunked.' It's unladylike and vulgar."

"She used to answer the door-bell in just any little thing at all, so the janitor told my maid, and one day the elevator man said to her, 'Lady, I've got some modesty even if you haven't,' and my dear, she was simply beside herself with rage and wrote a frightful letter to the renting agent, and—O, goodness! Is it my turn? What wicket am I for?" (Just two lovely guests who have been enticed against their better natures into a croquet game and are not much interested.)



Here's the family with a few chosen friends out on the side lawn with the croquet set all up and ready for a good stiff game. Sister Mildred is trying to make Esther, the Airedale pup, see reason, with no success, because Esther dearly loves to chase the croquet ball in its flight. To Mildred's left are a couple of guests who wish they were home. The cute girl to the right of the boy about to make a trick play is screaming and gurgling and telling Walter he's positively the limit, being such an old meanie and knocking her ball away down the line! The large girl on the extreme right is Aunt Nettie, who is a perfect fountain of questionable advice. "Now, Walter, listen," she's saying, "why don't you take your wicket and then hit Genevieve's ball, and take her away from the post, and then come back and knock Howard's ball away from Dorothy's!" The lawn is very bumpy, which is to be expected of all croquet grounds.



A young mother is a great trial as a partner. Can't seem to keep her mind on the ball, but is forever exclaiming, "Listen—was that the baby? Didn't you hear something?"



Harriet's ball has gone out of bounds, over in the pansy bed, and so, seeing that no one is paying much attention, Harriet is going to put it back on the croquet ground, a yard or so to the good.



The younger set, or the bright young people, as they prefer to be known, like to get all het up with gin and Scotch before starting the game. Because this seems to relieve that tension attendant on who will win and all that. (Joe and Sally have paused at the second wicket to give a rendition of the song hits from the latest show.)



The suspicious husband. "I'm not saying you moved the ball. All I said was that it seemed funny it had got where it is before you had a chance to play!"