

# BILLIARDS :

GAME, 500 UP.

PLAYED AT BRIGHTON, ON THE 18<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY, 1844.

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AN ACCOUNT OF THE ABOVE GAME,

WITH

## DIAGRAMS

*SHEWING THE POSITION OF THE BALLS FOR THE LAST NINE BREAKS ;*

ALSO

TWO-AND-THIRTY OTHER DIAGRAMS

WELL-ADAPTED FOR PRACTICE.

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GENERAL OBSERVATIONS, AND ADVICE RESPECTING THE ADVANTAGE  
OF PLAYING WITH GOOD STRENGTHS.

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BY EDWARD RUSSELL MARDON.

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BRIGHTON :

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# BILLIARDS:

GOOD STRENGTHS THE FIRST CONSIDERATION.

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A difference of opinion having existed relative to the merits of the respective force of MR. PORKER and MR. MARDON, it was arranged that a Trial Match should take place; Mr. Mardon receiving 25 points out of 500. On the 18th of January, at MR. KENTFIELD'S Room, the Parties met, and at half-past Twelve o'clock the Game commenced.

## GREAT MATCH AT BILLIARDS—GAME, 500 UP.

“The match lately played at Brighton between Mr. Mardon and Mr. Porker, “appears to have been extraordinary throughout, and was, at the finish, most “exciting. After the first two or three strokes, Mr. Mardon was 40 to 6. “Mr. Porker then passed him, and made his score 53 to 51. From this period “the balls, as well as the chance hazards, were much in favor of Mr. Mardon, “and he consequently shot greatly ahead, maintaining his advantage until he “became 82 points in advance. Three to 1 was now laid on Mr. Mardon. The “game at this point exceeded 300, and as the light became obscure, it was “proposed to have the lamps. Mr. Mardon played ere they were lighted, and “left to Mr. Porker the appearance of a great break; but as the ball he had “to play with was nearly close to the lower cushion, it was hardly to be ex- “pected that he could make the hazard that was to lead to the desirable result. “At this moment, however, he prudently awaited the lighting of the lamps, and “then accomplished the stroke in question; and it was pronounced by Mr. Kentfield “to be as fine a stroke, under such circumstances, as ever was played. As “soon as the hazard was made, the greatness of the break became apparent;

"and it yielded without intermission a run of 37 points! From this moment a  
 "most extraordinary change took place. For upwards of half-an-hour Mr. Porker  
 "continued to play in the most determined, and in the most brilliant style of  
 "hazard striking, setting at naught the oft repeated miss given by Mr. Mardon,  
 "and overcoming every movement of defence, either by a chance hazard, or by  
 "a stroke of very superior power, and in the time stated, and in the manner  
 "described, he scored 90 points, while Mr. Mardon could obtain but 7! Still  
 "he laboured on in the same quiet and defensive way in which the game was  
 "at first commenced, and thus it continued until Mr. Porker had brought his  
 "score to 495 to 475. Mr. Mardon's ball was now in hand; Mr. Porker's in  
 "the baulk circle, and the red ball midway between the middle and the corner  
 "pocket, and about half a yard from the cushion. Even at this point, and with  
 "such a score against him, Mr. Mardon again tried his favourite game, that of  
 "defence, and once more gave what he considered a prudent miss. This made  
 "Mr. Porker's score 496. Four to 1 was now offered on Mr. Porker; but the  
 "game was considered as good as over. Mr. Porker played at the red ball,  
 "and failed, and left, at length, to Mr. Mardon, an opening and a chance.  
 "Mr. Mardon made a rather difficult twist from the red ball into the corner  
 "pocket, and doubled it—just above the middle one, into which he again held  
 "himself; and he then continued scoring canons and hazards until the game  
 "was won, and finishing it with as splendid a losing hazard as can well be  
 "conceived, making in the last break a run of 25 points! Mr. Mardon was  
 "most warmly greeted at the close by a room crowded in every part, and  
 "the losers by the game were as loud in their applause as those that were  
 "winners, and who were so unexpectedly brought through.

"Not a bet was offered whilst the player was in the act of striking;  
 "and no one entered or quitted the room until after the ball had been struck:  
 "for such an arrangement much praise is due to Mr. Kentfield."

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The above, copied from the London Press, is, I believe, as  
 nearly as can be given, a correct account of the game; and  
 the Diagrams that follow, will shew the position of the balls  
 for the last nine strokes. I think it will be admitted that the

conquest of such a Match, under such circumstances, ought to be an encouragement even to the youngest player, since it was effected by one of very moderate execution, and possessing but a limited strength of cue. The Game of Billiards, beautiful even to the eye of an inferior player, may be rendered infinitely more so, by becoming acquainted with the modern and enlightened mode of playing it: and as this can be accomplished by any Amateur, although his arm possess but little power, there can be no reason why a weak player may not become, by practice and proper attention, greatly improved in all the varieties and peculiarities of the game. Fine and first-rate hazard striking does not constitute the scientific Billiard Player; and the occurrences of a single day may be sufficient to convince, that *caution, coolness, and good strengths* will defeat any player, however great he may be considered as a single hazard striker. Although devoted to the game, one may proceed, day after day, in the same manner, without improvement, and playing so badly as to become quite disheartened. What is the cause? It is this:—

The hazard presented to the player is made, but unfortunately, without sufficient reflection, and due consideration of what is to follow. The finished Billiard Player, is he that never makes a score without placing his own ball in such a position that will lead him to expect another; and seeing, in "his mind's eye," the produce of many strokes in advance. This is called playing with good strengths, and it is the

performance of these strengths judiciously, that constitutes the perfect player. In a game similar to that I have now described, there exists not the difficulty that many suppose, and its style may be acquired by any one who will take the trouble to reflect, and who will abandon the rattling mode of striking for one subdued and gentle. Fascinated with the beauties of the side-stroke style of game, it has been to me a source of great enjoyment, minutely to observe the method of scientific players; and a residence of a few years in Brighton has enabled me, not only to revel in the pastime, but to gain knowledge from the fountain head. The name of "Jonathan" is familiar to most Billiard Players, but the generality of persons are not aware that Mr. KENTFIELD, proprietor of the Rooms in Manchester Street, is the individual above alluded to. By this person, when engaged in the game, the perfection of the science is exhibited; and however one may feel disposed to laud the abilities of other fine players, he may rest satisfied that a wide distinction lies between them and Mr. Kentfield. The excellence of this great player and really wonderful man, is dependent wholly and solely upon strengths and judgment.

In the Billiard World there may be, and no doubt there are, many able to execute a single hazard with equal skill; but in making the most of a good break, and in working the balls with the judicious strengths leading to great results, Mr. Kentfield stands triumphantly alone! If strengths therefore can elevate him far above all competitors, why should not the Amateur,

who, like myself, plays simply for amusement, endeavour to cast aside the hard-hitting practice of common hazard striking, and familiarise himself with a strength that will not only render the noble game far more pleasing, but decorate and adorn it with a thousand charms. The little knowledge that I possess of the capabilities of the game, is derived from minutely watching the great artist, whilst he is engaged in its operations. Time after time have I observed him contemplating a break, that, to myself and other players of the same grade, appeared to be almost worthless; but no sooner is the first stroke executed, than the appearance of the game presents at once another aspect, and the position of the balls then brings to view the enormous score that is likely to follow. In the short game of 24 up, it is no uncommon thing to see him make that number in canons alone; and he will frequently do so without moving the balls more than a span from their original position. On one occasion, in playing a game of greater magnitude, he actually completed as many as two-and-thirty canons in succession! presenting, I think, a convincing proof of the combined properties of judgment, skill, and strengths. When the red ball is on the spot, and the striker's ball within six inches of, and nearly in a straight line with it, a very long run may be obtained, if one can contrive to make each hazard with a proper strength; and formerly when the pockets were larger and the old list cushions in use, it was customary with Mr. Kentfield frequently to score one hundred points off this ball alone!

I remember once playing with a gentleman very superior to myself in point of general hazard striking. The game was 100. My opponent was 99, I only 61. The red ball was on the spot, and my ball was in the position I have above described: I holed the red ball in one or the other of the two corner pockets 13 times in succession, and won the game. Now if this could be effected with the limited power possessed by myself, it is a convincing proof that good strengths will leave the hazards so extremely easy, that their accomplishment will come within the reach of almost any player. On three other occasions, I was also playing with superior players. The game, as before, was 100. They were all well advanced, each beyond 90; my ball was in hand, and the red ball in the centre of the table, about a foot-and-a-half out of the baulk. On each occasion I made sixteen losing hazards off the red ball in the middle pockets, and won the games! On another occasion, I made sixteen losing hazards off the white ball, and won a game that all had given up as lost! These feats were accomplished by strengths alone, for each hazard was left so very easy, that any player could have made it. Strokes similar to these are within the power of any person that really feels an interest in the game, and who will take the trouble to practice them.

Diagrams, shewing the situation of the balls, both for this hazard and for the winning one, from the spot, are annexed; but ere they are practised, let me once more recall to the

recollection of the reader, the necessity of forsaking all hard blows, and of regulating the strength to the swiftness of the tables now in use. All have been taught that the angle of incidence is equal to the angle of reflection; and for those who play upon a table whose cushions are stuffed with list, this doctrine is of the utmost importance; but as the cushions of the modern tables are padded with indian rubber, it is necessary to make allowance for throwing off abruptly, if they are played against with any degree of strength. And this fact alone, offers another and, I think, a sufficient reason why the strength must be moderated, as a canon, however certain it may appear, if gently played, can never be achieved if played with force. A person striking his own ball always in the centre, can become a good and certain hazard striker; but a knowledge of the side-twist is absolutely necessary to constitute even a fourth-rate player. Still, in this particular, "a little learning is a dangerous thing," and one must "drink deep or taste not."

Many a time have I seen good hazard strikers of the olden school, throw away game after game, in a vain attempt to win them after the manner of the present side-stroke fashion. Nevertheless, this knowledge is easily acquired; and when I assert, that skill in its use will in some instances enlarge the pocket to more than double its size, its importance will be readily acknowledged. One very great advantage of the side-stroke is this: it will instil a confidence never before experienced. For when the player's ball is properly struck, it receives so great



an anxiety to reach the pocket, that it will flutter about it, as it were, and finally drop in ; and this too, although it may have struck the shoulder of the cushion nearly one inch beyond it ! Suffer me again to repeat, that this invaluable art is easily acquired, and that it is taught by Mr. Kentfield in a few lessons.

If a Player has commenced in a bad school—imbibed an improper method of standing to his ball, striking, or holding his cue—he may go on for years without improvement ; but, if he will seek instruction from the professor above-named, he will, in a short space of time, not only be cured of all his former bad habits, but will obtain an enlarged conception of the game ; while the execution of difficult, but useful hazards, will render the amusement infinitely greater. Diagrams, shewing surprising canons, may be gazed upon for months, and practised by some, hour after hour, in vain ; whilst a person moderately advanced in the game, under the able tuition of Mr. Kentfield, will be capable of performing them at pleasure. Nevertheless, a wonderful side-twist canon off four or five cushions does not make the Billiard Player ; and one quite incapable of imparting to a ball the force that would be requisite for the stroke in question, would, by judicious strengths, and a proper nursing of the balls, beat this round-about performer to his heart's content.

I have lately seen as fine a hazard striker as could well be witnessed. His winning hazards were almost perfect. He could twist in off the spot, could hole a ball situated at one

end of the table, and make his own go straightly back to the other; yet, with all this brilliancy of execution, when he was contending against what he termed my "niggling" play, he could scarcely win one game in five! Will not this encourage players to practice the losing hazards in the middle pockets, and stimulate them to play the only certain game,—that of strengths. In some of the Diagrams, I have given the position of the balls from which long runs may be accomplished with moderate strength. Canons can be made from three or four cushions; but, as they can only be effected by the use of greater force, the goodness of the break that follows will be dependent in a great measure upon chance: but if the player habituate himself to make the hazard or canon before him with gentle strength, he may at all times rely upon obtaining the precise break that he had in contemplation. It has been said by Mr. Kentfield, that any bungler can canon full upon a ball, but in doing it after such a fashion, the balls will, in all probability, be separated and remain safe: whereas, if the second-ball hit can be struck upon either of its sides, the two balls will be placed together, and another certain score will be the result. Those gentlemen who have not had the good fortune to witness the game as it is played by Mr. Kentfield, cannot form any very enlarged idea of the extraordinary advantage that is to be derived from proper strengths, when combined with a correct conception of the game. And I have frequently seen this extraordinary man score a run

of forty or fifty points, each separate hazard being left so simply, that even a novice might have made it.

Once more, therefore, let me entreat players to think seriously of the immense advantage of such a mode of playing. A fine hazard striker, and one that is fond of the elaborate style of game, appears powerful, and is really so, while he plays with confidence and with success ; but if the weight of an additional bet should render him at all nervous, it will be seen that his bold and florid style of game has dwindled to a shade, and that all his flashy side-twist canons have been missed, instead of being made : whereas, the player of gentle strengths, having no difficulties to encounter, has nothing to dread, nothing to apprehend, and all appearing before him quite within the range of simple hazard striking, he feels confident of success, and can venture to back himself for any stake.

In a former page I have called attention to the necessity of playing each hazard with a strength that will insure the leaving of another ; and it must be obvious, that any one hazard, so left, will become the most easy, when a simple or common angle is formed ; yet it will frequently occur that balls, so placed, will not carry the object ball to the precise position desired : but should the player's ball be in hand, the size of the baulk circle will enable him to place it in a situation to insure success ; always bearing in mind, that it is far better to miss the hazard altogether, than not to perform it as required. I have

not attempted, in the Diagrams now supplied, to explain in a very minute manner, the way in which the strokes should be made, for they might be practised, under written instructions, until one is weary of the pursuit; but, if a spare hour occasionally could be devoted to Mr. Kentfield, the student will have obtained such an insight into the game, that what before appeared beyond his capacity, will be rendered simple and easy. An angle that is called a "common one," is the easiest to execute and the one most to be desired; but, if out of the angle, it must be remembered, that a proper use of the side stroke will effect it, and, in some instances with less strength. A little consideration perhaps will be required to ascertain if the angle be correctly formed, but Mr. Kentfield can discover it with half a glance. A short time since, I was playing with a gentleman who entertained rather a mean opinion of my play, thinking he should have but little trouble in defeating me. I won, I think, the first four games: then a gallant captain betted him three to two at starting. Continuing still in advance, my opponent was at length under the necessity of confessing that the losing hazards in the centre pockets, played with proper strengths, were far too much for him. My object, however, in making this statement, is to point out an occurrence in exemplification of what I have previously stated respecting Mr. Kentfield's knowledge of what can be accomplished from the balls. But to continue. The game was advanced, and both balls were between the baulk line and the centre pockets, my ball being in hand. A gentleman then

backed me to win the game, and to win it off the break. I continued to score until I wanted but five of the game; when an unlucky kiss placed the balls in a position that all present pronounced to be safe. A desire, however, to win for the gentleman the bet that he had made, induced me to play, as a sort of forlorn hope, to make the red ball knock in the white, and to twist my own ball back into one of the middle pockets. The first part I succeeded in effecting, but I failed in the second: the ball reached the brink of the pocket, but there it stopped. After we had ceased playing, Mr. Kentfield entered the room, and the balls having been replaced, I informed him of the attempt I had made. He smiled, appeared quite amused, and said, "the score, Sir, was a certainty, if you had known what to have played for," when, taking up a cue, he made the hazard a dozen times in succession; and afterwards, when I attempted the same under his direction, I found it to be quite as simple as he had described it.

My game, though difficult to beat by those who will not condescend to play defensively, would nevertheless be termed, by the generality of players, a "Pottering game." It signifies one of defence and of simple hazard striking; free from all gallery clap-trap attraction, and from every kind of useless embellishment; the lunge of the elephant entirely laid aside, and the lightness of the antelope substituted in its stead. If amateurs habituate themselves to play gently, seldom will they have many difficulties to encounter; for, being consequently near the balls, the hazard

or canon will be easily accomplished. The advantage of this style of game would be at once apparent, were players in the habit of practising upon a table as fast as that in the subscription-room of Mr. Kentfield, having pockets equally small. Frequently have I seen gentlemen, who were considered good amateur players, degenerate almost to mediocrity when, on most occasions, they have exhibited upon the table alluded to. It is sometimes the custom here, so to place the two balls, in order to effect losing hazards in the centre pockets, the player's ball being in hand. From a break apparently so good, we may generally bet a gentleman player that he does not score a dozen points! One answering to this description, and supposed, in London, to be a good performer, backed himself at the stroke and failed; and afterwards, when the number was reduced to ten, could not even accomplish that: but had this gentleman accustomed himself to depend wholly upon strengths, instead of hazard striking, he would not have found much difficulty in the task.

The practice of playing upon tables with large pockets is much to be condemned: the hazards become so easy that the player is not under the necessity of taking more than ordinary pains, and he is therefore disposed to make the hazard in a careless, slovenly manner: whereas, to constitute a sterling player, upon a table of greater difficulty, it is necessary to learn to play every ball to an inch, and to devote to the game the care and attention it deserves. Patronized by the Nobility, respected and esteemed by all, placed, and deservedly so, as Mr. Kentfield is,

on the pinnacle of fame, never have I seen the player that bestowed upon each part of the game a pains-taking equal to his; but were he to relax, or fail in this essential particular, one might look in vain for the beautiful and exquisite precision that accompanies every stroke: nor could he, without such devotion to the strengths, accomplish the extraordinary matches that he is under the necessity of playing. Fancy, for one moment, a disciple of the wild elaborate school, playing the "Go-back" game with one pocket to five!

I have not shewn in the Diagrams, the position of the balls for any of the surprising side-twist canons that are to be accomplished from several cushions; but canons of that description are to be found in great abundance, in a Work, lately published by Mr. Thurston. There are, perhaps, some stages of the game, where they may be played for with advantage, but they generally require first-rate execution. The object of these few pages is an humble endeavour to enlist votaries for a healthy recreation, and to induce those already enamoured of the pursuit, to abandon the uncertain dashing style of game, and to adopt one based on simplicity of action combined with proper strengths.

At parting, allow me to impress upon the mind of the reader, that the Game of Billiards, as it is played by Mr. Kentfield, is one of science, intellect, instruction, and entertainment, offering to the amateur an endless source of elegant and refined enjoyment.

E. R. MARDON.

Brighton, March, 1844.

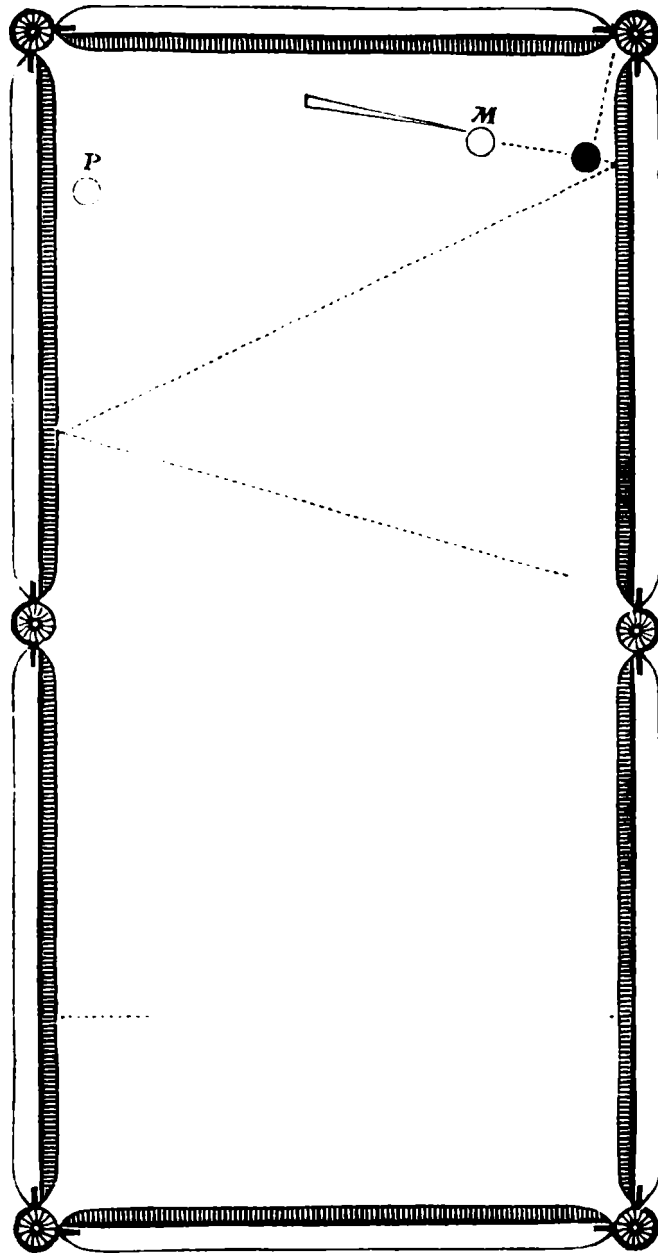
# **DIAGRAMS,**

**SHEWING THE POSITION OF THE BALLS FOR THE LAST NINE  
BREAKS IN THE GAME.**



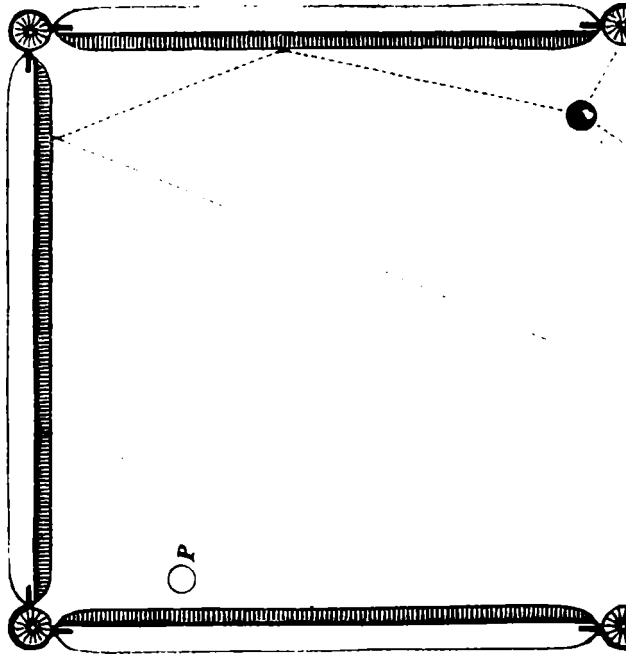
At this stage of the Game, Mr. Porker was 496, and Mr. Mardon 475.

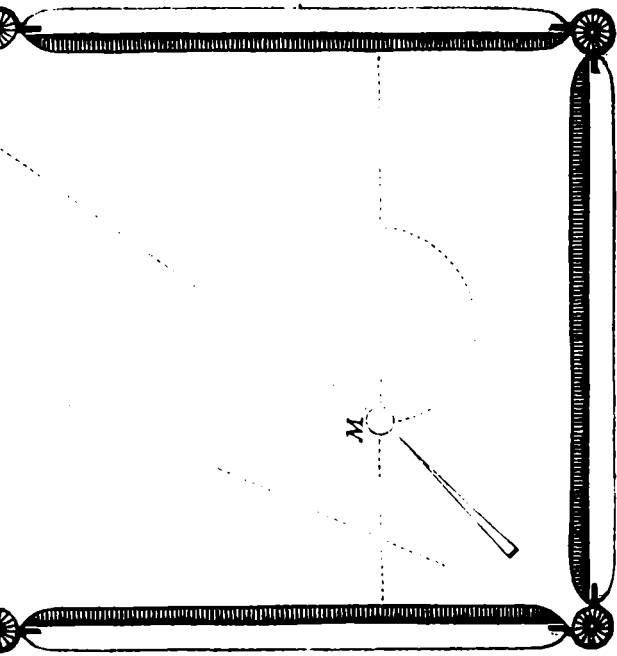
PLATE I.



Mr. Mardon played upon the red ball and twisted into the corner pocket, doubling the red ball just above the centre pocket. Game 478 to 496.

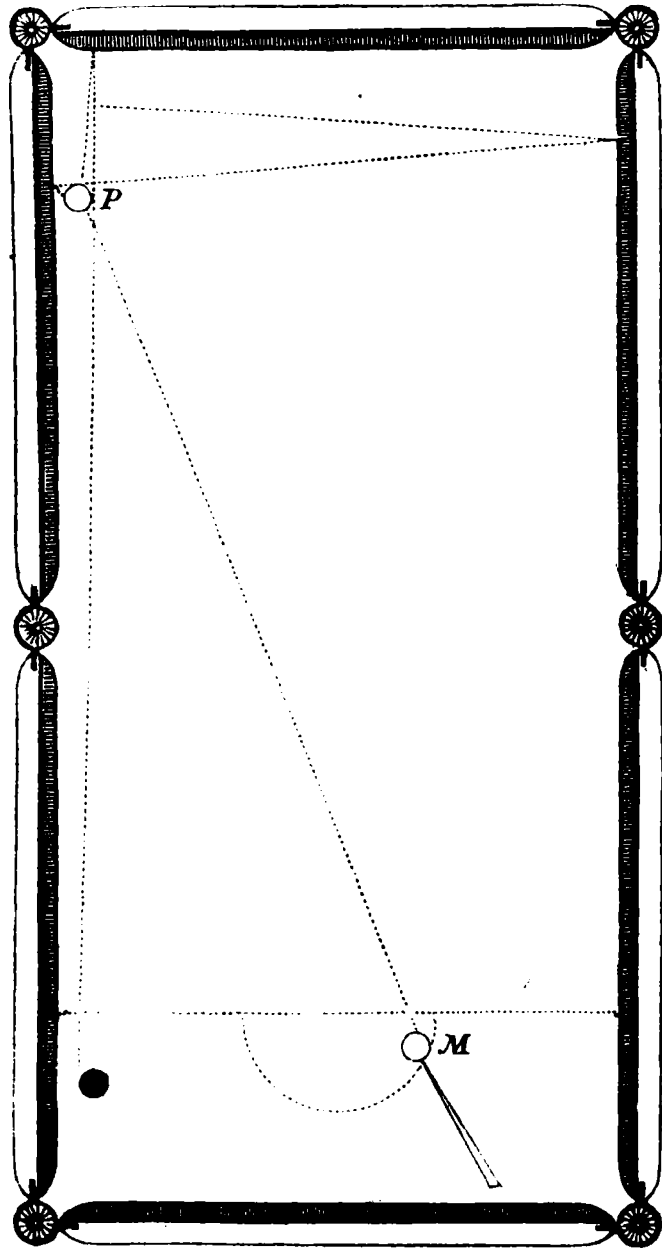
PLATE II.





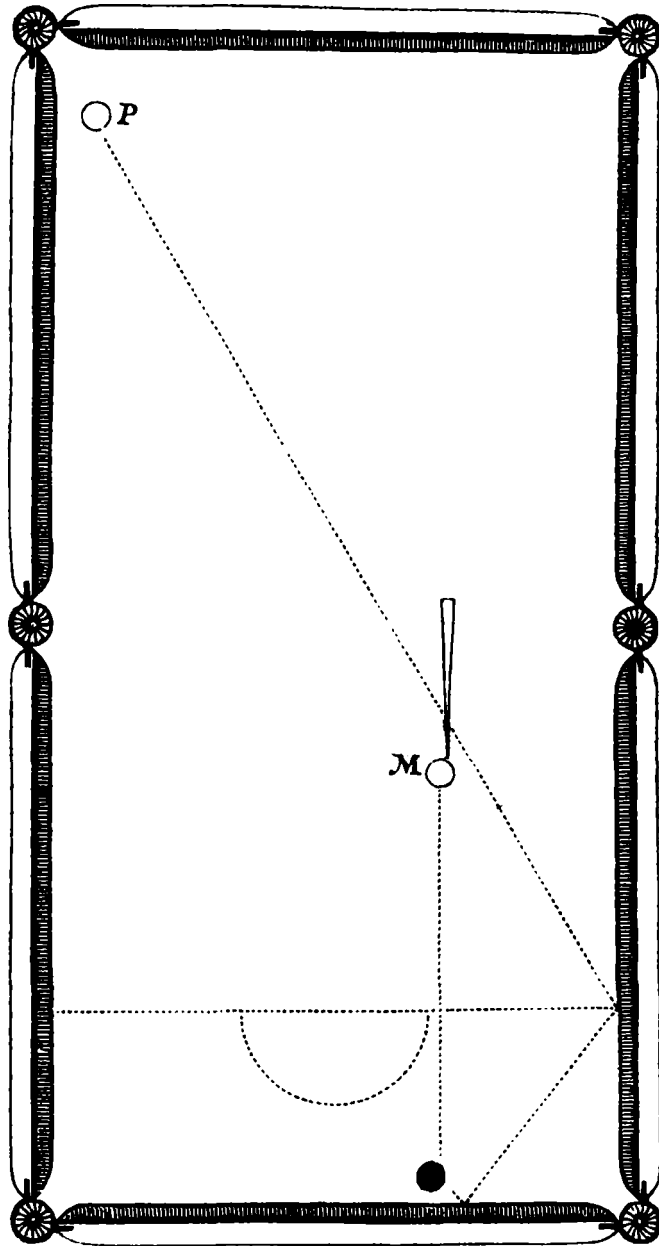
Mr. Mardon twisted into the centre pocket, the red ball coming into the baulk.  
Game 481 to 496.

PLATE III.



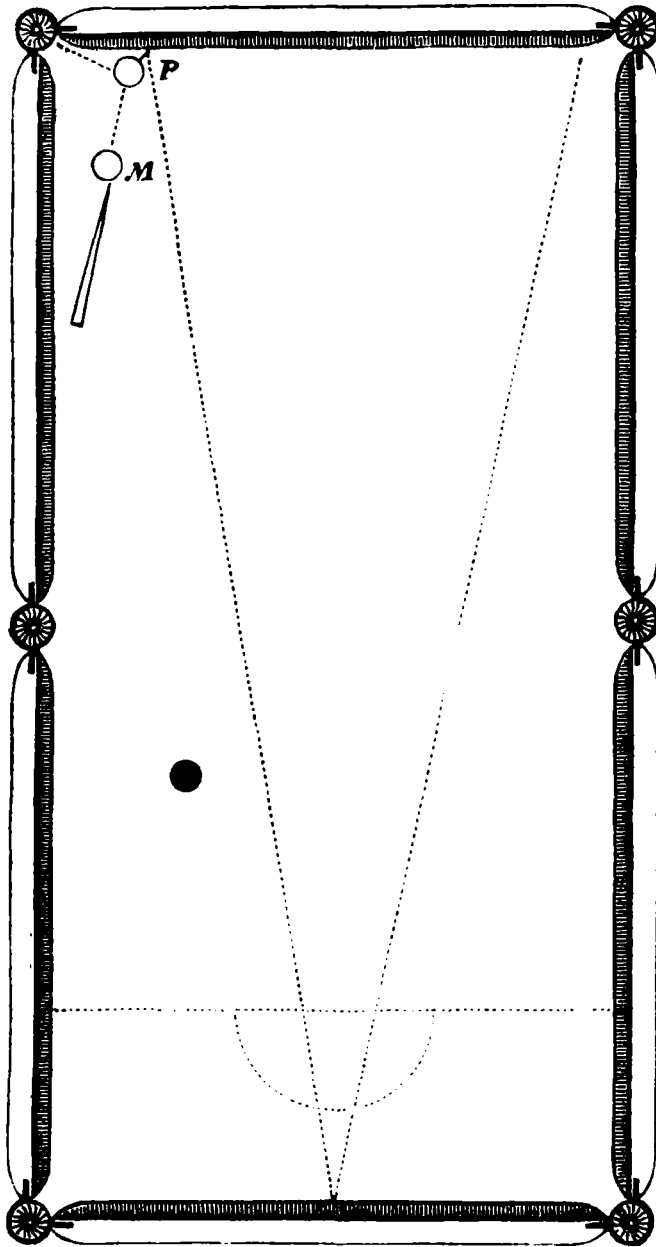
Mr. Mardon played for a canon off the white ball and made it.  
Game 483 to 496.

PLATE IV.



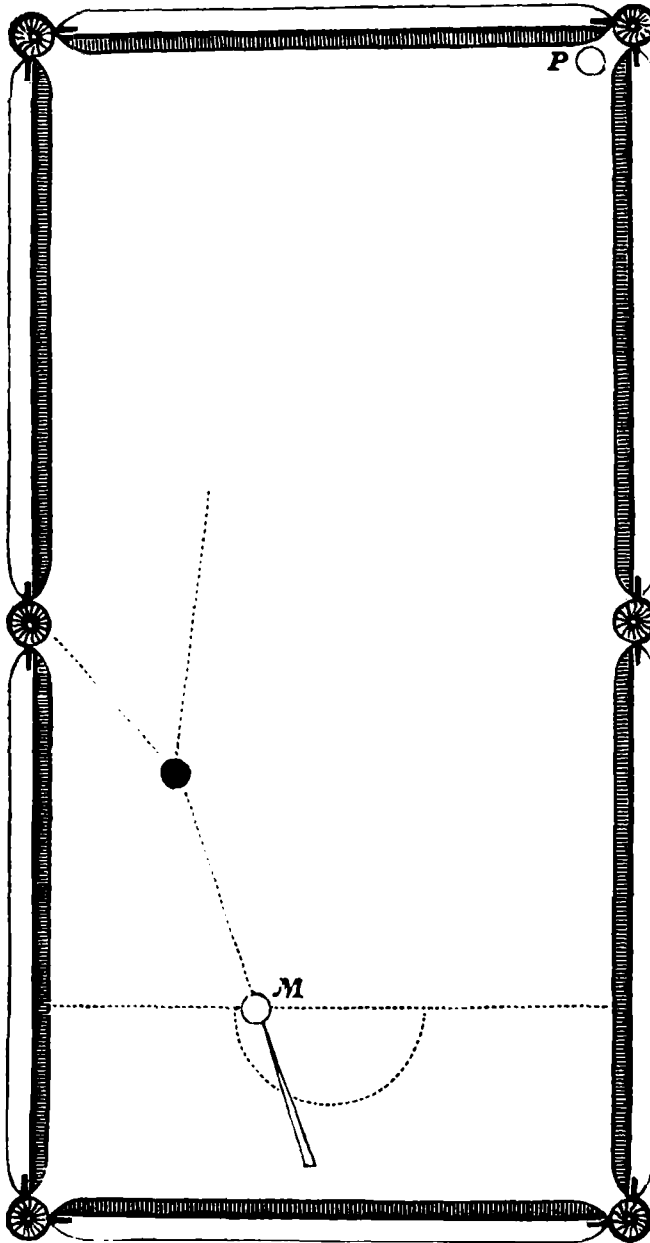
Mr. Mardon played from the rest upon the red ball and made a canon.  
Game 485 to 496.

PLATE V.



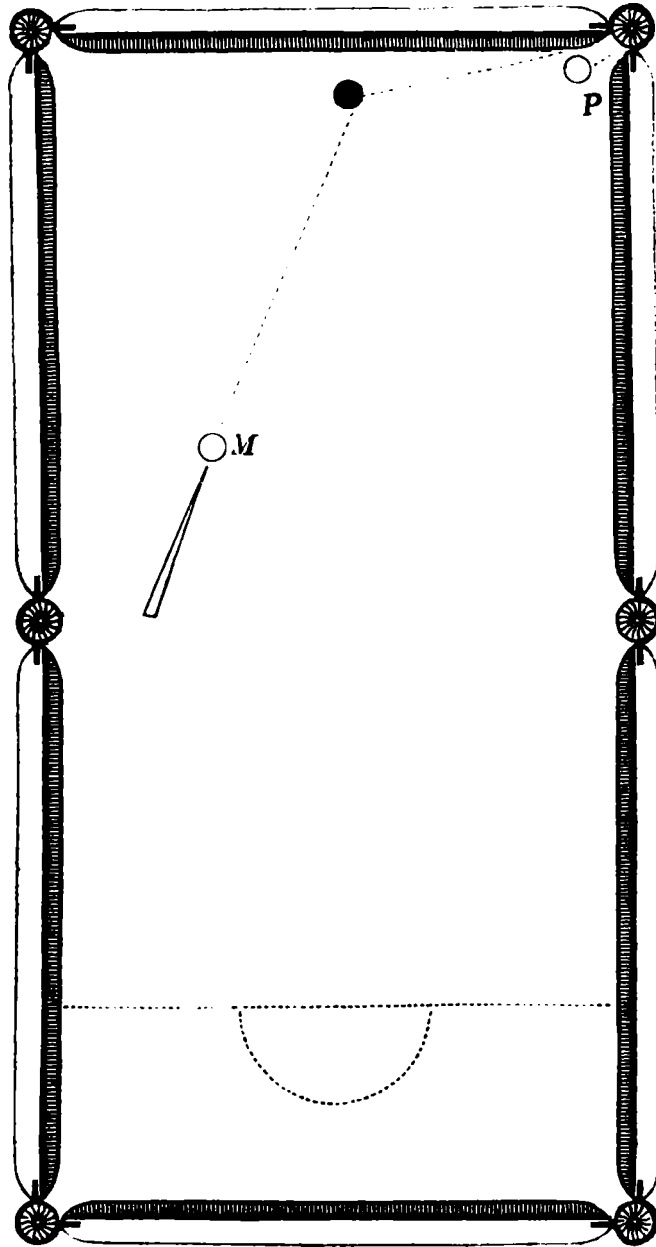
Mr. Mardon twisted into the corner pocket off the white ball.  
Game 487 to 496.

PLATE VI.



Mr. Mardon holed the red ball in the centre pocket.  
Game 490 to 496.

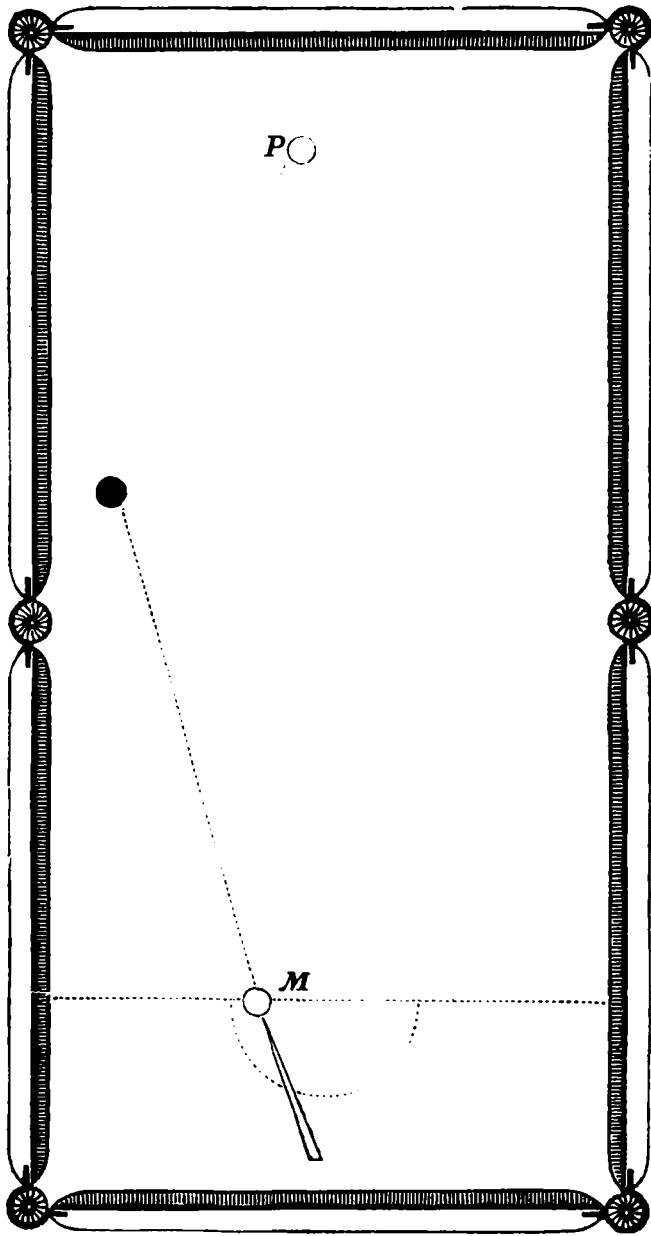
PLATE VII.



Mr. Mardon made a canon off the red ball—his ball went into the corner pocket—the two other balls kissed and were left as in the next Diagram. Game 495 to 496.

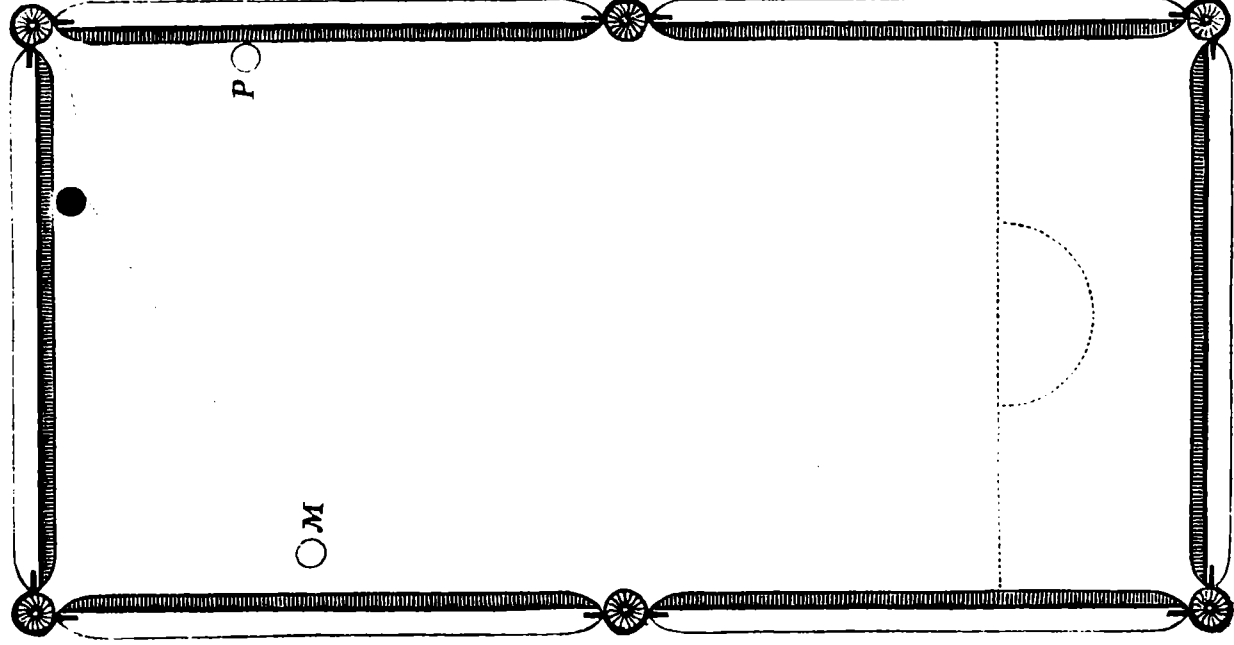


PLATE VIII.



Mr. Mardon played for a canon and made it.  
Game 497 to 496.

PLATE IX.



Mr. Mardon holed his ball in the corner pocket off the red with a strong side-twist, and won the Game; making 25 points off the last break.

THE  
DIAGRAMS & OBSERVATIONS  
THAT FOLLOW,  
ARE ADDRESSED TO A PLAYER WHO HAS ALREADY MADE  
SOME PROGRESS IN THE GAME.

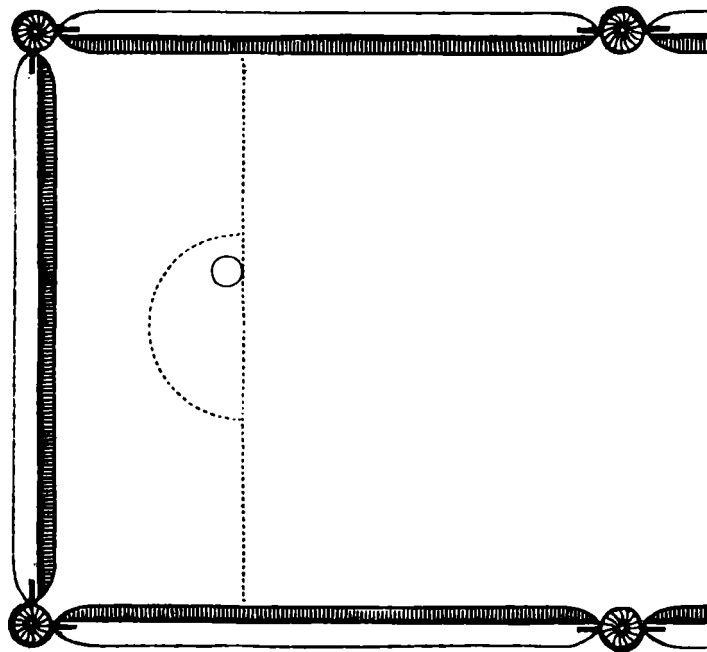
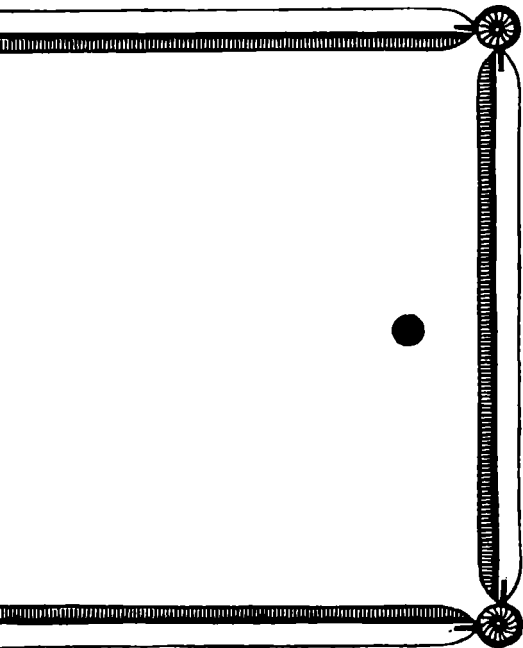


PLATE X.

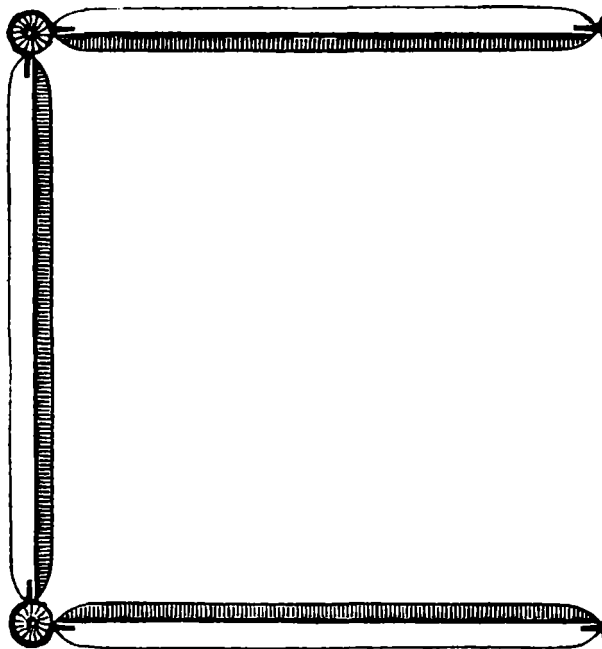


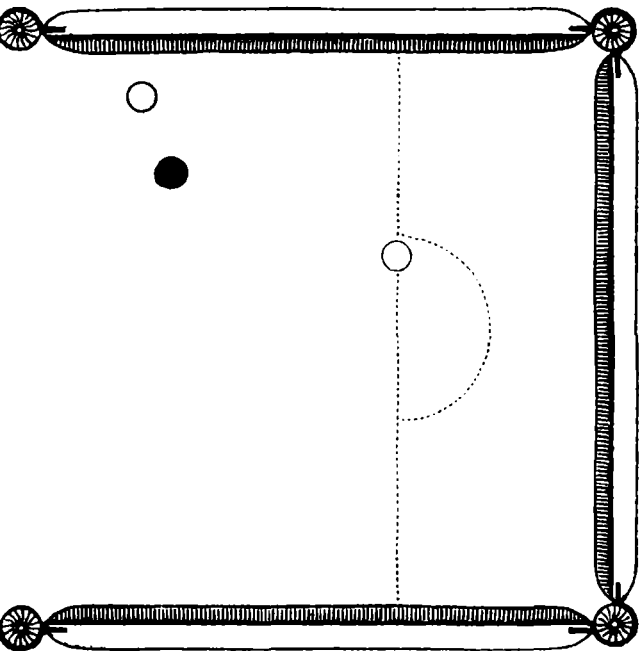
## PLATE X.

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In playing off, it is customary to give a miss in the baulk; but if the opponent gives another, and should place his ball in a judicious situation, the game will then be rather in his favor. I find the best method of playing, is to double the the red ball for one of the corner pockets, laying my own ball under the side cushion. Should the adversary lead, and play this game against me, I have two modes of acting. If the red ball is doubled within one inch of the pocket, I give a miss and mask the ball; but if it is nearly a foot from it, I may venture to play for a canon off the white ball, taking, however, especial care, in so doing, that I double it close to the opposite corner pocket, and leave it as near to the cushion as possible; for if I miss scoring, he will be, thus placed, crippled, and perhaps unable to take advantage of anything that I may have left.

PLATE XI.





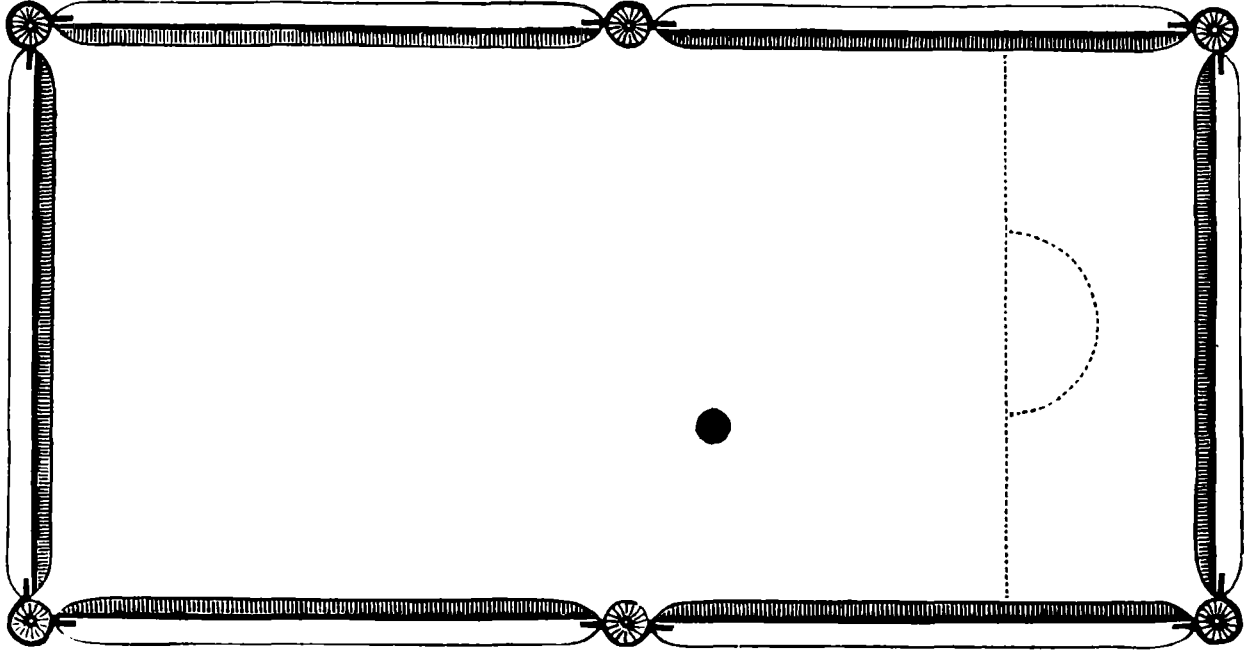


## PLATE XI.

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In this situation many persons play for a canon with just sufficient strength to carry the object ball to the right-hand corner pocket; but, by so doing, it frequently occurs that the ball thus placed becomes masked, and that the hazard intended, falls to the lot of the opponent. The best way of playing the stroke, is to make the canon with a strength that will bring the ball played upon down to the centre pocket; and if the stroke be properly performed, the other ball will be carried to it, and a great break will follow.

PLATE XII.



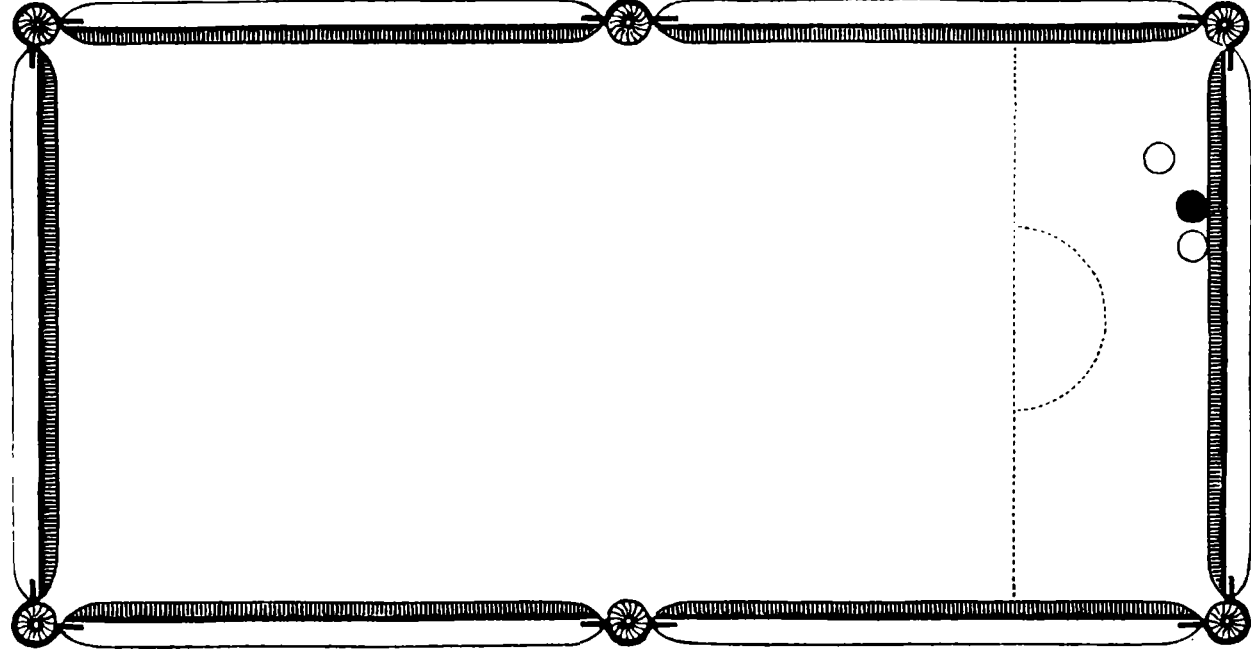
## PLATE XII.



### LOSING HAZARD.

This is the hazard that I have stated to be so valuable. The player's ball must be placed in such a situation that the object ball shall return to nearly the same position. The great secret of the stroke is, in bringing the ball about fifteen inches below the centre pocket, and in keeping it at least half-a-yard from the side cushion. I have played, with a Nobleman, upwards of thirteen hundred games, at five points in twenty-four; and I am sure he will readily acknowledge that, for the honor of my victory, I am entirely indebted to the losing hazard now described.

PLATE XIII.



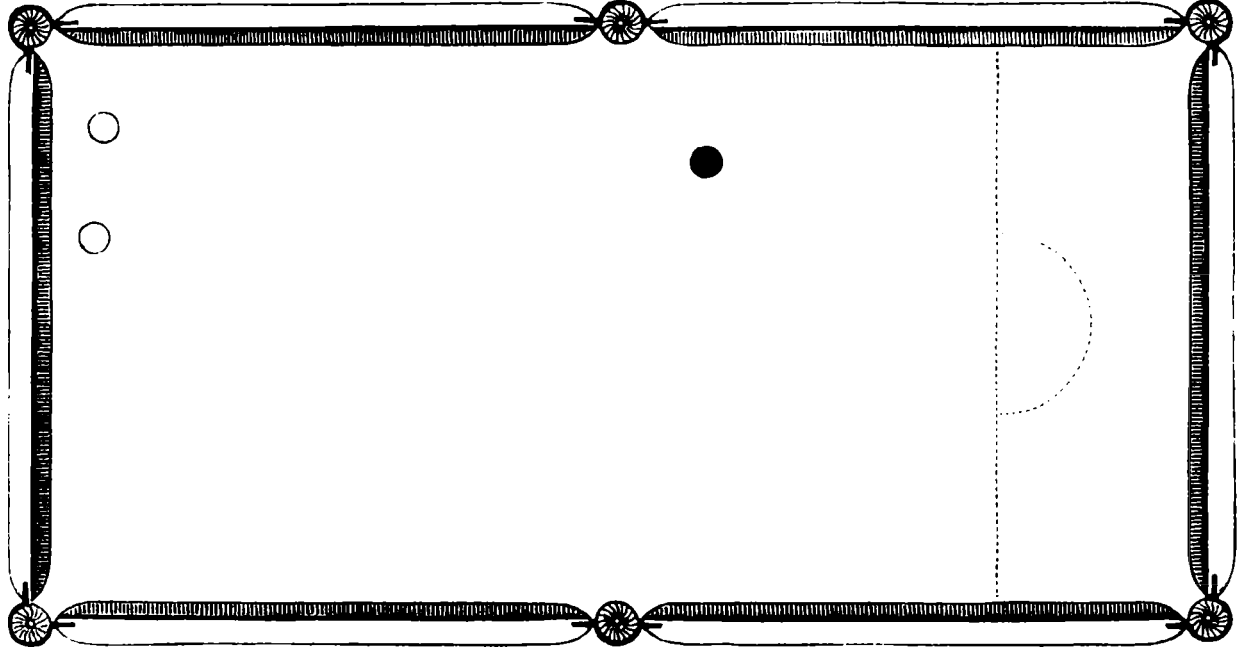
## PLATE XIII.



### CANON.

The player's ball is the one farthest from the cushion; the others touch it and are scarcely one inch apart. When the balls were thus placed, I thought it was impossible to make a canon, seeing that the space between them would not allow the first ball to pass without knocking the other away. A noble Lord, (four points in twenty-four worse than myself, and to whom I am indebted for the stroke), succeeded in making it upon every attempt. It is made with a strong side stroke, which enables the player's ball to follow up the other after it has been struck from its original position.

PLATE XIV.

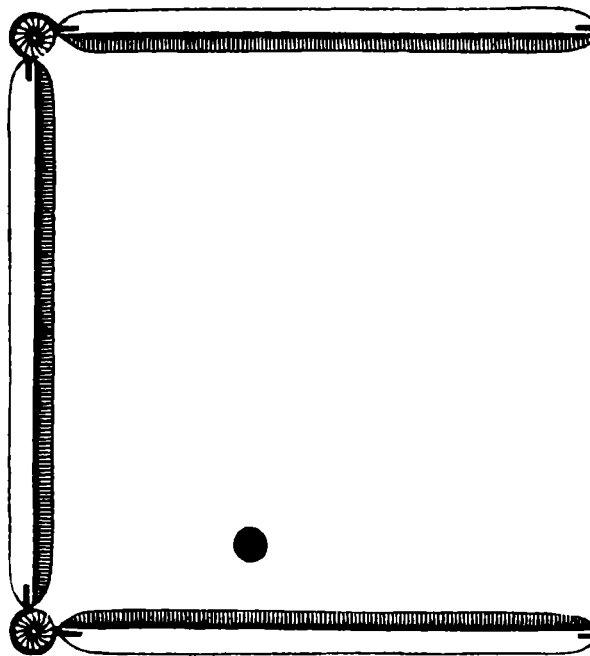


## PLATE XIV.

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If the ball farthest from the corner pocket is the players, and the game is much against him, it is proper to play for a losing hazard off the white ball. This is done by a walk, and by striking the ball on the side next to the cushion. If the game, however, is in a state of forwardness, the opponent's ball should be holed, and a baulk made.

PLATE XV.





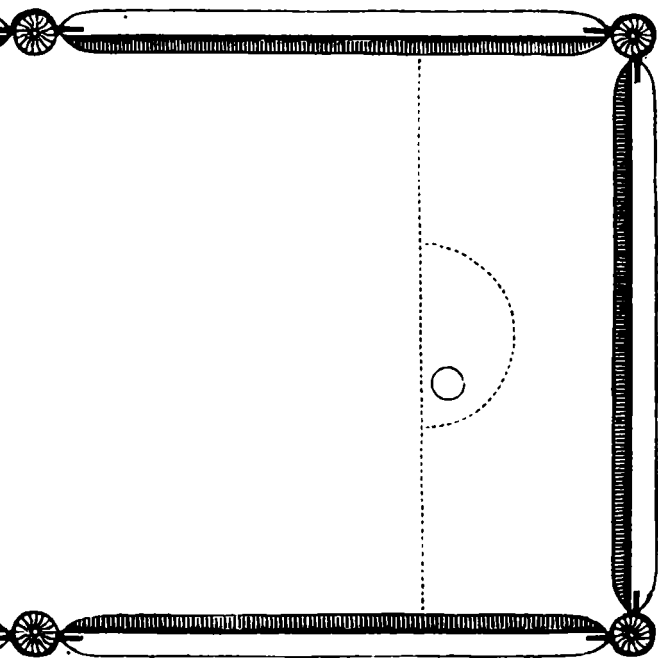


PLATE XV.



TO MAKE A BAULK.

This stroke is of infinite use, and it is one worthy of much practice.

Strike the red ball nearly a three-quarter ball. It will reach the baulk from the side and top cushions. The player's ball will return from the top cushion direct.

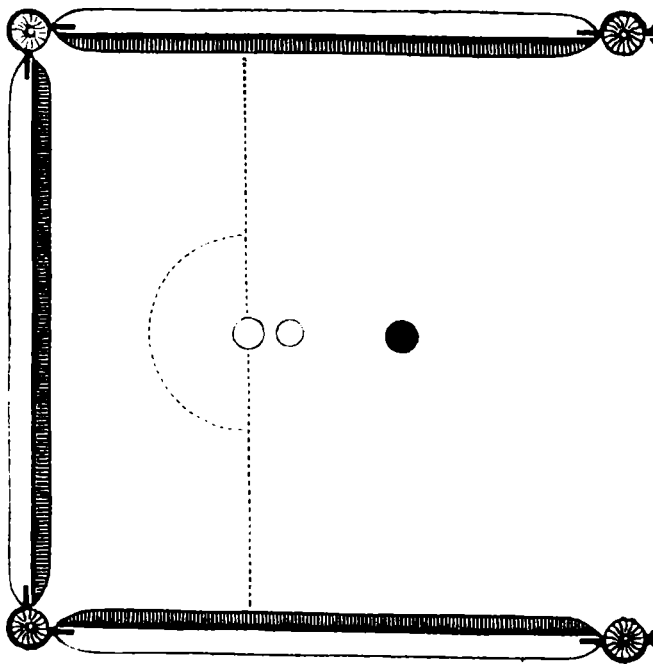
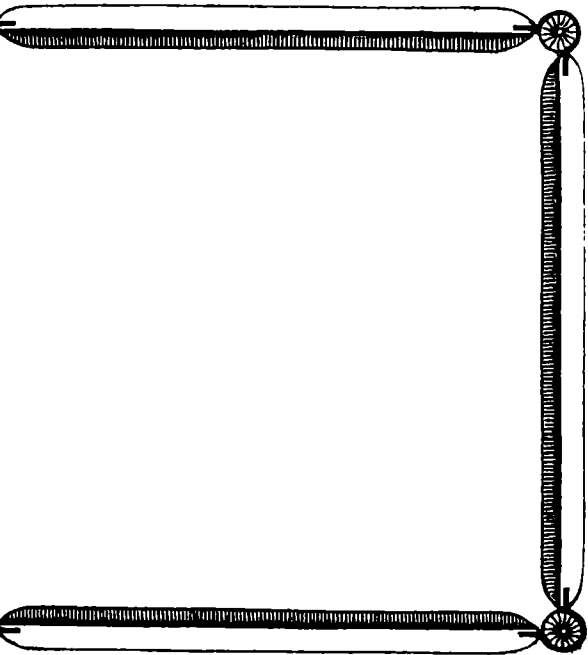


PLATE XVI.



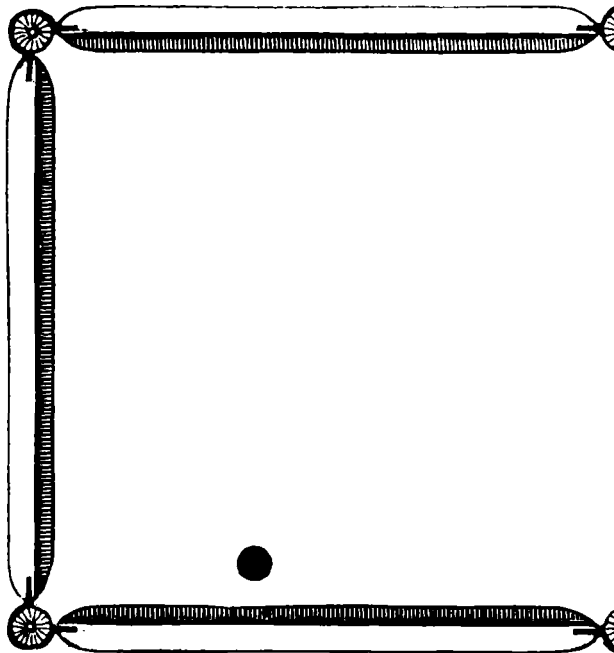
## PLATE XVI.

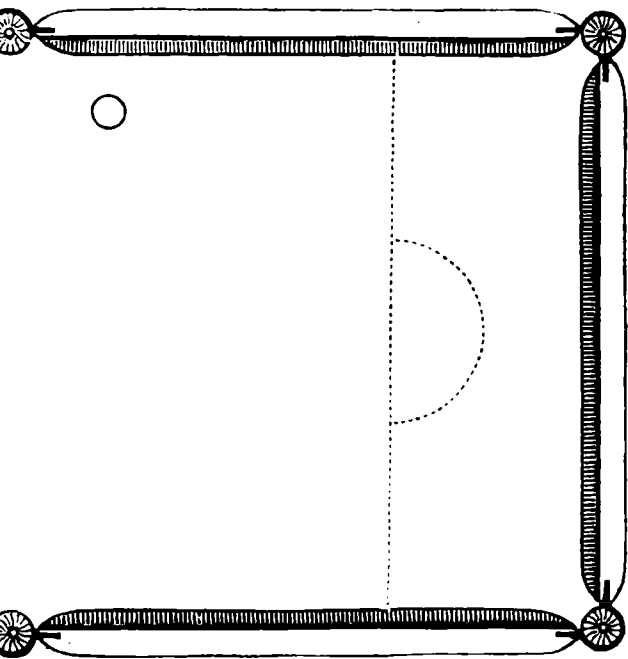


### CANON.

The balls being thus placed, and in a direct line, the novice would believe them to be safe: nevertheless, it is almost a certain canon. It is made by a push. The centre ball knocks the other a little on one side, and the player's ball catches it while it is moving. Mr. Kentfield can teach any one to make this invaluable canon in one lesson.

PLATE XVII.





## PLATE XVII.

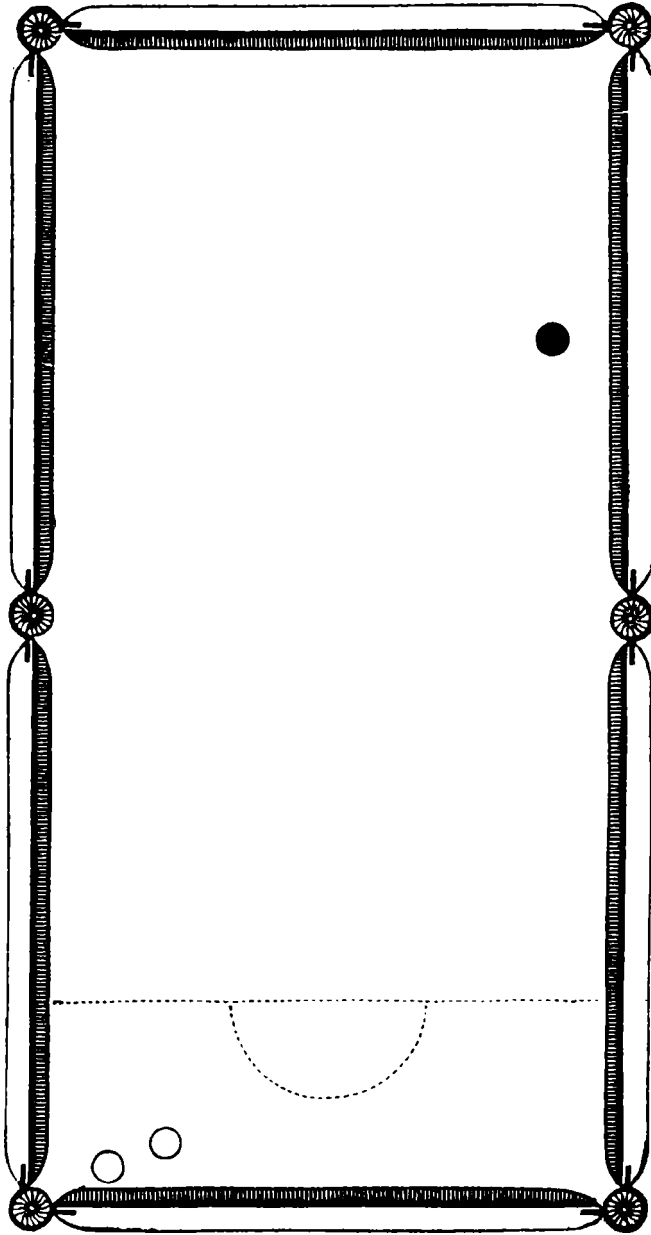


### LOSING HAZARD.

When the balls are in this position, and the player's ball in hand, he must play to hole it in the right-hand corner pocket. It will require a strong side-twist, and he must not play it with more strength than sufficient to double his opponent's ball over to the red. In all probability the balls will not be more than four inches apart, and will leave, consequently, the prospect of a good break.



PLATE XVIII.



## PLATE XVIII.

---

Player's ball the farthest from the baulk pocket.

There is not any part of the game more serviceable than that of being enabled to convert a winning hazard into a losing one. If the balls were placed as the representation shews them, and the game was 18 to 23, it is clear, if the striker pocket his opponent's ball, that the next stroke will be much against him ; but if he walk through the white ball, bringing it out of the baulk, and make a losing hazard off it, the winning of the game will then be nearly certain.

The losing hazard thus described, can always be accomplished if there is room for the object ball to pass without kissing.

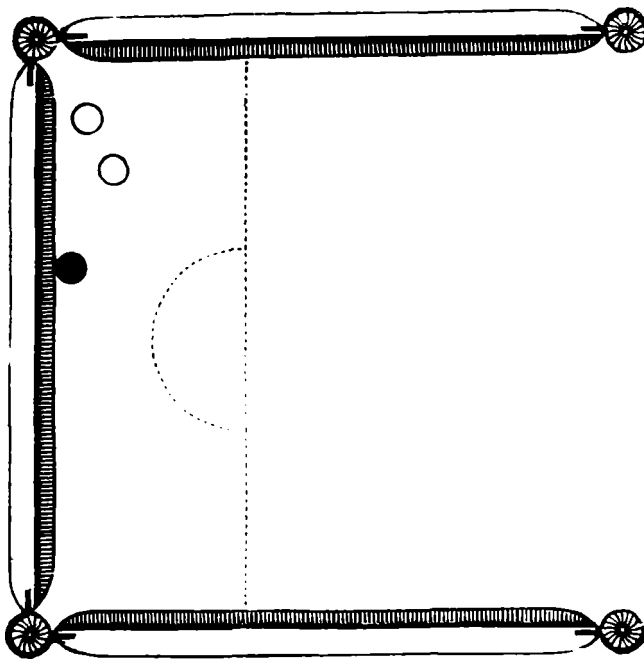
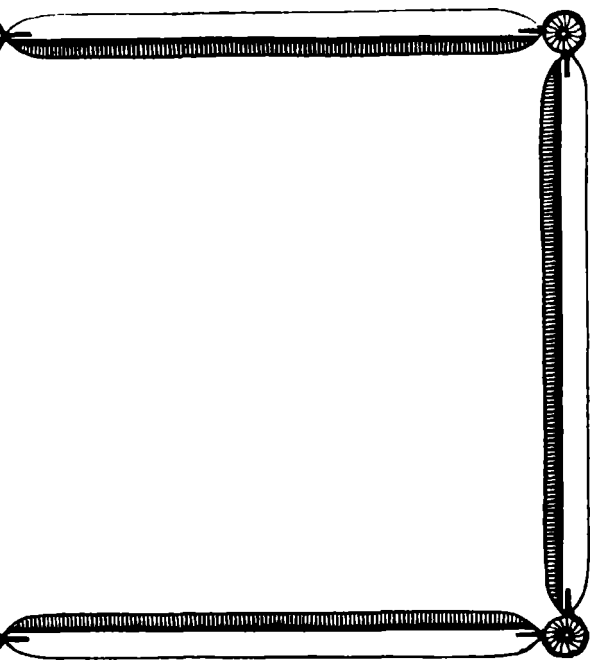


PLATE XIX.



## PLATE XIX.

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The centre ball is the players.

The balls were thus situated when the player had 20 points to make. The generality of persons would have holed the white ball and have made a baulk; but the baulk might have been disturbed and no score left. The player, with a powerful side-twist, made a canon from the red ball, and doubled it over the centre pocket; and, by playing the stroke very gently, he obtained a losing hazard off the white. This hazard being made, and the ball taken out of the baulk, he possessed as fine a break as could be desired, and the 20 points were easily made.

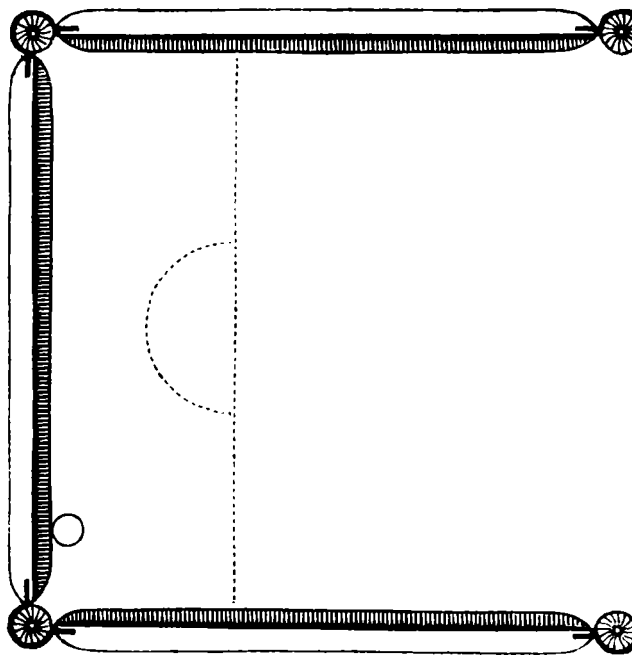
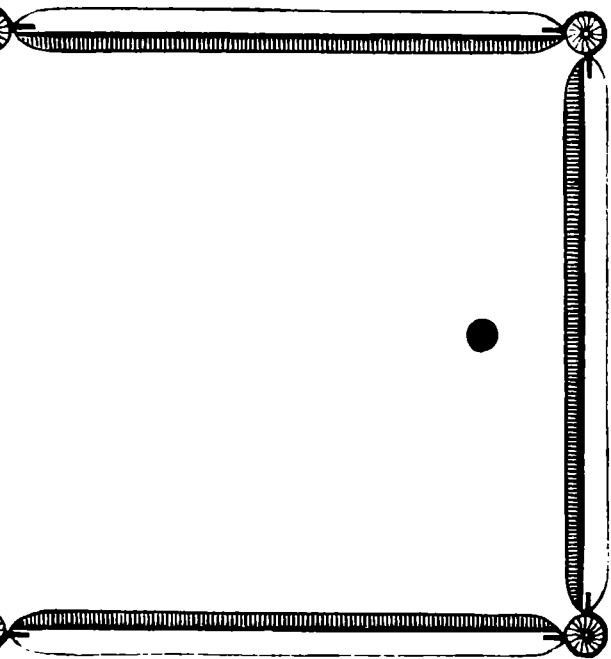


PLATE XX.



## PLATE XX.

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When the balls are thus situated, it is frequently the custom of the player, being in hand, to rattle away at the red ball. His opponent's ball being close to the cushion, he imagines there is not much to be apprehended from the next stroke. Nothing can be worse than such a mode of playing. A miss should be given just above the left-hand centre pocket, leaving a losing hazard off the red ball. This will oblige him to play to a disadvantage, for he cannot get out of his difficulties by giving a miss.



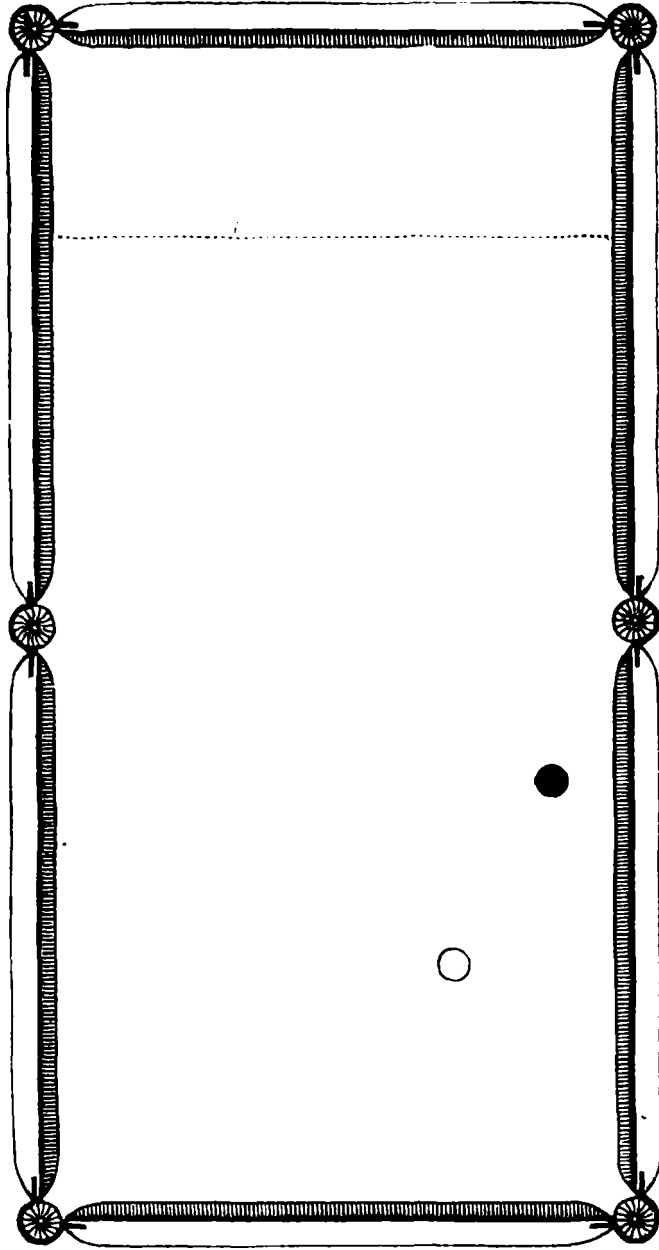


PLATE XXI.

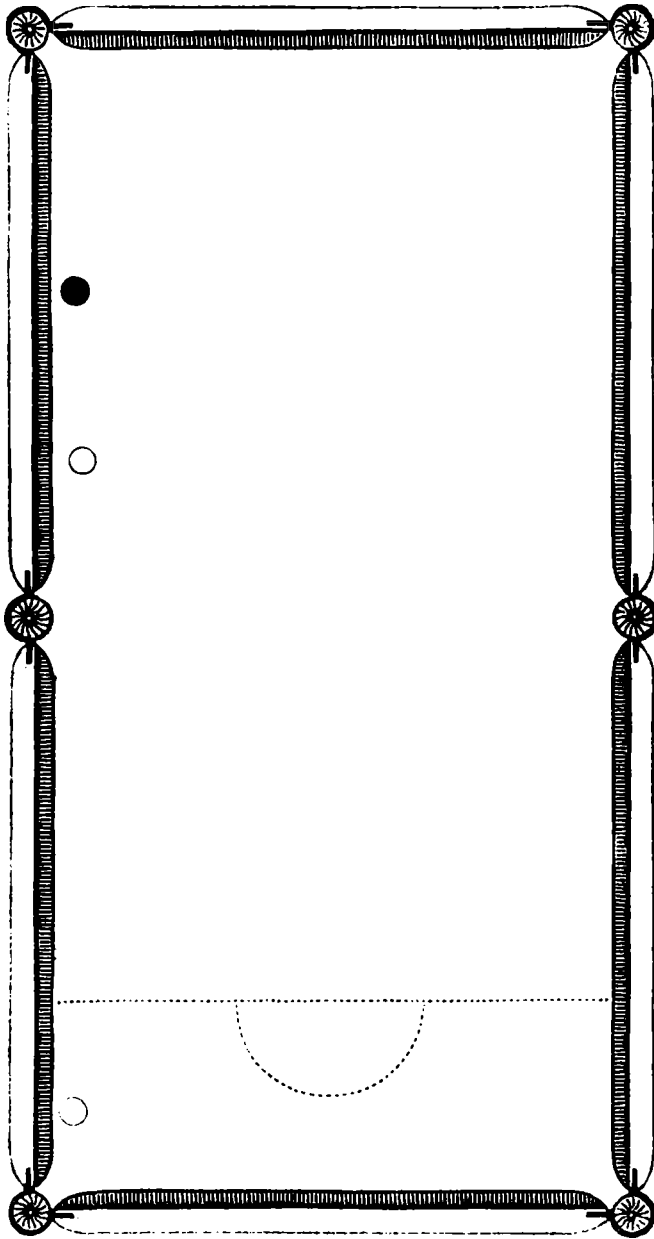
## PLATE XXI.

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This canon is of the greatest service and should be frequently practised.

Player's ball in hand. In making this canon, if the game is much behind, the red ball must be struck to double it from the left-hand side cushion over to the right-hand corner pocket, knocking the white ball as nearly as possible to the spot; for, after holeing the red, there will be one of the finest breaks imaginable. From balls so situated, I once saw a run of ninety points! If but six or eight points of the game be required, then the canon must be made on the left side of the white ball; for, by carrying it over to the red, the few points wanted will be insured.

PLATE XXII.



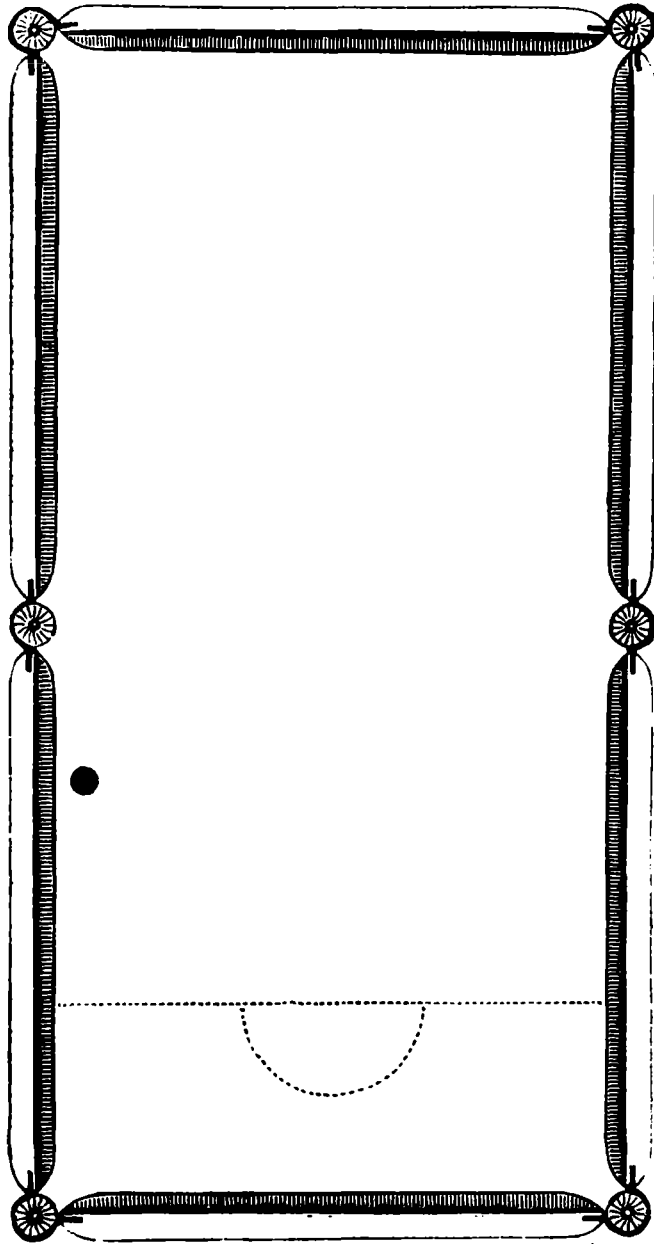
## PLATE XXII.

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The player's ball is that nearest the red.

The striker must here play for a canon off the red ball ; and if the game is backward, it should be played strongly and without a side stroke ; for if, in making the canon, the player succeed in obtaining a losing hazard off the white ball, he will be in possession of a good break, as the red ball will be placed in the centre of the table. If the game, however, is in a forward state, then the side stroke is necessary, with fine and gentle play upon the red ; for, should the canon be missed, the red ball will then be safely lodged under the top cushion.

PLATE XXIII.



## PLATE XXIII.

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### THE LOSING HAZARD CALLED "A JENNY."

This losing hazard, upon tables with list cushions, was one of infinite importance. At Mr. Bedford's rooms, a Gentleman made, upon one occasion, as many as 102 points in the same pocket, which, when effected, and the game won, the ball remained in as good a position as when he commenced.

Upon a very fast table the stroke seldom leaves a second hazard; and the best method of playing it, is to bring the object ball into the centre of the table.

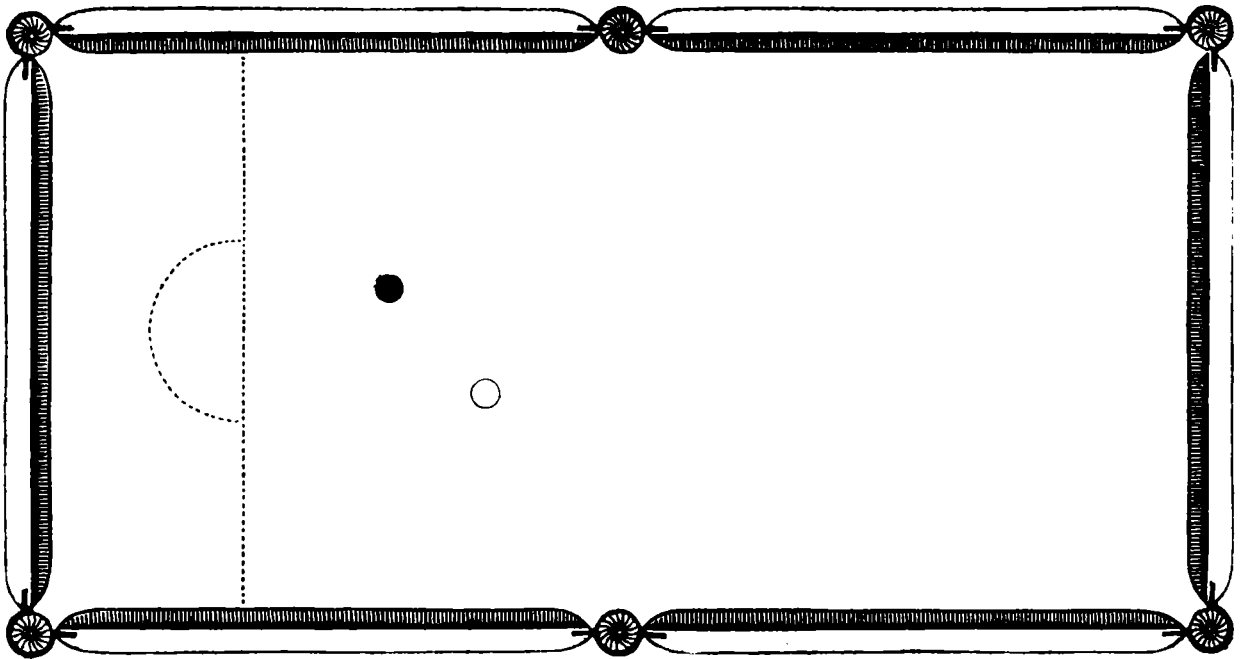


PLATE XXIV.

## PLATE XXIV.

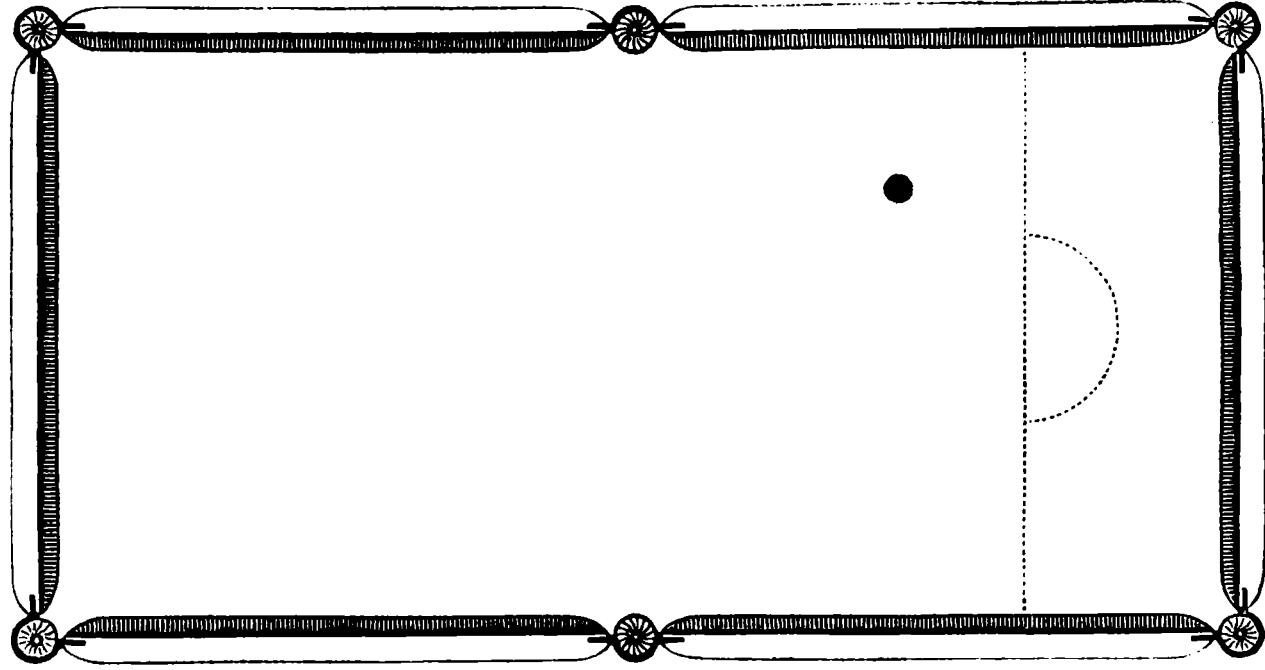
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Player's ball in hand.

The balls, as now placed, present one of the finest breaks imaginable. If the game is very backward, and fifteen or or twenty points are required to complete it, the striker should play for a canon; and it should be made with a strength that will carry the red ball *near* to the centre pocket. Many players hole it, and are well-pleased at having made the five; but such a mode of playing is wrong; for, by placing the red ball near to the pocket, a losing hazard will be obtained, and, if properly made, the balls will again present a similar stroke. I have frequently, by this method of playing, made a canon and a losing hazard three times in succession, and have then had as good a break as when I commenced.



PLATE XXV.



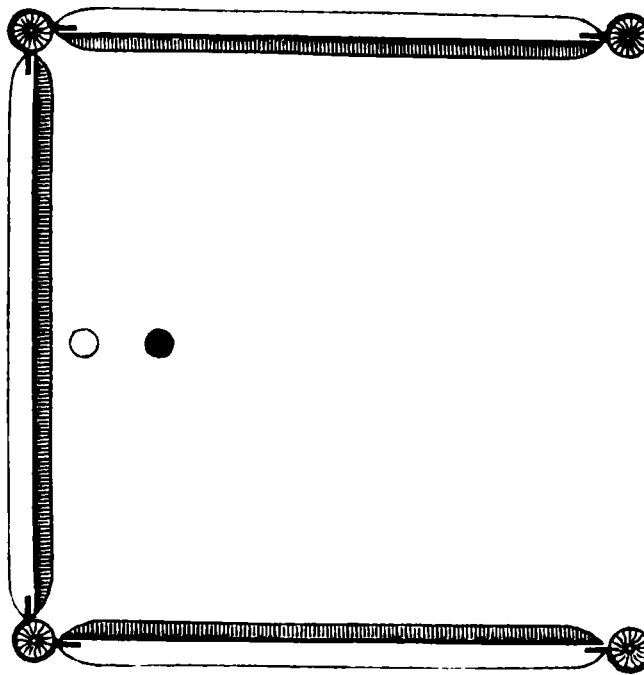
## PLATE XXV.

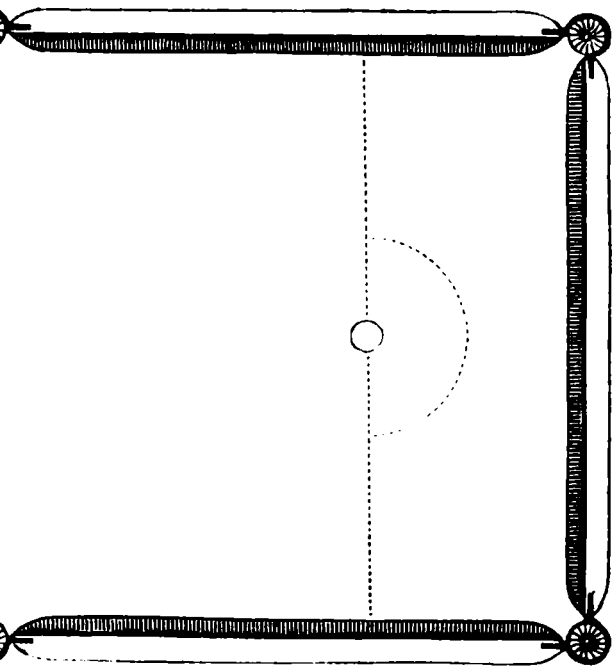
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### SAFETY.

The red ball being thus placed, and the opponent being in hand, it is not right to play to hole the red ball in the centre pocket; for, should the player succeed in effecting it, the chances are against obtaining another score; and, should he miss the hazard, his adversary, being in hand, can take a great advantage of the break left. My method of playing, is to double the red ball, from the top cushion, over one of the corner pockets in the baulk, bringing my own ball into it also from the side cushion. Should the opponent play back and miss, there will then be two balls upon the table instead of one, and a great many points may be obtained.

PLATE XXVI.





## PLATE XXVI.

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### A CANON OF GREAT USE.

The red ball being on the spot, and the opponent's ball behind it, the striker, if in hand, may venture to play for a canon. The ball must be hit in the centre and played full upon the red, causing the latter to kiss the white ball, which will meet the player's ball coming back. I saw this canon made a dozen times in succession by a Gentleman to whom I could have given eight points out of twenty-four. The stroke was taught by Mr. Kentfield. He received no more than six lessons, and considered that his game had been improved at least four points.

PLATE XXVII.

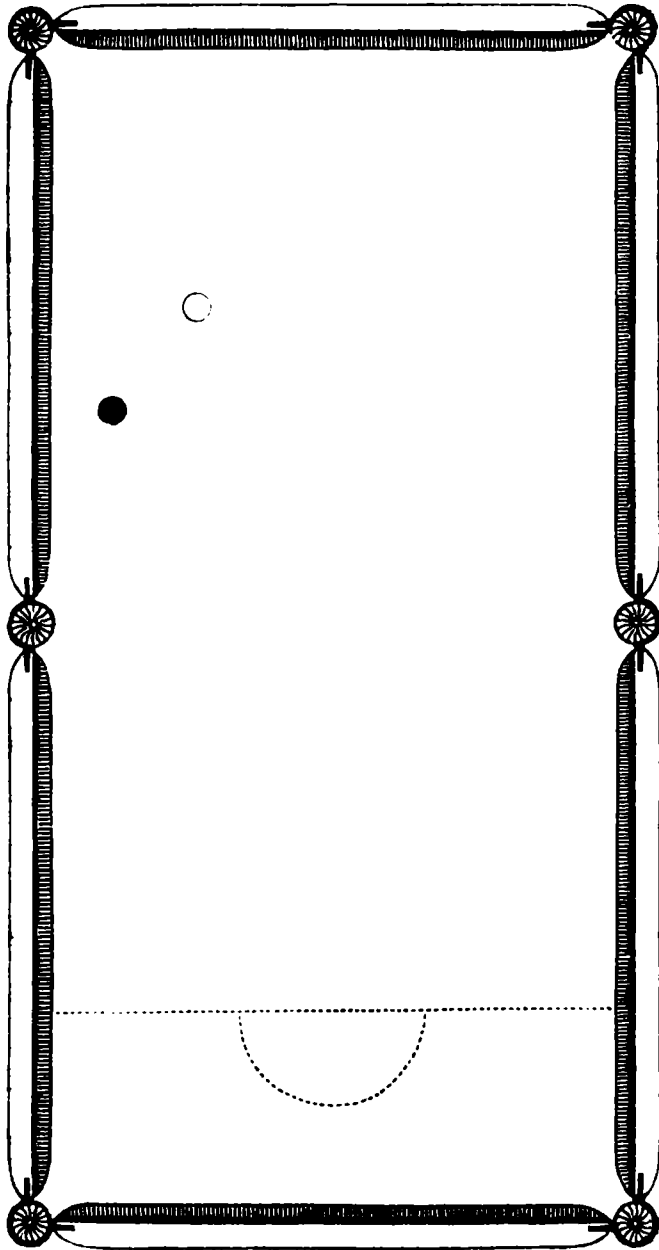


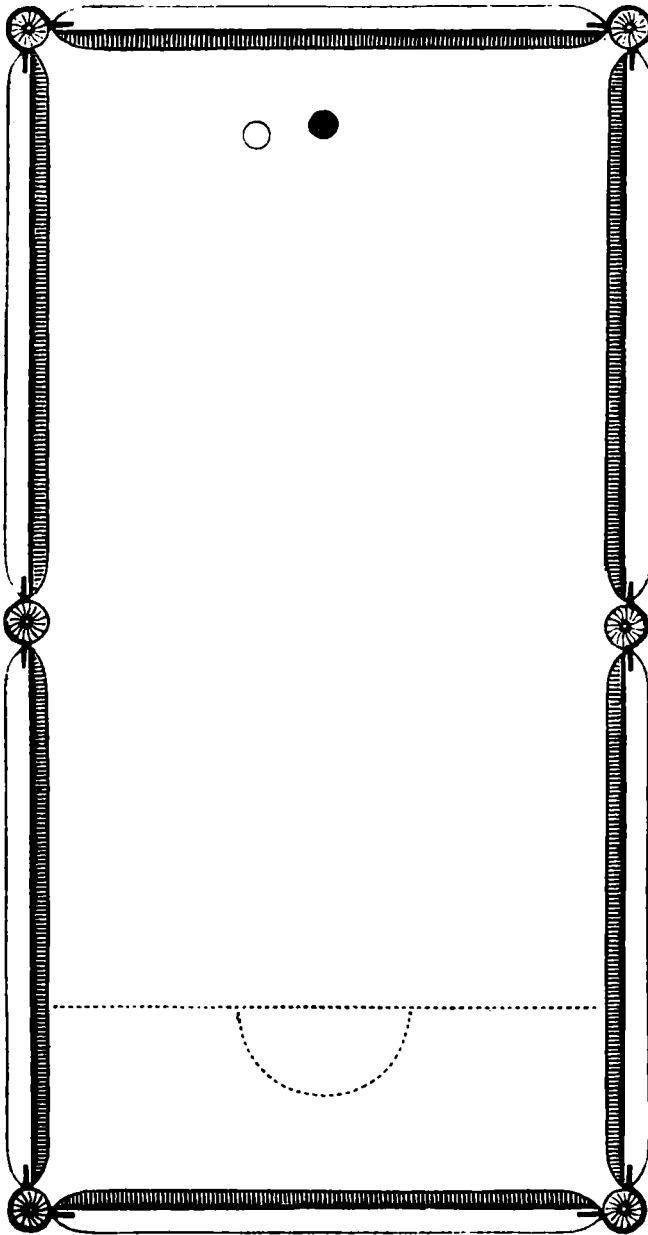
PLATE XXVII.



TO MAKE A BAULK.

The adversary's ball being in hand, the striker must play for a baulk, doubling the red ball from the side cushion, and following after it by the use of the side stroke.

PLATE XXVIII.





## PLATE XXVIII.



### THE "SPOT" STROKE.

This stroke is of great importance; and any one that can play it in a proper manner, should never consider the game as lost. If the balls are *quite* straight, the player must twist his ball back about four inches: if *nearly* straight, he must pass over to the other side: if the angle is more acute, he must obtain a similar position from the top cushion.

PLATE XXIX.

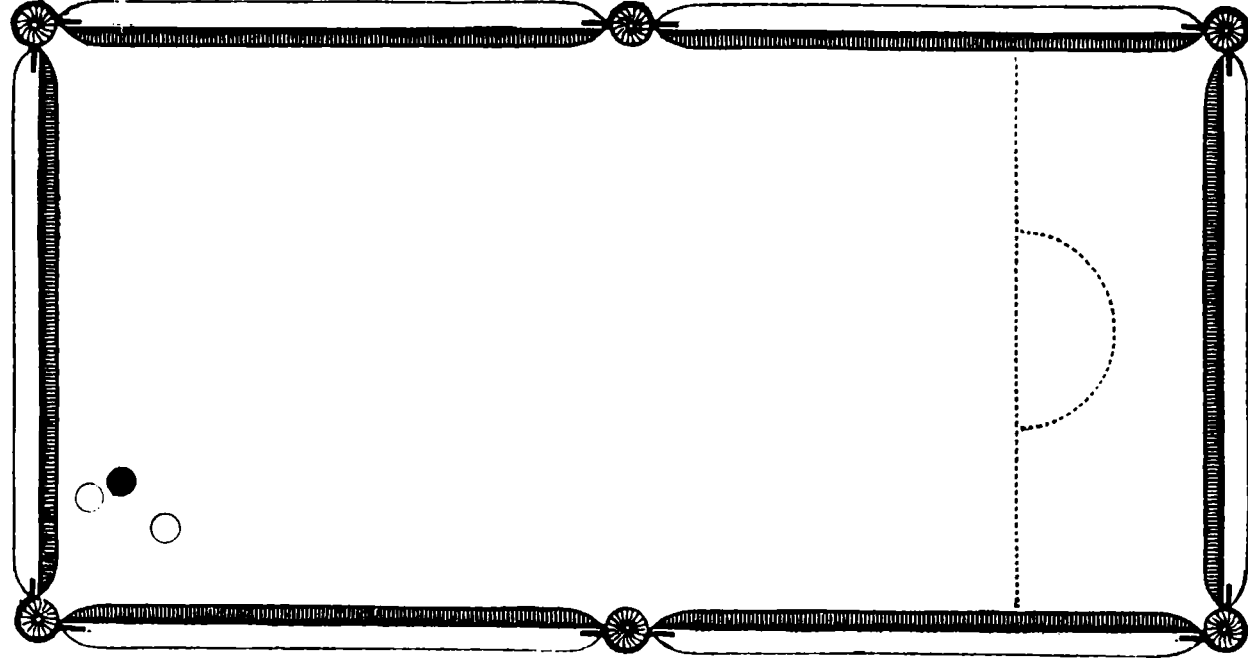


PLATE XXIX.

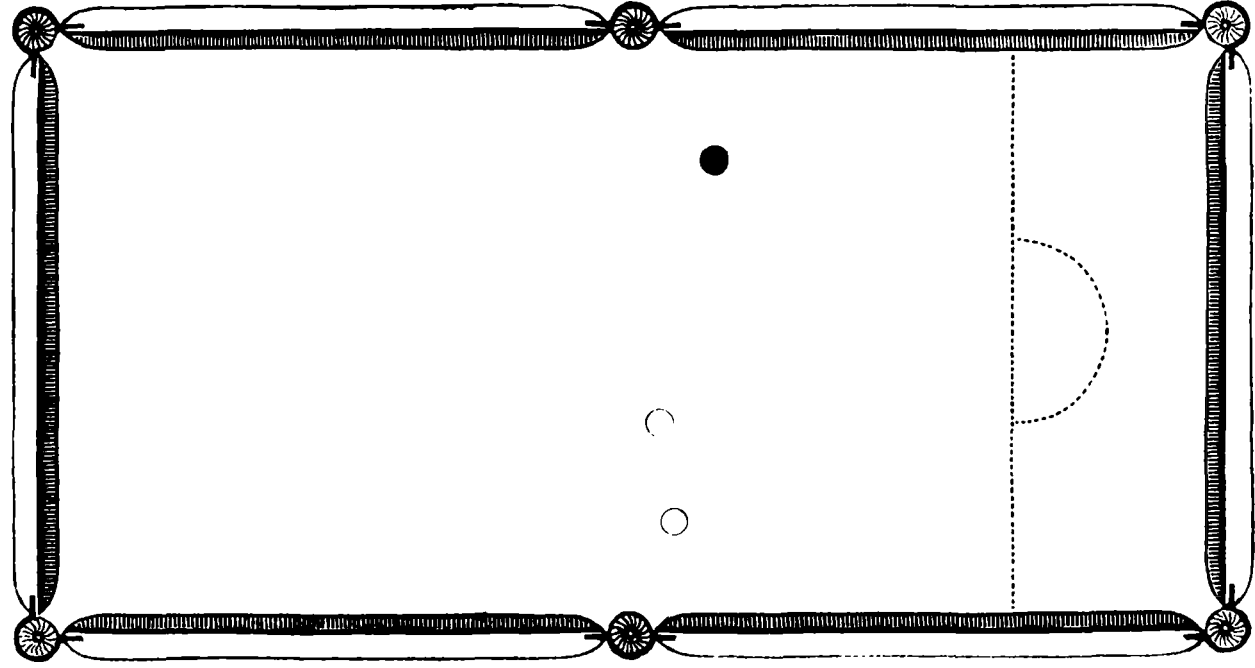
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A CANON OF GREAT SERVICE.

Player's ball is that nearest to the baulk.

When the balls are thus situated, a great many canons can be made—(as many as fifteen have been made by myself.) The secret is, for the player always to pass his own ball so as to have the other two before him, playing very gently, and keeping the balls as nearly together as possible.

PLATE XXX.

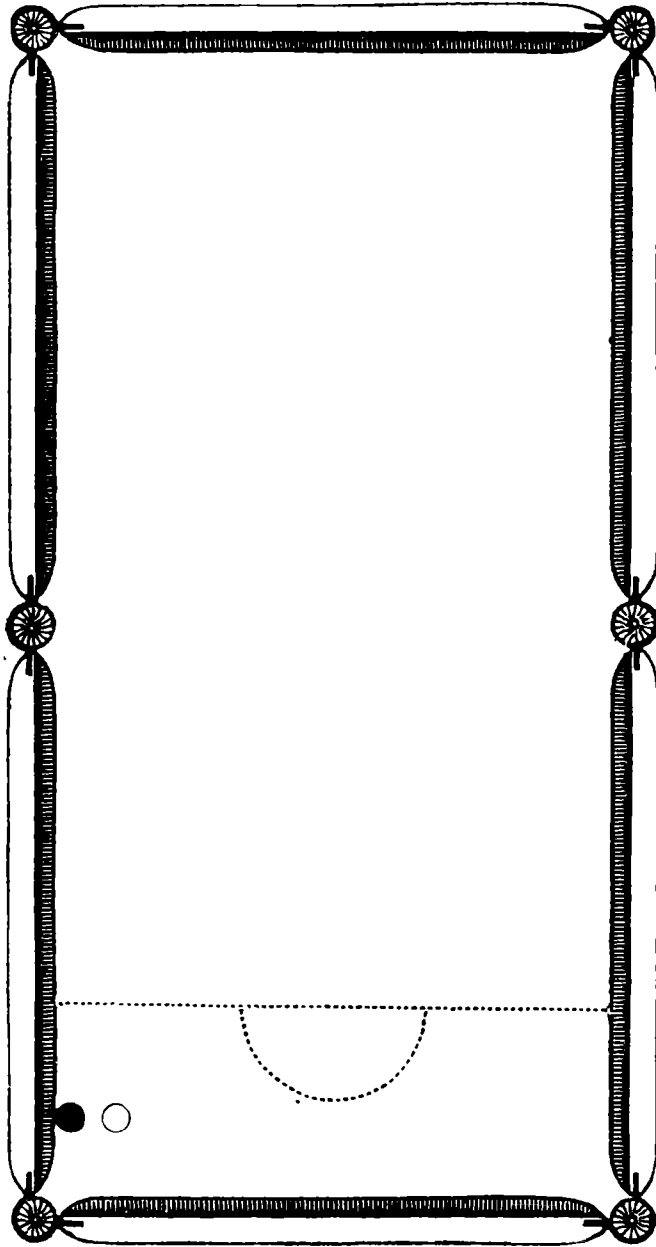


## PLATE XXX.



The balls being placed as represented, and the striker's ball being the centre one, he must play to walk it into the middle pocket. The object ball will cushion, and either cross over to the red or leave a losing hazard ; and, in either situation, the player's ball being in hand, the break will be most productive.

PLATE XXXI.



## PLATE XXXI.



### LOSING HAZARD BY A KISS.

Opponent's ball being in hand, and the striker's score twenty, he should play to hole his own ball through the medium of a kiss. Having done so, he must give a miss some distance from the red. His game will then be twenty-three and the baulk. The stroke must be played gently, and the ball struck above the centre.

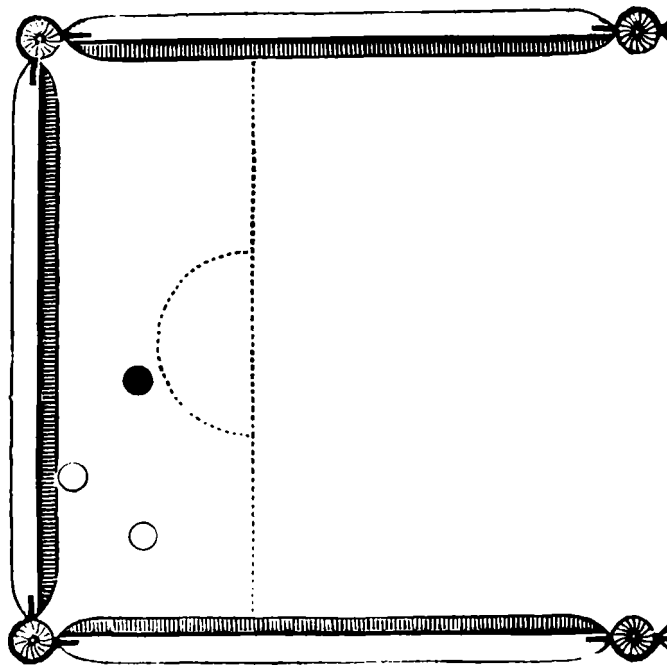
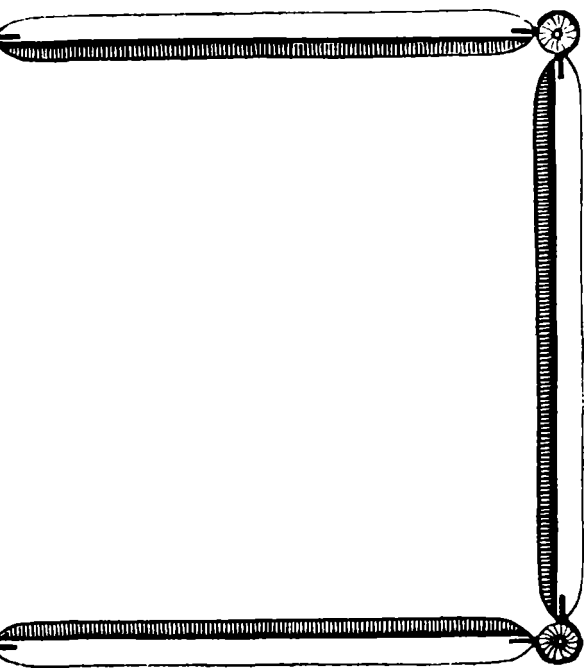




PLATE XXXII.



## PLATE XXXII.



### CANON BY A KISS.

Player's ball is the one to the right. He must play upon that which touches the cushion, and he will canon by means of a kiss. This stroke is very useful when the game is backward; for if it is played gently, it will leave a fine break.

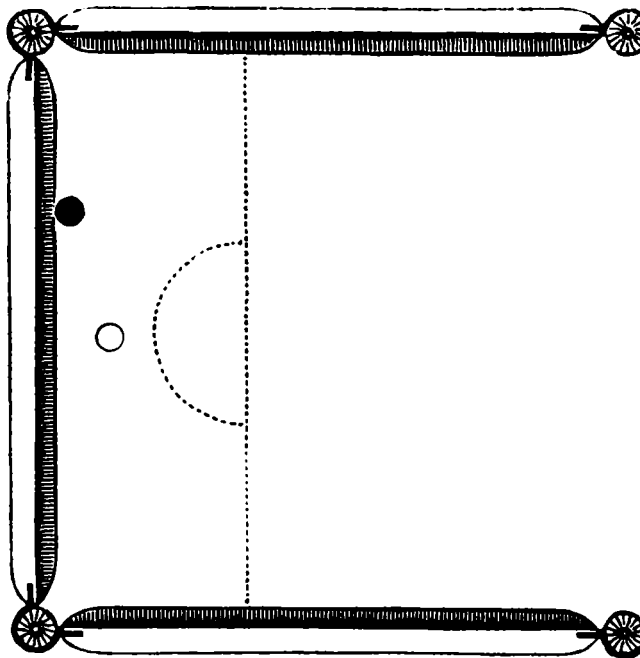
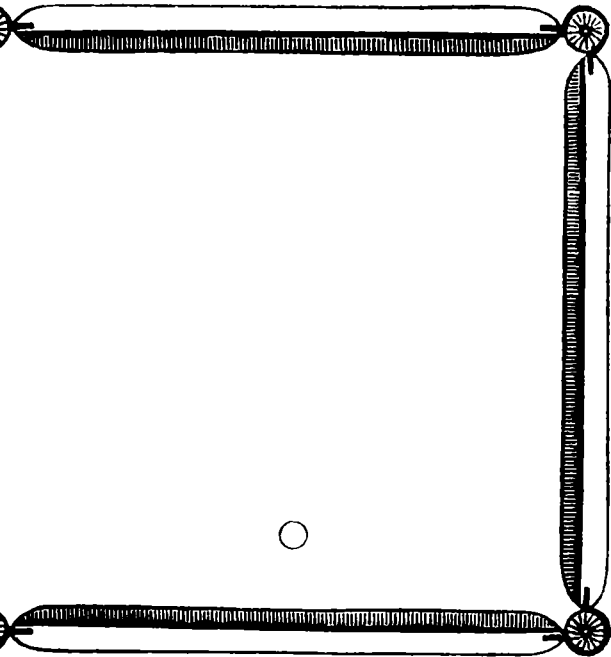


PLATE XXXIII.



## PLATE XXXIII.

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### LOSING HAZARD BY RUNNING ALONG THE CUSHION.

The holeing of the red ball would be very difficult, and, even if it was effected, it would yield but little. The proper way of playing this ball, is to run along the cushion and hole one's own ball in the corner pocket. The red ball will go out of the baulk, and leave as good a break as could be possibly desired. The ball must be struck upon the left, or cushion side, and the object ball nearly full—the player's ball will keep to the cushion; and, if properly struck, it will enter the pocket, although it may have cushioned a foot on this side of it.

PLATE XXXIV.

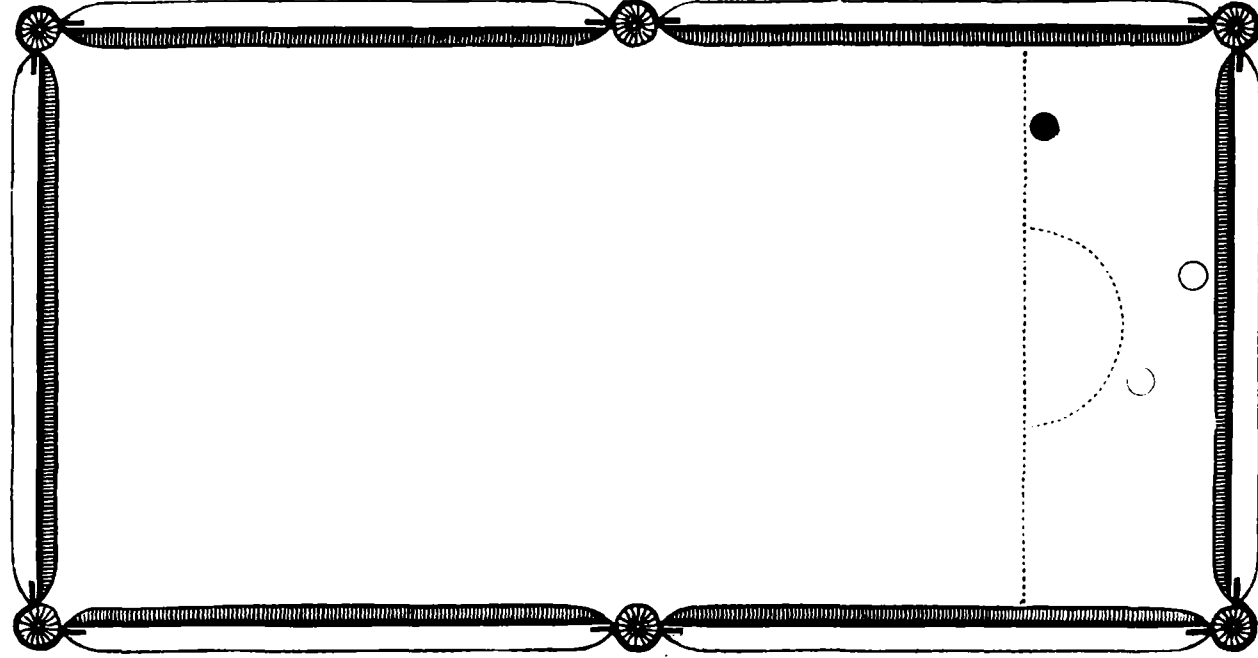


PLATE XXXIV.



CANON.

Player's ball the one nearest the baulk circle.

If the game is well advanced, a canon must be played for off the red ball; but if the striker have the worst of it, then he should play for the canon off the white. It must be done with a side stroke, and played so gently, that the three balls will be together, player's ball striking the red from the side cushion.

PLATE XXXV.

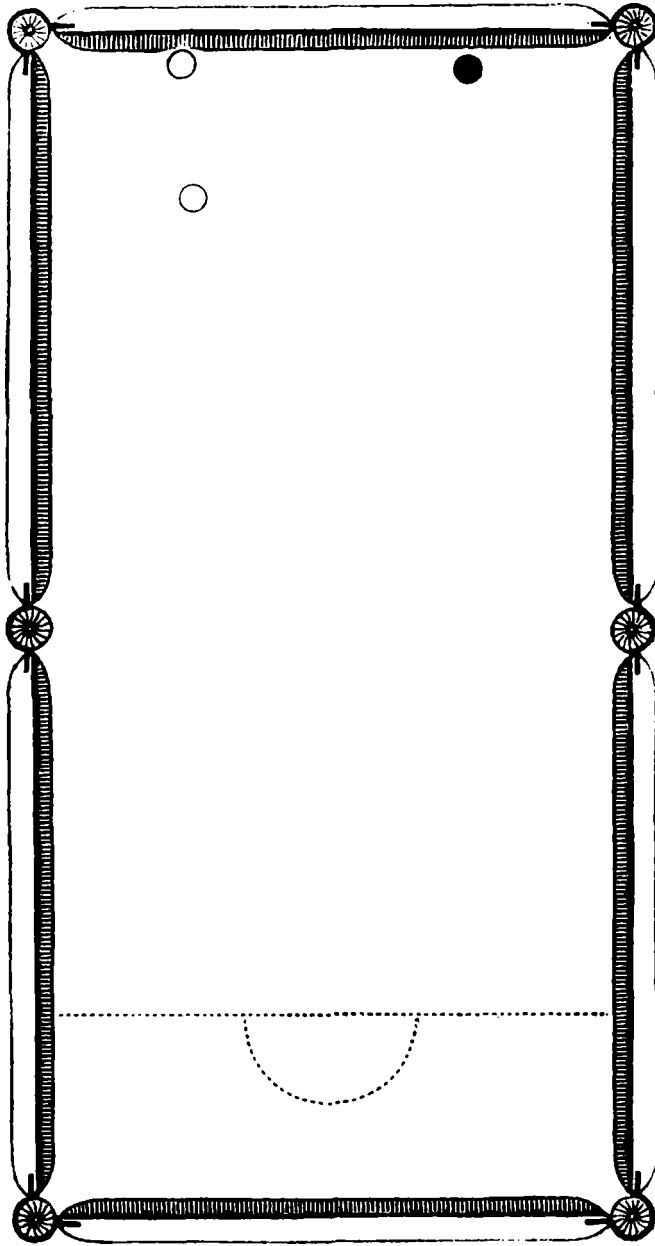




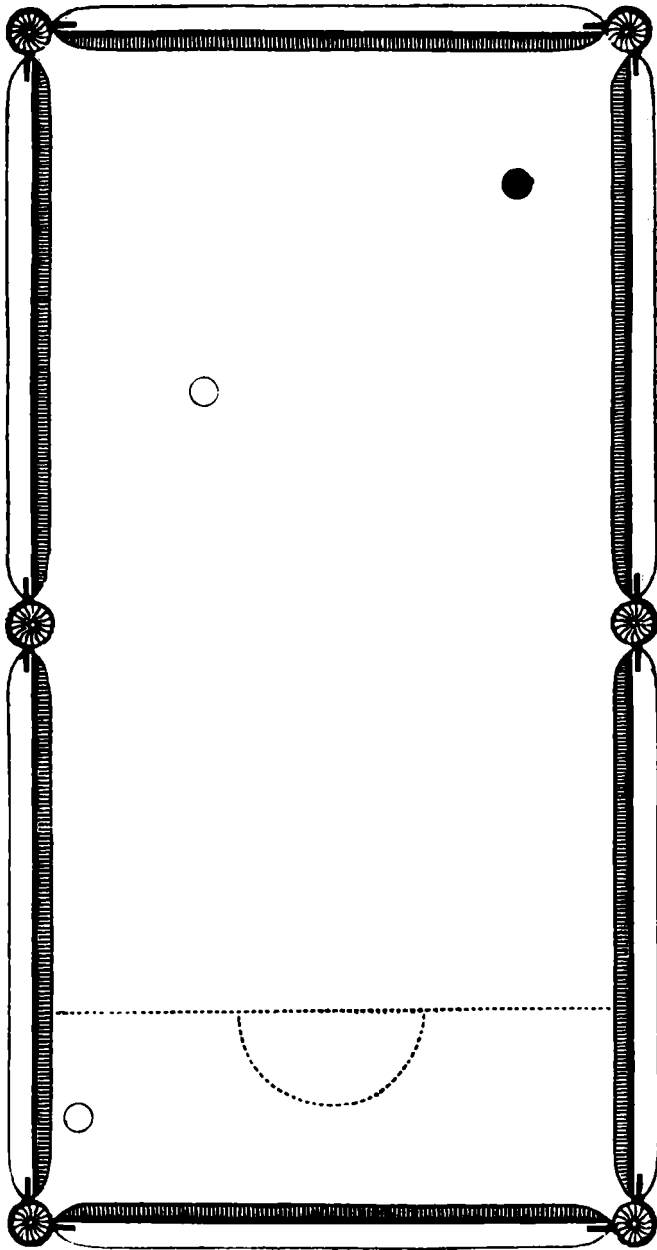
PLATE XXXV.



CANON BY A KISS.

Player's ball is that farthest from the cushion. He must play upon the white, striking his ball upon the top, with moderate strength, and the canon can scarcely be missed.

PLATE XXXVI.



## PLATE XXXVI.



### CANON.

Player's ball is that nearest the red.

If he want but two points of the game, he will find it much more easy to make a canon, than to hole the red ball. He must strike his ball on the right side, and play upon the left of the red. The ball played with, will travel from the top cushion to the right-hand-side one, and will canon, or go into the corner pocket, almost to a certainty. He must not play too strongly.

PLATE XXXVII.

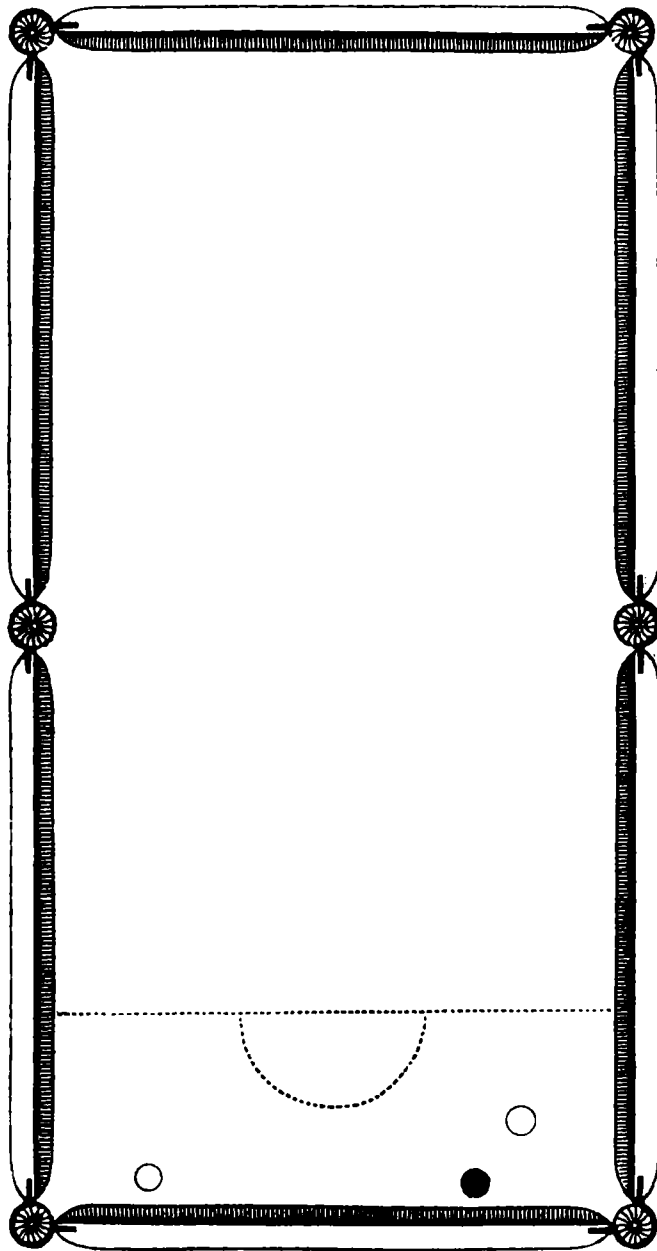


PLATE XXXVII.

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SHEWING THE POWER OF THE SIDE-TWIST  
FOR ENLARGING THE POCKET.

Player's ball near the red.

I wished to exemplify, to a friend, all that I had said respecting the power of the side-twist in enlarging the pocket ; and, for this purpose, I placed the balls as they are now represented. Having done so, I enquired if he thought it was possible to put my own ball, from the red, into the corner pocket that was masked by the white ball. He, knowing nothing of the properties of the side-twist, replied, that it appeared to be quite impossible : I played, and, on the third attempt, the ball struck the cushion ere it reached the white, and, clinging to it, passed the ball, and entered the pocket. I have before stated, that the side twist will be the means of enlarging the pocket more than double its natural size ; but, its dimensions in this instance, were increased to four times its magnitude.

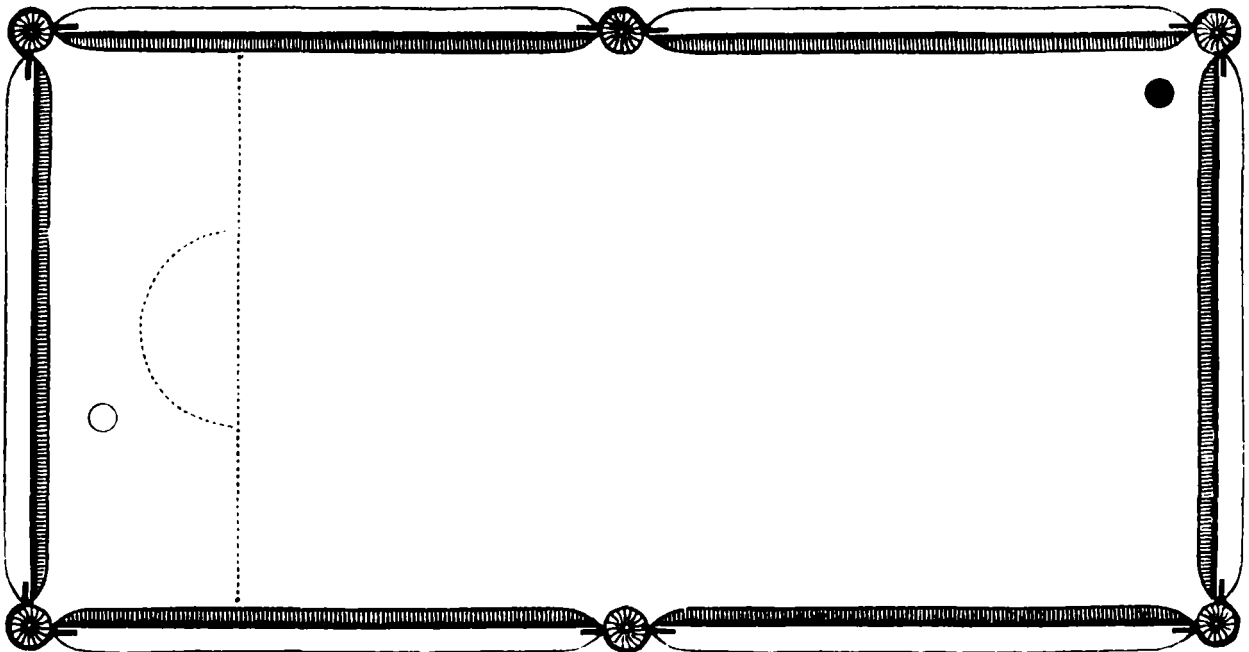


PLATE XXXVIII.

## PLATE XXXVIII.

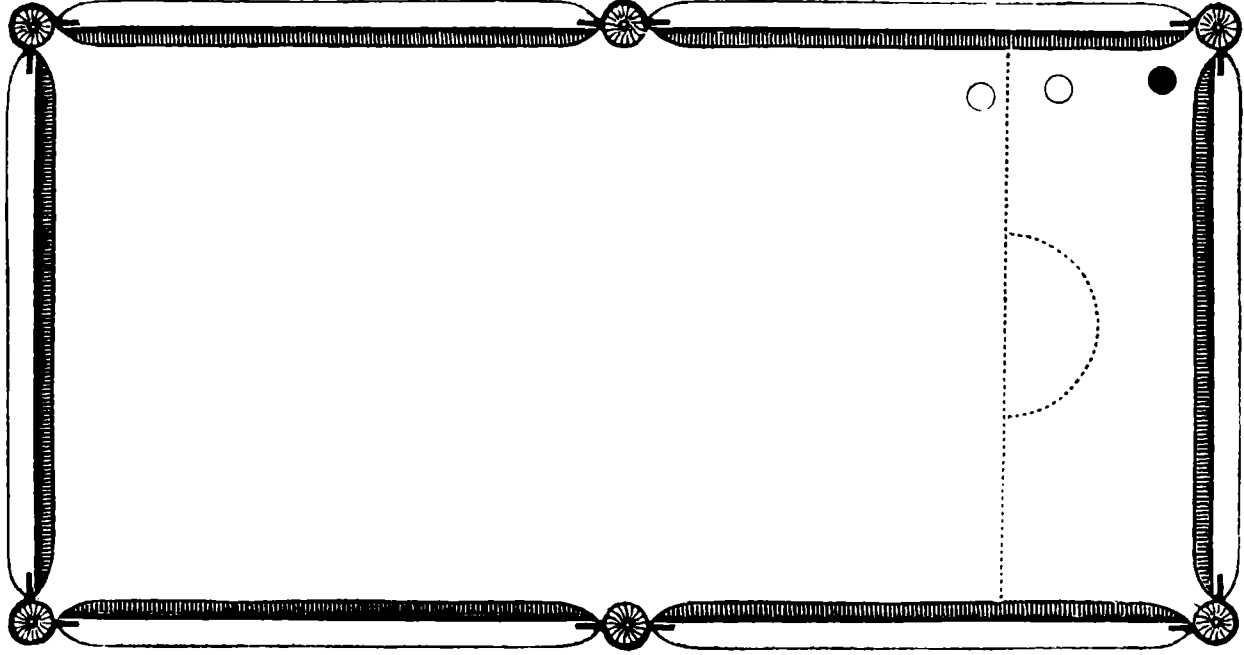


### TO GO ROUND A BALL.

The red ball is near the corner pocket. If it is left there, the adversary will assuredly obtain it. It must be played at with a strong side stroke, hitting the ball very high, and aiming two or three inches to the right of the white ball. The player's ball will go round it, and hit the red.

I once saw a game played between Mr. Kentfield and the celebrated Carr. Mr. K. was 97, Carr 99. The balls happened to be, on the game stroke, precisely as they are now described in the diagram. Mr. Kentfield made his ball go round the white, and hole the red.

PLATE XXXIX.





## PLATE XXXIX.

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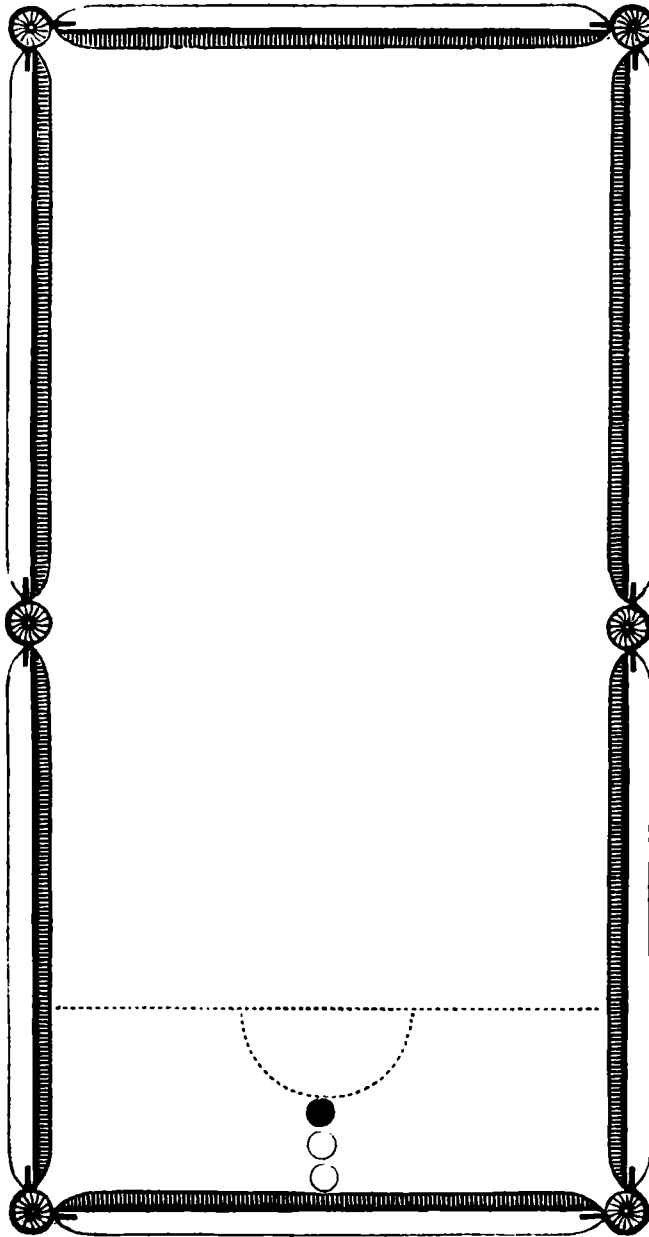
### THE PERFECTION OF STRENGTH—GOOD PRACTICE.

The player's ball is the centre one.

A sovereign to be placed on the red ball, and a canon made without knocking it off.

The object ball must be struck on the side nearest to the cushion: player's ball will take that cushion, the top one, the left-hand side cushion, and perhaps the lower one; and can be made to touch the red so gently, as not to disturb the coin that is placed upon its top! I have seen Mr. Kentfield perform this feat repeatedly.

PLATE XL.



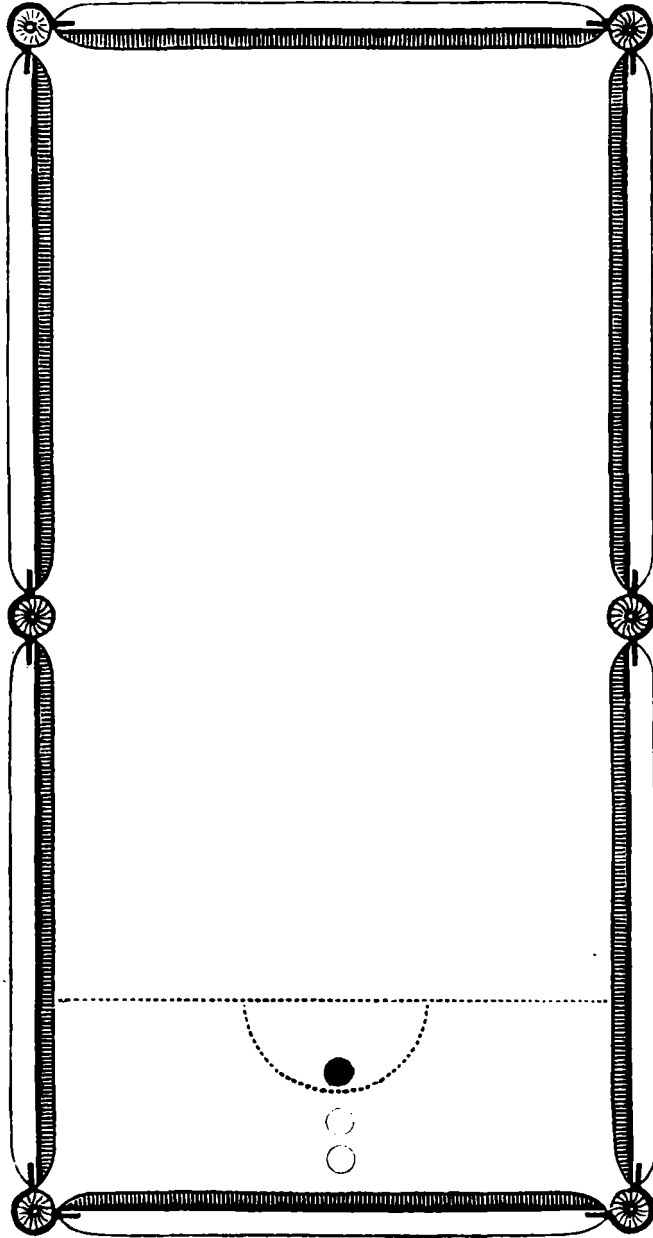
## PLATE XL.



### THE POWER OF THE SIDE STROKE.

The balls are in a line, and as nearly together as they are represented. Carr would play with the one nearest to the cushion, and make a canon. Strike the ball upon the top, and very much on the side; it will run out an inch or two, (either to the right or left, according to the side stroke), and then pop in between the other two. This stroke to Carr, was a certainty; and I never saw him miss it.

PLATE XLI.



## PLATE XLI.



### CANON.

Player's ball the one nearest to the lower cushion.

The advantage of having the three balls nearly together, is well known to, and duly appreciated by all talented Billiard players; and if the canon, now represented, be properly performed, each ball will remain within the circle.

I consider this stroke to be of considerable importance; and, although it can be made a dozen times in succession by the person who discovered it, I question whether there is any other player (professional or amateur) by whom it could be accomplished, unless he had previously received instruction.

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

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There are few of the niceties of the game that require more care than that of "giving a miss," and particularly when the player wishes to mask the ball. I recollect a game I played with Mr. Burke, of Cheltenham. He went off, and doubled, as was his custom, the red ball nearly over the baulk corner pocket. Not feeling disposed, against so skilful an antagonist, to run the risk of playing for a canon off his ball, I gave a miss, thinking I had masked the ball. His eye, keen and penetrating, discovered at a glance, that I had just left him room to pass. He played at the red ball, and holed his own ball off it by a fine cut, and scored forty points from the break. Had I taken the required pains, and had really masked the ball, the game would, in all probability, have been in my favor; but as it was, I lost, through carelessness, the only chance I possessed.

---

The style of game must be regulated according to the score. If in a state of forwardness, the play must be cautious, avoiding all attempts to make either a canon or a hazard, if the risk appears to be two to one against accomplishment. If the opponent's game, however, be much advanced, one will be justified in playing more boldly, taking, at the same time, especial care, that each stroke is played with a strength that will insure another score. On this subject, I cannot, perhaps, do better than cite the doggerel lines addressed by Mr. Hughes to the frequenters of his room :

“ William Hughes, hopes you'll him excuse,  
 For making this observation :  
 When you've the best of the game, keep the same,  
 To mention more, there can be no occasion.”

---

If the red ball be safe, and my opponent's ball be so placed as to offer me a losing hazard, through the medium of a twist, I always, after the fashion of Mr. Burke, play for it with a dead strength, if it will carry the object ball to the situation required ; for, should I miss holeing my own ball, it will be left so completely over the pocket, that there will not be made from it more than the solitary two ; and, in compensation, the red ball being safe, I, in all probability, obtain a miss ; whereas, should I succeed in scoring, as described, the break left may prove very advantageous.

It must always be remembered, that the power of a fast Indian-rubber cushion, is at least three times greater than one stuffed with list; and, consequently, that the stroke can be executed with a third less strength; and likewise, that if the angle must be formed from the cushion, a strong blow will entirely destroy it.

---

If, in playing for a canon off the white ball, there be any chance of missing it, the striker should employ sufficient strength to carry his ball some distance from the red; for, should he play it slowly and miss the score, he will, in all probability, leave a certain canon for his opponent. Upon the same principle, one should never play the red ball slowly for a pocket, if there be the least chance of missing it; but, if it be requisite to hole the adversary's ball, it must be done with the gentlest of strength; for, if the score be missed, his ball will be left so close to the cushion, that he may not be enabled to do harm. In witnessing the playing of two great Sweepstakes, I observed that, on both occasions, they were won by gentlemen who were fortunate enough to follow those who played upon the system, against which I would give the strongest caution.

---

In giving a miss, the ball should never be placed close to a cushion, as the adversary, taking advantage of the crippled



situation, can play for a score that he would not, under other circumstances, have attempted; and should he fail, one cannot, from such a position, take advantage, with certainty, of any thing he may have left. A space of six inches should lie between the ball and the cushion; for, if a canon is attempted by the opponent, there will be left to him plenty of room to go round it.

---

There is a stroke now in use that is, at times, extremely serviceable. When either of the balls is so near the baulk-line, as to be pronounced playable, the player's ball must be placed as near to it as possible without touching, and then, by a push, the striker can hole his own ball in the corner pocket as often as he pleases. I remember that the white ball once came in such a position, when my score was thirty-eight, my opponent's eighty-four, the game being a hundred. I holed my own ball in the same pocket one-and-thirty times, and even then the object ball was scarcely moved from its original position. I have heard of inferior players that could score, from a ball so situated, as many points as were necessary to complete even the longest game. The stroke is worth practising.

---

Every person is, I believe, aware that, for general hazard striking, the proper position of the cue is horizontal; but there

are some strokes that require a slight elevation of the right elbow; others are, I think, executed with more success with a slight depression. Many also require that the ball played with, should be struck at a particular point. For instance, if to follow, the ball must be struck above the centre; if to remain nearly stationary, it must be struck below it; and if to recede, or what is termed "come back," it must be hit lower still.

---

If accustomed to give a miss at starting, it must be done from the side cushion, taking care to bring the ball into the circle. Thus situated, should the opponent give another, the player will be in the best position to take advantage of it. If the miss be given on the baulk-side of the centre pocket, and not more than six inches from it, it is good play to double the ball for the opposite pocket, and to canon from the top cushion, through the medium of a strong side-twist. If the miss be given six inches above the centre pocket, and rather close to the cushion, one may play for a canon off the red ball; and although the situation of the player's ball may be a little out of the angle, the counter side stroke will enable him to reach it.

---

There are few parts of the game more essential than that of being enabled to disturb a baulk. In this, many excel; and it

has always been my lot to play against those who seldom or never missed. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying, that I have lost many and many a game when the balls have been thus situated, and my score advanced to twenty-three. Let me, therefore, call attention to the very great utility of the measure. It is an art that is easily acquired, requiring only practice and a little instruction ; but let me again reiterate, that all the instruction in the world will avail nothing, unless, if from an Indian-rubber cushion, due attention be given to proper strength.

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As the side stroke cannot enlarge the pocket for a winning hazard, it will consequently be rendered much more difficult than a losing one ; but skill in that hazard, being of great importance, I have been induced to insert a description of the Game of Pyramid. This game consists entirely of winning hazards ; and as the mass of balls, when struck, are, perhaps, widely scattered over the surface of the table, it is requisite, in holeing a ball, that the hazard should be made with a peculiar nicety of strength, in order that many others should succeed ; and thus the game, now about to be described, will offer to a player, desirous of improvement, the very best of practise.

THE GAME OF PYRAMID.

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This game can be played with any number of balls, or players: the usual number of balls is sixteen,—viz., fifteen colored, and one white. Two persons generally play.

The game is scored by holeing the colored balls: whoever has holed the greatest number of balls, at the end of the game, wins.

The player pocketing the last ball, scores two.

String for the lead: the ball nearest to the baulk cushion, has the choice. The fifteen colored balls are placed in the form of a triangle; the first ball being on the winning spot.

The player commences from the circle in the baulk. He plays with the white ball, at the colored ones placed as above. Should the striker not pocket any of the colored balls, the next player plays with the white ball, from the place it has stopped.

In pocketing one or more of the colored balls, the player continues until he fails.

Should the player pocket his own ball, he must replace, on the winning spot, one of the colored balls he may have already holed. Should the spot be occupied by another ball, he must place it in a line behind the ball, or balls, so occupying the spot or line. Should the player not have a ball, he must place the first ball that he may pocket, on the spot; or, if the game shall have been finished, ere he shall have holed a ball to replace, he must pay the winner one ball extra.

Missing the balls, the player must spot a ball.

Making a foul stroke, the player must spot a ball.

Foul strokes are made by touching any ball in playing (except the striker's) with the hand, cue, or otherwise; or by touching a ball whilst running. All balls holed by the foul stroke, are replaced, and the next in succession plays.

Should the player pocket his own ball, and, at the same time, hole one or more of the colored balls, the balls, so holed, are replaced; and one more is also replaced, in consequence of the striker having holed his own.

All the players play with the same ball, except when there are only two remaining on the table; in that case, the last striker plays with the white, and the other player with the colored ball.

When only two balls are on the table, should the player hole his own ball, he loses the two.

## HANDICAP SWEEPSTAKES.

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Three or more persons can play, and the game may extend to any number of points agreed upon. Draw lots for the order of starting. The red ball is spotted. No. 1, plays first; No. 2, follows; and the rest in rotation. The number of points made by the player, in each inning, are marked upon the slate; and when he has ceased to score, the next player commences. If a miss be made, one point is taken from the player's score, and the others do not reap any further advantage. Should the player hole his ball, without striking another, he loses three points. When the balls touch, there cannot be any score; they are broken, the red ball spotted, and the next in succession plays. Whatever the game may be, that person is the winner, whose aggregate amount of the scores, made in the several innings, first completes the number specified. When there are several persons desirous of occupying the table, they will find Sweepstakes very amusing; and, if inferior players receive

an adequate number of points, each person can have a fair chance of winning. At Brighton, this method of amusing many persons at once, is very popular ; and it has frequently occurred, that, in Sweepstakes, handicapped by Mr. Kentfield, four or five players have been, at the close, within one or two hazards of winning the game. It is also very attractive to spectators, and promotes a great deal of speculation and excitement.

## GOLD CUE.

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In the early part of last year, several Noblemen and Gentlemen made a £10 Sweepstakes. The game was 250 up, and the winner to be entitled to a Gold Cue. In order, however, to give popularity to the game, and also a general stimulus, it was resolved that the Cue should pass into the possession of any other champion, who had ability to win it. To accomplish this end, it was arranged that Sweepstakes should be annually played; and, as the conditions connected with it, may be interesting to amateurs, I am induced to subjoin them:—

## GOLD CUE, 1844.

*“The Annual Sweepstakes, 250 up, 10 Sovereigns each, will be played at Mr. Kentfield’s Rooms, on Tuesday, April 2nd, 1844. Any Gentlemen wishing to play, must declare his intention to Mr. Kentfield one fortnight, or more, before the above day; and, having so declared, will forfeit half his stake should he not play.*

*“The stakes to be paid to Mr. Kentfield before the commencement of the Sweepstakes.*



“The winner will have the right of challenging the present holder of the Gold Cue, to play a match for £25, either of twenty-five games of twenty-four points each, or of one game of 500, as he (the winner) may choose.

“If the winner of the Sweepstakes win also this match, he shall receive the Cue from its present holder, and retain it safe from challenge this year; but open to the challenges of the next year and the year after.

“If the holder of the Cue win this match, the player who was second in the Sweepstakes, shall acquire the right of challenging on the same terms; and if his challenge be refused, or if he prove successful in the match, the Cue must be resigned to him to be held as above.

“If the holder of the Cue refuse the challenge of the winner of the Sweepstakes, the latter is then open to the challenge, for this year, of the second in the Sweepstakes, to play the usual match, which match will determine who shall be the holder of the Cue.

“If the present holder of the cue defend it on these conditions, for this year and the next, the Cue shall become his property.

“If the Sweepstakes result in equal points for second place, between two or more players, the tie to be played off, if between two players, in a match of fifteen games of twenty-four points each, for £10; if between more than two players, in a Sweepstakes, 100 up, £5 each player.

“The above match must be played (as the players may determine) either on Tuesday Evening, after the Sweepstakes, or on Wednesday Morning, commencing at ten o'clock, in order that it may not interfere with the challenge matches, which, if they take place, must be played on Wednesday, April 3rd, and Thursday, April 4th.

“The annual Sweepstakes are appointed to take place on the Tuesday before Easter Monday, and the challenge matches on the two following days, under the same conditons as above.”

As it was intended that the Cue should be considered as a trophy for the best amateur player, I think the game should be played, as greyhounds are run, namely, two and

two, each winner of a game again contending, until it is brought to the last couple, and the victor of that struggle to be the possessor of the prize. By this mode of playing, the superiority of the player would be manifest, and the "blushing honors" might rest with justice on his brow; but playing, after the fashion now in use, the winning of the game generally depends, not upon defence and science, but upon the goodness of the breaks that may fall to the lot of either competitor.

## THE TABLE.

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Cushions stuffed with Indian-rubber require considerable heat to keep them supple; and, as they become quite hard when affected by cold weather, they are not exactly adapted for Tables in a private residence. Balls returning from a cushion stuffed with list, will always act correctly, but the unfortunate passion for *fast tables* has excluded them from most public rooms.\* A gentleman informed me that he had a Billiard Table in his house when he was stationed in a remote part of India. The cushions had become so worn that the Table could scarcely be played upon. Not being enabled to obtain either workmen or fresh list, he set to work and re-stuffed his cushions with layers of superfine cloth. His friends, when they afterwards again favored him with a visit, were quite astonished at the

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\* *Extract from the letter of a Gentleman, upon whose judgment the greatest reliance may be placed:—*

“I fully agree with you, that the old cushions are, in every respect, preferable to the Indian-rubber ones, and may be made to run quite fast enough, with an iron or slate bed and fine cloth.”

apparent improvement ; the cushions were perfectly correct, and infinitely faster than before. When consulting a Billiard-table Maker, respecting Tables for friends, he has always asked me whether they required speed or truth, saying, at the same time, "Both cannot be obtained." The more elastic\* the cushion, the more incorrect will be the angle, if it be played against with force ; and I have frequently seen a ball, after it has struck a second cushion, cross and recross the table in nearly a direct line ; whereas its proper course ought to have been in an opposite direction, and its final place of rest, probably five or six feet from where it actually stopped. How wretched, to a player possessing an eye, accustomed to geometrical demonstration, must appear the running of the balls when returning from cushions so palpably untrue ; and how mortifying to witness the unfavorable result of a well-played stroke, that ought, with correctness of angle, to have insured the winning of the game. If players would give up the ridiculous railroad-pace, useful only to those who are advocates for chance hazards, and content themselves with a speed that would insure correctness of angle, it would be highly beneficial to improvement ; would induce them

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\* Indian-rubber cushions, very fast, and, consequently very elastic, were placed upon the Billiard Table in a Club of which I was a member. A losing hazard would present itself from a ball within the baulk. The object ball, when strongly struck, although hitting the cushion a foot outside of the line, would, instead of crossing over to the centre pocket, again return to the baulk. The frequenters of the room had the good sense to discard such cushions immediately.

to look forward to defence as a safeguard, and encourage them to persevere in the pursuit of a pastime, from which, many may be driven in disgust, from the multiplied lucky hazards too frequently following in the wake of speed and hard hitting. If cushions, stuffed with the finest cloth, would yield a speed one length faster than those stuffed with list, I should say, that a metal\* bed, and cushions of this description, would produce a perfect table, fast enough, in all conscience, for every purpose of scientific play; and, by playing on a table so constructed, a knowledge of the game would be more easily acquired, whilst a greater number of points could be made from the balls.

In these remarks, I believe, I am fully borne out by the repeatedly-expressed opinions of some of the finest professional players, and the very best of amateurs. Cushions, such as are now described, requiring no alteration, would prove more satisfactory to the maker, while the proprietors of Billiard-rooms would, I think, find players of merit more anxious to contend. Balls, returning from cushions stuffed with Indian-rubber, receive an inclination to rise, or jump; and to prevent this, the cushion is made to project at the top; but a ball, hitting a cushion so constructed, touches it above the centre, and it will

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\* I specify "Metal," because, in matches, occupying several days, during which period, upwards of twelve hundred games were played, I cannot recollect a single instance of the balls having run untruly. The Table was supplied by Mr. Hunt, and is still in the possession of Mr. Bedford, it has been up ten years and has not required any adjustment.

consequently imbibe a motion similar to one that has been struck, by the player, on the side. To remedy a defect so glaring and so inconsistent, a cushion has lately been invented by Mr. Hunt, that will, I believe, receive the ball upon its centre; and I have the authority of Mr. Bedford for stating, that the cushions, now described, come the nearest to truth, for correctness of angle, and are brought to a state of perfection that he never expected to witness.

One of the inventors of the Indian-rubber cushions, being a billiard-table manufacturer, as well as an excellent player, and quite capable of judging correctly respecting the precision of an angle, placed his maiden cushions on a table of his own, and proceeded, ere they were exhibited, to try their effect. The balls had not been many times struck, before the incorrectness of the angle became apparent, and their immediate removal was contemplated. The table, however, having been engaged by gentlemen at a given hour, and the intervening time not allowing of their being replaced by others, the cushions were permitted to remain. The gentlemen arrived—they commenced playing. The speed, the extraordinary speed, filled them with amazement; and as the games went on, their delight kept pace with their surprise. The inventor smiled, and, if I am rightly informed, thus expressed himself: "If the public is pleased, the cushions may as well remain." But had the table, upon which the experimental cushions were placed, been first played upon by scientific players, the absurdity

would, at once, have been condemned ; their removal would instantly have taken place ; and cushions, too fast to be correct, would never have disgraced a game, whose beauties and scientific properties are governed by, and wholly dependant upon, truth of angle.

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### CONFIRMATION OF JUDICIOUS STRENGTHS.

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A player, considered by many as second only to Mr. Kentfield, a few days since, gave rather more than a third of the game to a gentleman, whose power of cue was held in some repute. The latter won. Upon expressing my surprise, the loser thus replied: "The fact is, I play so seldom, that I cannot judge the strengths." Here, therefore, is an admission from almost the highest authority, that judicious, or well-regulated strengths, constitute the *power* of the game. An acknowledgment of this kind, from so celebrated a player, is to me a flattering confirmation of the truth of all that I have said upon the subject. If good strengths—"the one thing needful"—are so essential to the game, they should be played with the greatest care and nicety of judgment ; and, in order that success may be insured, it is

necessary that the speed of the bed of the table, and the return from the cushion, should be equal ; and that they should, of course, continue so from day to day ; but I am informed by a marker of experience, intelligence, and close observation, that cushions, stuffed with Indian-rubber, are so susceptible of change of temperature, that the effect of it has even been experienced during the continuation of a match ! Thus the best of strengths at eleven in the morning, might prove the worst of strengths at five in the afternoon !

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## THE BALLS.

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How scientifically soever a man may play, the power of his game will be materially injured, if the balls swerve from their direct or proper course ; and, as the *correct* execution of some strokes, require that the ball struck should travel nearly the length of the table, with what is termed “a dead strength,” the winning, or the losing, of, perhaps, a most important game, may depend entirely upon the correctness of the construction of the ball. The fineness of the cloth now in use, and the extraordinary speed of the table, render the



slightest imperfection the more apparent; and, as there is considerable difficulty in preserving the balls sufficiently perfect, with reference to size and *equal weight*, the following remarks may not be deemed unserviceable.

If there be any moisture remaining in the ball, it will be drawn forth when exposed to the power of the strong gas-light, by which billiard tables are now illuminated. and a bias may, consequently, be the result. To guard against this, as much as possible, the balls should be obtained from the manufacturer, full two inches in size. They should be laid in bran, or suspended in the billiard room, a few months before they are wanted for use; and, when considered to be sufficiently seasoned, they should *then* be turned down to the size required; and, the one most approved of, is, I believe, just a shade under two inches.

The marked ball should have but one spot, and that as small as possible.

The best balls that I have seen, have been made by Mr. Stewart, 249, Oxford-street; and by Messrs. Holtzaphael, Charing-cross.

## THE SIDE STROKE.

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The ball must be struck on the side it is intended to go. If it is the wish of the player that the ball should incline to the right, it must be hit on the right side; if to the left, the left side must be struck. There are several parts of the side of the ball that can be struck—and some strokes require one part to be hit, and some another—but all, I believe, have greater effect when the ball is gently struck. Instruction, from a professor, in the use of the side stroke, would greatly improve the game of any amatuer.

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## THE CUE.

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A single leather is preferable to a double one; and a cue that has any spring in it should not be used.

In sending forth these few pages, I have not been influenced by a desire of gain; nor have I given way to an egotistical feeling. The interest taken in the game, by the number that were present, and the winning of it having been pronounced by Mr. Kentfield to have been "a wonderful performance," induced me to imagine that diagrams, shewing the position of the balls for the last nine breaks, would prove interesting to those who were not present at the match; at the same time, they would afford to billiard players of ordinary power, the opportunity of practising the strokes, until five-and-twenty points could be made, from balls so placed. My remarks respecting the cushions, are made with no other intention, than that of endeavouring to impress upon the minds of young and rising players, the necessity of resting their hopes of improvement, upon correctness of angle, instead of unnecessary speed.

## LAWS OF THE GAME.

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1.—If the striker, in making a canon or hazard, should by accident touch either of the balls with his cue, hand, or otherwise, the adversary can, if he thinks proper, claim it as foul, and have the balls broke; in which case, the points made by such stroke, are not scored, and the person claiming the foul stroke, leads off.

2.—Foul strokes are made as follows: namely, when the striker's ball touches either of the others; touching any ball while rolling; moving another ball in any way while taking aim, or in the act of striking; pushing the balls together when playing with the *butt* of the cue; playing with both feet off the floor; playing at a ball before it has done rolling; or by playing with the wrong ball: in this latter case, should a hazard or canon be made, the adversary can have the balls broke and lead off; and should no score be made by such stroke, he can take the choice of balls and play.

3.—In breaking the balls, you take them all off the table, place the red on the spot, and both parties play from the baulk.

4.—If the balls have been changed, and it cannot be ascertained by whom, the game must be played out with them as they then are; or, even if two strokes have been made before the mistake is discovered, it must still be played out in the same way.

5.—Should the striker, in making a canon or hazard, knock his own or either of the balls off the table, he cannot score the points made by such stroke; and the opponent plays, but the balls are not broken.

6.—If a ball stops on the edge of the pocket, and afterwards falls in, either by shaking the room, table, or other accident, it must be replaced as near the original place as possible.

7.—Should the striker, when in hand, play at a ball in baulk, his adversary has the option of scoring a miss; or having the balls replaced, and the stroke played again; or of breaking the balls.

8.—If the striker's ball touch another, he must play; and should he make a canon or hazard, the adversary can claim it as foul; or he can allow the points to be scored, and the person to play on; but, should the striker not score, it is at the option of the opponent to break them or not.

9.—Should the marker, whilst marking for the players, by accident touch either of the balls, while rolling or not, it must be placed as near as possible to the place it would have occupied.

10.—If the last player should alter the direction of the balls while rolling, with the cue, hand, or otherwise, the striker may place it where he thinks proper.

11.—A "line-ball" is when either the white or red is exactly on the line of the baulk; in which case, it cannot be played at by a person whose ball is in hand, it being considered in baulk.

12.—If the striker's ball is over the pocket, and he should, in the act of striking, miss it, but, in drawing his cue back, knock it into the pocket, he will lose three points, it being "a coup."

13.—If the red ball has been put into a pocket, it must not be placed on the spot till the other balls have done rolling, should there be a probability of either of them touching it again, as the stroke is not finished till the balls stop.

14.—If the striker should touch his ball by accident, when taking aim, it is not a stroke, and the ball is to be replaced; but should he touch it in the act of striking, then it is a stroke.

15.—If either of the balls lodge on a cushion, it is off the table; and should a canon or hazard be made, it does not score, and the ball must be placed on the spot, or played from the baulk, according to what ball it is, white or red.

16.—Any person refusing to play the game out, after he has played one stroke, loses it.

17.—In a match of four, the game is thirty-one, and each person is at liberty to offer his partner advice.

18.—All disputes in the game to be decided by the marker, or majority of the company; but no person has a right to interfere, until appealed to by one or both players.

19.—It is a "love game" when no hazard has been made by the loser.

20.—All "cramp" games are played sixteen up.