

ROBERTS ON BILLARDS.

BY JOHN ROBERTS,

CHAMPION OF ENGLAND.

EDITED BY HENRY BUCK,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOARD OF GREEN CLOTH."

With Twenty Diagrams

SHOWING IN A NOVEL MANNER THE MODE OF "PLAYING
BREAKS."

LONDON :

STANLEY RIVERS AND CO.

Publishers of Scientific Amusements and Pastimes of Society,

8 PALSGRAVE PLACE, STRAND.

TO

GEORGE PAYNE, ESQ.

FOR MANY YEARS A PATRON OF OUR NATIONAL
SPORTS,

This Work is respectfully dedicated

BY

JOHN ROBERTS,

CHAMPION BILLIARD-PLAYER OF ENGLAND.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

THE GAME.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. PRELIMINARY REMARKS	3
II. STANDARD GAMES : ENGLISH	7
III. " AMERICAN	20
IV. " FRENCH	35
V. INCIDENTS IN MY CAREER	39
VI. SCREW AND THE SIDE TWIST	53
VII. PLAYERS I HAVE MET	60
VIII. SHARP PRACTITIONERS	65

PART II.

HOW TO PLAY IT.

IX. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS	129
X. ROOMS AND TABLES	140
XI. STRENGTH	146
XII. LOSING HAZARDS	154
XIII. WINNING HAZARDS	158
XIV. CANNONS	161
XV. PLAYING BREAKS	163
XVI. A PRACTICAL LESSON	192
XVII. POOL AND PYRAMIDS	210
XVIII. CURIOSITIES OF THE GAME	219
XIX. RULES : ENGLISH, AMERICAN, FRENCH	223
XX. CELEBRATED MATCHES	281

PART I.

THE GAME.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

I PROPOSE writing some of the notions and experiences acquired during five-and-thirty years spent over the billiard-table. Many men who have played and marked, and managed rooms, and been connected with the game a much shorter time than I, hate it and all its belongings most cordially. They knocked the balls about for pleasure until they tired, and then play became absolute labour. I, on the contrary, have always felt a strong attachment for billiards, and even now often find myself attempting strokes for amusement when alone in the room. It has frequently been suggested to me that I should put my advice on paper; but lack of inclination has hitherto stayed me. What I have said in the succeeding pages will be found contained in the fewest and simplest words; the abstruse mathematical problems which

have adorned so many recent books on the game must, if they are required, be sought elsewhere. I take it that precision is the pivot on which geometry and mathematics work; and this being the case, billiards has no right to claim their aid. A faulty ball or cushion would upset the calculations of hours, while the consequences caused by a slate which "drew" would prove immensely disastrous.

Some peculiarities hitherto unnoticed I have treated of, and not a few false theories are commented upon. The illustrations will be few in number, as I do not consider elaborate diagrams either necessary or desirable. One winning hazard is the same as another, so far as the point of contact is concerned, and, if we except half-a-dozen or so, losing hazards greatly resemble each other. What I shall chiefly endeavour to point out is, the advantage of keeping the balls in good positions, through the medium of a succession of easy strokes. To this end, I have caused two sets of diagrams to be drawn from different positions, showing a few of the most advantageous opening strokes in each break.

The ensuing pages, I may add, are written for the guidance of amateur players; and, although at times I perhaps may have been tempted into the relation of facts concerning strokes or breaks made by myself, it will be discovered that no effort has been made to show so much what *I* can do as what *ought* to be done by players. Advice is also offered on what to attempt and what to shun, together with such suggestions and cautions as ought to prove beneficial. My object throughout has been to make *Roberts on Billiards* not essentially a text-book, but as palatable as possible; and several events and anecdotes which must be new to the majority of players are included, while a few pages have been devoted to some of the incidents in my career, and the players I have met in Australia, America, on the Continent, and in this country.

The rules of the English, American, and French standard games have been carefully revised, together with those of pyramids and pool, as well as for half-a-dozen of the most important cramp games. The short reviews of the three national games will be found to contain many facts of interest, especially relative to

the American. In the chapter headed a "Practical Lesson," the chances of the table are considered from every point, and amongst the illustrations will be noticed such hazards and cannons only as it is advisable to make, except on the diagram headed "Curiosities." The sharpers, who assist so much to bring billiards into disrepute, do not escape scot-free, and several interesting stories of their malpractices may assist in warning persons who read them against being entrapped. To the matches since 1850 considerable space has been allotted; but as several were reported very briefly, and many never appeared in print at all, a few of the best are necessarily omitted.

STANDARD GAMES.

THE ENGLISH GAME.

WITHIN the memory of several distinguished players still living, most of the chief improvements in our game have been made. The recognition of the side stroke, and the introduction of the red ball, of cue-tips, of slate tables, and of india-rubber cushions, followed in rapid succession. Each met with powerful opposition, but their obvious advantages gradually forced themselves into notice, and after being cultivated by a few of the more discerning, they were generally adopted. Comment, therefore, is needless on the method of play prior to the adoption of the red ball, which came into use shortly before the opening of the present century, and led to the original "three-ball billiards." It was at first 16, then 21, and afterwards 24, up, and governed by various laws about alternate

strokes. Hitherto the mace had proved the most useful instrument in playing; but White, in his *Treatise on Billiards*, published in 1807, says: "The cue is the only instrument in vogue abroad, and it is played with amazing address by the Italians and Dutch; but in England, until of late years, the mace has been employed almost exclusively, which the foreigners hold in the utmost contempt, as it requires not near so much dexterity in playing it. It is astonishing to what a degree of skill the management of the cue has been in many instances carried. Examples of this will daily present themselves to those who are much in the habit of frequenting the billiard-rooms of our own country; but I think I have upon the whole seen more instances of superior address among foreigners. The keeper of a billiard-room in Hamburg, where perhaps the game is played as much as in any other town in Europe, will at any time engage to make the straight hazard across two contiguous tables; that is, that he will strike the object-ball from one table to the other, and hole it in any specified pocket of the latter. But the most remarkable instance of this un-

usual dexterity that has hitherto come within my observation occurred in an Italian who frequented the billiard-rooms at Paris, about the period of the Revolution in 1789. I have frequently seen him place two balls in the middle of the table parallel to each other, and venture an even bet that he would make either the winning or losing hazard in any one of the six pockets; and this he usually performed with facility, upon the nature of the hazard and the particular pocket being determined upon by the spectators. He had so great a facility of making what are called double hazards (*i. e.* hazards made after a reverberation of the ball from an opposite cushion), that he has been known to hole the red ball in one of the upper holes, by playing at it from the striking-point, thirty times without an intervening failure."

Winning hazards proved the most serviceable at the outset, and were practised accordingly. Then followed Carr with his twist shots, by which losing hazards were rendered easier and more certain than before. The year 1827 brought us slate instead of wooden table-beds, and additional weight caused more

solidity and steadiness. Hitherto list had answered the purpose for stuffing cushions, and it was not until about 1835 that india-rubber came to be tried. Everybody laughed at what was considered an innovation, but, although grave reasons against its adoption were advanced, it was eventually used, and has been attended by great success. The angles are as correct, the ball comes off cleaner, and much greater rapidity is gained, twist strokes being effected by a gentle turn of the wrist instead of hard hitting.

After this billiards became a popular amusement, and gradually rose to the position it now holds among our national pastimes. "The Old Soldier," formerly a marker at Bath, said to me during a conversation a few months since on its rapid growth: "Before I enlisted and went to India, none but persons of rank or high connection played billiards; ten years later, on my return, every street had its room, and every hotel its public table; the players were 'mixed' certainly, but a hundred times more numerous."

Unlike the American, the English game has hardly any history, and very few associa-

tions worthy of notice. Carr and the Cork marker were the first players of any pretensions whose prowess is recorded. In Pierce Egan's *Annals of Sporting and Fancy Gazette*, a few matches are reported between them about the year 1825. They played one evening at the Four Nations Hotel, in the Opera Colonnade, three heats of 100 up, and Carr won every time; the Cork marker getting to 92 in the first, 49 in the second, and 75 in the third. In the second, Carr, it is added, made "twenty-two spot hazards off the red ball." After this display, Captain S——, for Carr, challenged all metropolitan players for 100 guineas a side. Kentfield responded, and expressed a wish to make the match, but owing to Carr's illness they did not come to terms. Pierce Egan, I may add, calls Carr the "father of the side stroke;" so that it is most probable he was the discoverer.

Kentfield now became famous, and, being exceedingly strong at losing hazards, greatly attached to the game, and celebrated for the gentle strengths he adopted, was justly considered the best player for many years. John Pook, now of the Cocoa-tree Club, was a first-

class hazard striker; as also were Jem May, George Howse, Bedford, Pratt, Winsor, and many others whose names do not just now occur to me. They, however, played on tables with much larger pockets than those of the present day; therefore we can hardly judge of their pretensions as against the pretensions of the professionals of more recent years. Mr. Mardon, in his work on billiards, says Kentfield once made the spot hazard 57 times; and that his longest break numbered 196. Both are splendid performances; but I need hardly say Charles Hughes, Cook, and one or two other players, including myself, have excelled them.

I recently came across an interesting anecdote, confirmatory of the high standing to which billiards is entitled as a healthy amusement. The incident occurred during the professional career of the well-known Parisian physician, Dr. Lambert, and was related as follows:

One day M. Hoguet, the banker, waited on the doctor, seeking a prescription for his wife, whose health he thought appeared to be failing.

“What ails her, Monsieur?”

“I know not, neither can she tell; she has no pain, no disease, nor any apparent malady. The advantages which my wealth should afford are as nothing; she is ever miserable, finds nothing to engage or entertain her amongst fashionable amusements, and continually she lacks appetite.”

“But has Monsieur not a billiard-table attached to his château?”

“Alas, no! I have neglected fitting up the room allotted.”

“Ah, I comprehend; and so Madame must be the victim?”

“What means M. le Docteur?”

“Do you not comprehend? Your wife has low spirits, induced by some hidden grief.”

“*Mon Dieu!* It must be so; her favourite daughter was buried twelve months ago.”

“She daily inhabits the house, is not at home to visitors, cares for no society, reads dismal books, and reclines on the *fauteuil*, instead of seeking exercise and amusement.”

“It is all true; Monsieur le Docteur is an astrologer; but how am I to blame?”

“Listen, and we will endeavour to effect a

cure. I shall prescribe but one remedy. Go at once and have your best apartment furnished with a billiard-table. Induce Madame to play, and she will soon become attached to the game. Appetite will follow exercise, which will also secure digestion. Then nervousness and depression will be removed; Madame will recover her wonted spirits, and Monsieur will again possess in happiness the lady who is known as an ornament to society and a treasure in the domestic circle."

"M. le Docteur's words are pearls; they have removed a great weight from my mind. I go at once to obey. Adieu."

Three months later the following missive reached the worthy physician:

"CHER DOCTEUR,—Thanks for your prescription; my obligations to you are lasting. My health is restored; my spirits better than ever. Accept the enclosed *souvenir* from your grateful

"EUGENIE HOGUET."

The letter contained a cheque for 10,000 francs.

I shall close my brief review of the English game with some remarks by Michael Phelan, the celebrated American cueist, who, in his *Game of Billiards*, makes the following comparisons between French, English, and American players :

“At the game of billiards, more than at any other game or exercise within our knowledge, the observer of national characteristics will have an opportunity of studying those peculiarities of the individual whose aggregate is the character of his country. Thus we find that the Frenchman, whose artistic eye and mathematical genius make him the best military strategist of all the European nations, is also by far the most brilliant billiard-player to be found in the world. His conceptions are daring, and his execution has all the finish and rapidity of one with whom it would be presumption for a less-gifted player to contend. His opening is a succession of *coups-d'état*; and if we did not know that his pace was a ‘killing one,’ we should feel tempted to throw down the cue in despair, and ask the marker how much we had to pay for the table. But, alas, his success is his destruction; his

most brilliant *coups de main* only accelerate his ruin: he is intoxicated by the triumph his own genius has in part achieved, and the vivacity of his play evaporates before the game is half concluded. For single strokes of almost miraculous adroitness he puts forth all the skill he is master of; but for the patient foresight and self-restraint which are necessary to a prudent management of the balls he is utterly unfit. He would not forego the chance of a brilliant shot, even though he knew that it must leave the balls in a position from which his adversary may make an easy run to game. He cares not to win, as long as he can make it clear that he *could* win if he chose always to play as carefully as he does upon occasion: so long as he is confessed to be the 'most brilliant billiard-player,' he cares not who is 'the best.'

"The Englishman, on the other hand, in this, as in almost everything else, is the direct reverse of his late imperial and imperious ally: he looks to the result, and does not care the snap of one of his portly fingers by what means the victory has been gained so long as it is his *de facto*; he knows that his

conceptions, though profound, are far from lively; and he flatters his tardy execution by the maxim that 'all great bodies move slowly.' He is the very essence of patience and laborious foresight in his play; if care could win a game, the Englishman would never lose. But he is so opposed to 'rashness' of every kind, so averse to those progressive ideas which he, in general, sums up under the head of 'impracticable,' that he would lose a stroke which, though difficult, is probable, rather than forfeit that reputation for prudence upon which he especially prides himself. He 'forgets to remember,' as the saying is, that it was care killed the cat; and though his game is a very strong one, and perhaps of the two more safe than the Frenchman's, still it is marred by the excess of caution, and numberless counts are lost from the timidity which will not stretch forth its hand to grasp them.

"Half-way between these two, and combining the peculiarities of each, stands the American billiard-player. With much of the Frenchman's vivacity and all his hardihood, his conceptions are bold enough to seize all

the possible advantages of a stroke; and his manipulation, though less difficult than the Frenchman's, is superior to the Englishman's in quickness, ease, and force. On the other hand, he is proverbially a man that calculates the cost of his whistle before sitting down to enjoy it; the problem of each stroke passes rapidly through his head before he strikes; and though he does not 'manage the balls' (as a general rule) so *exactly* as the plodding Englishman, he foresees the position in which they will be placed clearly enough for all practical purposes, and his judicious audacity gives him counts which the more timid player would lose for the simple want of trying.

“It has always been an easy task to speak well of the Athenians in Athens, but we can not be accused of flattering our readers when we simply state a fact which every observer of experience must have long since noted: to wit, that the Frenchman is the most brilliant, the Englishman the most careful, the American the most successful, and therefore—if that be any argument, as it is commonly admitted to be the most conclusive—the very best of billiard-players.”

There is, it has been said, "nothing like giving oneself a good character;" and certainly no doubt can be entertained about Phelan's being the "sincerest flattery." The Englishman, however, being admittedly *careful*, hardly accepts every statement he hears as a fact. He decidedly looks a little to *results*, and, in the case of billiard-playing, it seems to me that we have, on paper at any rate, the best of it. The highest break ever made at the American game without "jawing the balls" (a practice some time ago abolished in championship matches) and without the aid of the "push-shot"—which will ruin the game if not speedily done away with—was 315. At the English game I have made 346. The difference is not great, still it is in our favour, and that, too, with *three* balls instead of four. Certainly losing hazards are not allowed in the American game, but then the balls are larger and the tables smaller than ours. "Brag is a good dog, but Holdfast is a better."

AMERICAN BILLIARDS.

THE American game has been recently reviewed at some length in a couple of New-York journals, from whose columns I have gleaned some interesting facts, which I shall proceed to lay before my readers before offering such remarks as my observations during a visit to the United States in the year 1866 lead me to make.

Prior to the beginning of this century, New York city could not boast a single table ; now it contains a round number of thousands ; and probably billiards is more popular on the other side of the Atlantic than in any other country in the world. It is stated that an Irishman named Connolly owned the first board in New York, and that he occupied a room on Whitehall Dock. During the year 1808, one Rhodes opened a house in Gotham, and set up four public rooms ; then followed other accessions, until in 1812 they numbered about a

score. The description of a unique table is somewhat surprising. It was 14 ft. in length by 7 ft. in width, stood upon eight legs, and the cushions were stuffed with *curled hair*.

They were later in America with leathern tips than in England, and only a few recognised clever players were allowed to strike with the flat-ended wooden cues, the proprietors of rooms insisting that the mace should be used, and the cloth thus kept clear of damage. The inventor of "tips" is said to be W. Lake, the once-celebrated champion mace-player. He kept a private room, and to his father, who was a shoemaker, is probably due the discovery which so much surprised American players. First-class "macers" were pretty numerous from 1810 to 1820, but none could "hold a candle" to Lake or Ike Dennison, who were considered nearly even.

After cues followed "spot-ball" playing, and in 1824 "Pony" Higham visited New York. He was undoubtedly a clipper, and with the wide-mouthed pockets then in vogue made some wonderful scores, though his boast of "1500 at a run" is somewhat hard to swallow. For years "Pony" was at the head

of his profession, but in 1855 Michael Phelan, an ex-champion, introduced square-jawed pockets, and "spot-ball" playing was no more.

In its stead, however, there soon reigned the present curse of the game, "the push-shot," which at the outset was strongly opposed, and would have received little support had it not been for the exertions of Andrew Buist (Starke) and Higham. They constantly employed the stroke, and made such large runs that amateurs soon practised it, and brother professionals, not to be outdone, were compelled to follow in their wake. The push, however, differed somewhat from the stroke used now. A foul was made if the player dwelled at all; he was bound to make a definite thrust and then stop his cue, not back-up the balls as M'Devitt and Foster and Deery and Dion do.

The first public match of real importance took place in February 1855 at San Francisco, between Phelan and M. Damon, a Frenchman. It proved a memorable meeting, and was the means of "making" Phelan. They played three French games of 100 up each, Phelan giving 20 points, for a stake of 500 dollars,

and bets amounting, it was estimated, to 10,000 dollars, all the chief sporting-men of San Francisco being present. Damon won the opening game by 6, but after a severe tussle was defeated by one point in the second. The Frenchman had reached 97 to 77, and at this period those who had staked 6 to 4 on Phelan offered to lay 20 to 1 against him. One alone of the American's adherents did not think of hedging, his oldest and heaviest supporter, who doubtless desired thus to show his entire confidence in his protégé's ability to defeat his opponent at the points allowed. The third game also proved a close affair, but the American pulled through by 5 points, and gained an "infinity of dollars" after seven hours' play.

In December 1857 Phelan took part in another match, which is not without interest, though it proved a rather hollow affair. His opponent was Ralph Benjamin, and they contested the best of 17 games, each 16 up, at the three-ball game, Phelan giving 3 points in 16, for 2000 dollars. Benjamin won the third and ninth heats only, Phelan the other 9 out of 11 which were decided. The match was played

on a full-sized six-pocket table, fitted with the "combination cushions," which he had recently introduced. Since that time they have been employed in every great public match with the exception of two.

John Seereiter, Barney Chrystal, Michael Foley, and Dudley Kavannah sprang into fame about this period. Foley and Kavannah met at Detroit, Michigan, in 1859, in a match for which the first admission-tickets were issued. In it Kavannah made a break of 177, the largest at the American game until 1865, when M'Devitt put together 267 at Cincinnati.

The next night at Fireman's Hall there began a contest between the "cracks" of the rival north and west for 10,000 dollars. Perhaps no single game ever created so much excitement; and it is supposed that quite a quarter of a million of dollars changed hands on the result. About 2000 persons were present, and tickets sold for five dollars each. A six-pocket table and $2\frac{3}{8}$ in. balls were used, the game, 2000 up, lasting seven hours thirty-five minutes. Phelan eventually won by 96 points, his chief breaks being 101 and 127. Seereiter made runs of 150 and 157, and

was altogether more dashing than his adversary, who, however, made one mistake, and suffered for it. He was 333 points in advance, and, considering his game secure, tried to "bring down the house" by a "gallery-shot," which failed to score by a hair's-breadth. The balls fell together, and Seereiter, following with his longest breaks, was presently 143 ahead. Phelan speaks of his one weakness with disgust, and has never since been tempted by a flash stroke.

About 1849 there came from Canada an expert named Motts, who, with a set of balls $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. in diameter, discomfited every player that entered the lists against him, including Starke, Higham, and Hopkins. He, however, declined a proposed match with Phelan; and it was "put about" that his defeat of the other cracks, who were quite as clever as Michael, was scarcely *bonâ fide*.

No contests of importance took place between 1859 and 1860, as the game of "ten pins" then assumed the first rank amongst American pastimes. The *furor* lasted much longer than might have been expected; but when it abated the game fell headlong, and billiards

became ten times more popular than ever. Phelan and a few others had striven hard for its resuscitation, and their efforts were crowned with success.

In 1860 a gold-mounted cue was offered for public competition, and the first tournament assisted materially in reinstating the game in public favour. Claudius Berger, the well-known French *artiste*, happened to be in New York at the time, and he supplemented Phelan's gift of a gold cue by the offer of a French prize cue. Five competitors took part in the meeting, viz. Kavannah, White, and Lynch of New York, Geary of Chicago, and Tieman of Cincinnati. Geary and Lynch were never "in the hunt," and it was eventually found that Tieman and Kavannah would be entitled to play off for the prizes. The opening games had been 500 up (carom table); but on the proposition of Tieman the points for the closing heat were doubled, Kavannah reluctantly consenting to the alteration. Tieman ran up 531, whilst his opponent scored 329. Kavannah, however, showed fine form afterwards, and, with breaks of 144, 142, and 118, managed to regain his lost ground, and to win by 254

points, thus obtaining virtually the title of champion. An incident occurred during the play worthy of notice. When Tieman was 200 points ahead, and sure of a great break, he "nursed" the balls until 70 had been scored; then, to his mortification ever after, hit hard, and drove them round the table, ashamed, as he said, of holding his opponent at so great a disadvantage.

In 1862 Foley and Kavannah played a match, in which the push-shot and *masse* strokes were barred. A six-pocket full-sized table was used, and the highest runs were—Kavannah 75, Foley 90, the former winning by 204 points in 1500.

The second tournament took place in 1863, and introduced a Gold Challenge Cue, to be held against all comers for three years. The chief prize was an elaborate billiard-table, of curled tulip-wood, inlaid with pearl and coloured panels. The players were, Seereiter, Goldthwait, Foley, Estephe, Deery, Kavannah, Fox, and Tieman; and the contest, which took place in Irving Hall, occupied nine days, 28 games of 500 up being played on a full-sized four-pocket table, 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. balls. One

player alone, Deery, succeeded in defeating Kavannah, who won the first prize; Lewis Fox taking the second, 250 dollars. The highest break was made by Deery, who jawed the reds and ran up 315. Tieman and Kavannah curiously enough each scored 203.

Since 1863 many remarkable games have taken place, the chief players being Fox, Carne, Deery, Dion, Goldthwait, Tieman, Melvin Foster, and M'Devitt. The last-named is credited with the highest run in a championship match without jawing, viz. 308; and Dion with the highest run by jawing, viz. 616. M'Devitt, however, in a recent contest against Goldthwait, scored 1483 "off the balls;" and both Dion and he have in practice made over 1200. The latest battle for championship came off on April 8, 1868, the competitors being Foster and M'Devitt (the champion). Unhappily, a dispute arose before the termination of the game, the scores standing—M'Devitt 1268, Foster 1262. The latter had taken a strong lead at the outset, and become 939 to M'Devitt's 496, and 1020 to M'Devitt's 538. The result now appeared a foregone conclusion; but the cham-

pion, with breaks of 293, 243, and 173, presently succeeded in leading his opponent by six points. Here, in the midst of a run, he attempted a cannon, and apparently his ball missed by a hair's-breadth one of the objects. Foley, his umpire, claimed the score; and Furlong, on behalf of Foster, opposed it; but the referee, Le Brun, gave his decision in M'Devitt's favour. Foster thereupon left the room, and presently the referee declared the champion to be the lawful winner of the game. The stakes, 1000 dollars, have not yet been paid over, neither have the majority of the bets, which it is assumed amount to 20,000 dollars, principally at 7 to 4 on M'Devitt. The game was played on a second-size four-pocket table, 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. balls, and lasted, so far as it had proceeded, 4 hours 10 minutes.

Such are the chief facts in connection with the introduction of billiards in America, and also with the principal contests and competitors. I shall now proceed to offer a few explanations on its various points, and show in what it differs from our English method of playing. The standard table at present contains four pockets, and is 10 feet long by

5 feet wide, with a marble or slate bed and cloth or india-rubber cushions. The cue is much longer than ours, and a great deal broader at the tip; while the balls vary in size between $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. and $2\frac{1}{2}$ in., those used in matches being $2\frac{3}{8}$ in. in diameter, and weighing about 7 oz. each. The principal table-makers are Messrs. Phelan and Collender, and Messrs. Kavannah and Decker.

Losing hazards score against the player, so they are never made except by accident.

The terms in general use are as under :

String Line. The baulk line.

Carom. A cannon.

Force. A screw shot.

To bank. To cannon or hazard by *bricole*.

Jump. A *masse* stroke, which causes the striker's ball to bounce from the table.

Scratch. To make a fluke.

Playing spot-ball. The spot-hazard from either red.

The push shot. By this the player is allowed to dwell on the stroke and push his ball past or between others, so that he can "nurse" them with the utmost nicety.

Jawed. When the balls are worked into a pocket-mouth.

Crotched. When the balls are cornered on a table without pockets.

Discount. A proof of the superiority of one player over another, inasmuch as the more skilful allows all the scores of his adversary to be deducted from his own. He is then said to "discount" his opponent's gains. Case: If an opponent makes a break of a dozen, they are scored to him and a dozen deducted from the discounter's figures.

There are, in my opinion, two great objections to the American game as now played. The first and most important is the practice of jawing the balls, and the second the "push-shot." Since the match between Dion and M'Devitt, jawing has been discountenanced by the "American Billiard Association," and is prohibited in championship matches, but it is still used in many games of importance; and this year M'Devitt, as I have before stated, ran up 1483 in 1 hour 55 minutes from a jaw. There is, however, a strong objection to it amongst amateurs, and hopes are entertained that its abolition will be shortly brought about. How-

ever much public feeling may be opposed to jawing, it is far stronger against the "push-shot;" and I recently received a copy of a journal published in the United States called the *Billiard Cue*, which contains the following remarks pertinent to the subject of its abandonment: "As played by amateurs it is of little account, and may as well be practised as not; but in the hands of professionals it is a powerful weapon, without which runs of one hundred and upwards would be rarities, and without which no player who, by superior play round the table had acquired a commanding lead, could possibly be beaten. As it is, we have seen players win who were four or five hundred points behind when their opponents had but about one hundred to make. A couple of runs made close together, and almost wholly through the medium of the push-shot, turned the tables at a time when, in the judgment of everybody, it was dollars to cents that the leading player would be successful. With the push-shot permitted, a game between expert professional players is almost as much dependent upon a fortuitous turn of a ball as upon skill. The question to be answered nowadays is not which

is the superior player, but which will win. It would be better in match games, we think, to trust less to luck and more to skilful play. Before players can do this, however, the push-shot will have to be abandoned."

According to existing regulations the striker may, if he be sufficiently an adept, push his ball through an object which lies three or four feet away; in fact, no push is considered foul unless the cue-point be obviously withdrawn and reapplied.

The choice of three object-balls ought to be of great advantage to the player, but, on the other hand, the exclusion of losing hazard destroys altogether the beauty of the game.

The chief *artistes* I saw in "the States" were Foster and M'Devitt and Kavannah, all of whom possess unsurpassable brilliancy and remarkable softness of touch. They, however, rely chiefly on the chances offered to them of running together great breaks through the medium of the strokes just referred to, and not on accurate winning-hazard striking and legitimate cannons, whose fairness depends on the withdrawal of the cue the instant after the stroke. The instruments with which they play,

too, are strange in the hands of the uninitiated. The cue has a tip nearly half an inch broad, and the balls require a good deal of strength of arm to get them round the tables, which are very slow in comparison with ours. From what I saw I certainly think there are a hundred players in America to every ten here, and although the prices charged for tables—depending a great deal on the quarter in which you may play—are considerably higher than ours, they indulge in far more practice, and are much greater adepts than the majority of Englishmen.

FRENCH BILLIARDS.

SINCE the Revolution in 1798, billiards has become the most popular amusement in France, and it is estimated that there are now in Paris alone over 20,000 tables, whose gross receipts, says the *Figaro*, are computed to amount to 12,000*l.* per day. Once the pastime of kings, it now serves to while away the idle hours of hundreds of artisans, clerks, and citizens, who daily haunt the *cafés* in the vicinity of the Boulevards. The game, however, was equally in its infancy in France, as in other countries, until the invention of leather-tipped cues and the discovery of screw and twist in the early part of this century. As a cannon and hazard game, scores were made slowly and without much certainty; but with the introduction of the new aids there gradually grew up a class of *artistes* unequalled in the art of cannon-playing, the use of screw, and the appliance of *masse* shots.

A dozen years ago hazards were abolished, and now the French game consists of cannons alone; but the push shot, though common at the outset, is now rarely brought into use. There are several codes of rules, and each room has its own, which frequenters adopt *pro tem*. They also play by time, and the proprietors are remunerated in respect of the number of hours, and not of games played. The marking apparatus consists of beads on strings, and each cannon counts one. A miss also may or may not score against the striker, according to the rules under which the competition takes place.

The tables are small, and vary between six feet long by three broad, and nine feet by four and a half, while the balls are large in proportion, viz. $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. and $2\frac{5}{8}$ in. in diameter. The cushions are extremely high, and at the same time very slow—slower even than American cushions.

As billiards has been played a great deal longer and far oftener in France than in any other country, I shall not attempt a review of its rise, variety, or of the *spécialité* of its choicest players. Sauret, Mingaud, and Paysan are the most distinguished names to be met

with in the history of the game ; but Berger, Lemaire, Gibelin, Ubassey, and Alfred de Paris are all celebrities of the present day, and many of them may be found in the vicinity of the "gayest city in the world." Their contests have been few and far between, as every professional is extremely jealous of his reputation, and would consider himself disgraced were he to suffer defeat at the hands of a rival.

In July 1867 a game of some importance came off in the Rue Lepelletier, Paris, between Charles Burger of Paris and Francis Ubassey of Marseilles. They played ten games of 400 up, and Ubassey, after a ten-days contest, won, scoring 4034 to Burger's 3404.

Neither player, however, is equal in variety of stroke to Claudius Berger, who a few years ago was engaged by me at Saville House. His performances with the balls were simply wonderful, and though several "professors" have since been commended to my notice, I must say that none can sustain any claim to recognition as his equal. Again and again I have seen him make from 150 to 200 consecutive cannons. He was a perfect master of every nicety of the player's art, and could

bring into use what have been termed the "curiosities of the game" with the utmost precision.

As there is no variety in the French cannon game, I do not consider it necessary to offer much advice or instruction. It is advisable to play off the red ball whenever the white lies in the vicinity of a cushion, and always to give a safe miss when a score is uncertain. Recollect, however, that, because of the smallness of the tables and increased size of the balls, it is comparatively easy to cannon, while being better able to get at your own ball than on an English table, *masse* shots are effected from apparently awkward positions.

INCIDENTS IN MY CAREER.

THOUGH I could narrate hundreds of instances of games won under difficulties, of brilliant play, of luck, and of the fatal effects of ill-humour or want of attention to the game, I shall give only a few of the more interesting. Perhaps I cannot do better than begin by relating what occurred on my first introduction to the "board of green cloth."

MY NOVITIATE.

The first table I ever played on was at the old Rotunda, Bold-street, Liverpool (my birth-place), when I had reached my ninth year. It was an old-fashioned wooden-bottomed concern, made by Gillow; and the cushions, which were of list, carried a ball about four times. I felt I had an aptitude for the game even then, and after six months' practice could give points to men who had played for years. The score was 21 up at that time, and they charged

3*d.* a game, which, amongst the class of players who nowadays can get through four in an hour, lasted about ten minutes.

One day, when Harry Hunt was down from London on some business connected with the table, the governor said, "Come, Johnny and I'll show you a few strokes."

He did not know what I could do at all, and must have expected my play was very moderate. After a dozen games, of which I won nine, he laid down his cue and crossly said, "This won't do: you've been idling your time, and must go to a trade."

So I did, and learned carpentering for two years. Then I felt I must be a billiard-player, and left home; and ever since that time I have been associated with the game.

THE SPOT HAZARD.

Mr. Lee Birch, a member of the Union Club, Manchester, taught me the spot hazard. He had been to London and seen it played there, and, being one of the best amateurs of his day, soon became so expert in its accomplishment that he could answer for a dozen or more hazards whenever he got into position at

the head of the table. I saw that the stroke gave many points advantage to whoever could perform it with anything like certainty, and for six months practised it incessantly. Hundreds of hours were spent on that single hazard; but I have since reaped the full benefit that always rewards perseverance. It was easier on the old tables, because the elbows were more cut away; but I never equalled the break made against Dufton in 1862, which included 104 consecutive hazards.

ROBERTS v. STARKE.

After my first match with Starke in 1850, an aristocratic patron of mine wrote to the editor of *Bell's Life*, who published his remarks, which were as follow :

“After the play had commenced it was apparent that Starke was a great player. When he got hold of the balls, the way in which he kept them together and nursed the cannons was truly surprising, and elicited the praise of everyone at all conversant with the game. I may also observe that his winning hazards were most beautiful, particularly the long shots. He commenced the scoring, and made,

I believe, 40 points from the first break. When Starke was 600 to 450, Roberts got near the red ball when on the spot (his favourite position), and made from it no less than 39 hazards. From this period of the game his sole endeavour was to obtain a similar break, and when he succeeded his splendid execution was the admiration of the room. In his last break he holed the red ball in the corner pockets six-and-thirty times in a style most beautiful and finished; nothing conceivable in billiards could exceed the brilliancy of his play, and the great accuracy he displayed in placing his ball for another score surpassed everything within my abilities to relate. Kentfield showed good judgment in declining a match with Roberts, for had they played upon a neutral table he would have been defeated to a certainty."

The editor then goes on to remark that "such a statement from one so capable of judging correctly leaves us no alternative but to accord to Roberts the preëminence which the accomplishment of so great a task commands; for, setting aside the envious remarks with reference to size of pockets, is

there a man in existence besides himself who could accomplish a similar feat upon any modern table? Mr. Mardon, in his late treatise on the game, assigns to Kentfield (the god of his idolatry) the champion's wreath; but we believe that gentleman now admits that the execution of Roberts, in his late match, stands unrivalled. Of one thing, however, we are quite certain, viz. that while Roberts will play a match with any man in the world, for a sum varying from one shilling to one thousand pounds, no one declining the challenge can retain the laurels that may have been assigned. The Brightonians may preach about their game of 'one pocket to five,' and extol, in florid terms, the wonder of a cannon from six or eight cushions; but if Roberts was the proprietor of public rooms, even at Brighton, he would find the public rally round the man that could make upwards of a hundred points from many a common break."

A CLOSE SHAVE.

Perhaps the greatest "pull out of the fire" I ever achieved was in the year 1860 at Newmarket, in a match against Dufton. I gave

400 in 1000, and he reached 970 before I had got to 900. The betting at this point was 50 to 1 offered freely against me, and very few takers, except a friend or two of mine, who make a practice of backing me at all sorts of outside prices, even if my opponent has the break and only wants a dozen to win. Dufton opened for a losing hazard, and, failing by a sixteenth part of an inch, let me in. The balls were not well placed, but I scored, and a lucky kiss put them together, allowing me to get up to the spot, where I made over 60 and gave a miss. Presently I had another chance, and then we both played so carefully that the game was some time ere it terminated in my favour by 2 points, thus landing the welcome odds.

“YOU'RE NOT JOHN ROBERTS.”

During a visit to Yorkshire some years ago, I had been at a small race-meeting, and during the evening looked into the billiard-room attached to the hotel in which I was staying. We had just dined, and, having assisted in the emptying of several bottles of champagne, I was a little excited and talka-

tive. Two gentlemen, apparently well-to-do farmers, were knocking the balls about, and as they did not play to my satisfaction I made remarks not at all complimentary to their skill. Presently, after a worse attempt than ordinary, I said, "Why, you can't play at all!" This brought forth a reply, the cleverest of the pair asking if *I* could play? "Yes, I can; very well indeed," I replied. As soon as the game ended, he walked up and said, "Now, young man, I'll play you 100 up for a 'fiver;'" with which offer I at once closed. After letting him get away from me, I began showing "fancy" strokes, and with such effect that the win was an easy one for me. Then he said, "Give me 10 in 100 and I'll play you double or quits." To this offer also I cried "Done;" and after again beating him, he said, "Who the deuce are you?" I replied, "My name's John Roberts." He looked at me for a moment, and then said slowly, "You're a —." I answered, "And you are a gentleman." We played on, and kept increasing the points until I had beaten him with 60 in 100, and won over 50%. Then he said, "Dash me if I don't believe you are Roberts." "Of course

I am," I replied: "if you don't feel satisfied, order the 'boots' to bring down my portman-teau, and you'll see my name and address on it." He did so, and sure enough "John Roberts, Manchester," was found on my cue-case as well. We supped together afterwards, for they were jolly good fellows. He paid up like a trump, and it cost me a case of champagne.

TIME MATCHES.

A game of a thousand, or, at any rate, a couple of thousand, is sufficient to take the "go" out of most men, but some can play a very long time without tiring. Against Starke in 1855 I recollect my match lasted over ten hours, the room all the while being so crowded that the heat was excessive. This can hardly be considered a feat; but I will relate an incident to which I was a party in the year 1846, and I don't think, looking at it now, I should care to try it again. I had rooms in Glasgow at the time, and an amateur who was in the habit of frequenting them thought that, although I was in fine play and doing good training round the table every day, he would be a match for me if I gave 60 points' start in

100, marked the game, handed the rest, took out the balls, and spotted the red, &c. On these conditions we agreed to play till one of us stopped voluntarily or through exhaustion. The stakes were ten shillings a game, and whoever gave in first was to forfeit 25*l.* and all claim to anything he might have won. The result is soon told. We played *forty-three* consecutive hours, and then my opponent, whilst making a stroke, fell fainting on his face. He was plucky to the last, but nature could assist him no longer. During the time 125 games were played, and I won altogether a good stake, how much I forget.

The "Squire," when in his prime, was celebrated for matches against time; and even in his later years he used to play for many successive hours at the Portland Club. I recollect, on the occasion of my first match with Starke, Mr. Osbaldeston was asked to undertake the office of referee. On the day of play he travelled from London to Manchester, and, coming straight to my rooms, took up his position where a favourable opportunity of witnessing the game was to be obtained. He continued to *stand* during the whole of the

game, which occupied nearly four hours, and would not take anything except a glass of sherry—the only refreshment that passed his lips from the time of leaving London till after the close of the match. Dick Chilcott was sitting somewhere behind the “Squire,” who somewhat impeded his view; but notwithstanding the oft-repeated requests of the former, the old gentleman declined to sit down.

Mr. Joseph Howarth, a fine Yorkshire player, has always been a *gourmand* at a “distance;” and I recollect on one occasion opposing him for over forty hours.

MEETING WITH KENTFIELD.

I remember perfectly my first meeting with Kentfield, better known as “Jonathan.” It was in the beginning of 1849, at Brighton, where I went on purpose to see him play. On entering his rooms, I met John Pook, the present proprietor of the Cocoa-tree Club, who was at that time his manager. After sending up my name, Kentfield came in and inquired my business. I told him that I was admitted to be the best player in Lancashire, whence I had come to find out if he could show me

anything. He inquired if I wanted a lesson? I told him I did not, and asked how many in 100 would be a fair allowance from a player on his own table to a stranger, provided they were of equal skill. He replied 15; I told him I thought 20 would be nearer the mark, but I was contented to try at evens. He said, "If you play me, it must be for some money;" on which, not to be frightened, I pulled out a 100*l.* note, and told him I would play him ten games of 100 up, for 10*l.* a game. He laughed, and said I was rather hasty, and eventually we knocked the balls about, and then commenced a friendly 100 on level terms. He had the best of the breaks, and won by 40. In the second game I pulled out a few north-country shots, and won by 30, but he secured the third. Then he put down his cue, and asked if I was satisfied he could beat me? I said, "No; on the contrary, if you can't play better than this, I can give you 20 in 100 easily." He replied, "Well, if you want to play me, you must put down a good stake." I asked how much? and he answered, 1000*l.* I said, "Do you mean 1000*l.* a side?" Upon which he told me he thought I was a

straightforward fellow, and he would see what could be done. He then sent Pook back to me, and I explained to him how things stood. He replied, "You may as well go back to Lancashire; you won't get a match on with the governor."

I tried afterwards to arrange terms, but he never would meet me. Before leaving Kentfield, I may state that he played a very artistic game, but possessed very little power of cue. He depended on slow twists and fancy screws, and rarely attempted a brilliant forcing hazard. He gave misses and made baulks, whenever they were practicable, and never departed from the strict game.

A MATCH IN AUSTRALIA.

In 1864 I played a series of entertainments in Melbourne and round the district. One of them was against an amateur named Pogson, to whom I gave 600 in 1000. He scored altogether 184 points, whilst I made game; but the most curious part of the affair was, that I got *one hundred and eighty-six* at a break, *just two points more than my opponent's total.*

MY LONGEST BREAKS.

In the year 1858 I played Herst in Glasgow, and scored *one hundred and eighty-eight* at a break, including fifty-five spot hazards.

In March 1862 at Saville House I made *three hundred and forty-six* off the balls—the longest break on record. It was commenced by a cannon; then followed several losing hazards; and eventually I got up to the spot, and continued to score until *one hundred and four* consecutive hazards were added. Dufton was my opponent, and after seeing me make fifty hazards he put on his coat and proceeded to light up a cigar, thinking it was not improbable I should score the five hundred or so I wanted in order to win, straight off.

At Huddersfield, in Yorkshire, I also made *two hundred and fifty-six* off a break, in January 1867. On this occasion Dufton was again my opponent; and after scoring 26 points round the table, I got behind the spot, and was successful in counting *seventy-eight* times before I failed by an eighth of an inch. The “tykes” have always been noted for their

cordiality; I think they were extra enthusiastic on that evening.

At Oxford, in 1861, I played Bowles, and ran up *two hundred and forty*, including one hundred and two cannons made in the jaws of a pocket.

One of the most remarkable games I ever played, however, was with Charles Hughes, in Dufton's first handicap at the Philharmonic. The heats were 200 up; and as I commenced at 60 behind the scratch, I had 260 to make to win. After rubbing off 10, I got hold of the balls, and, with the assistance of 38 spot hazards, added a break of *one hundred and twenty-eight*. Hughes then made 54, and I followed with another run, this time of *one hundred and twenty-four*, including *thirty-nine* spots, the heat of 262 terminating after 35 minutes' play.

SCREW AND THE SIDE TWIST.

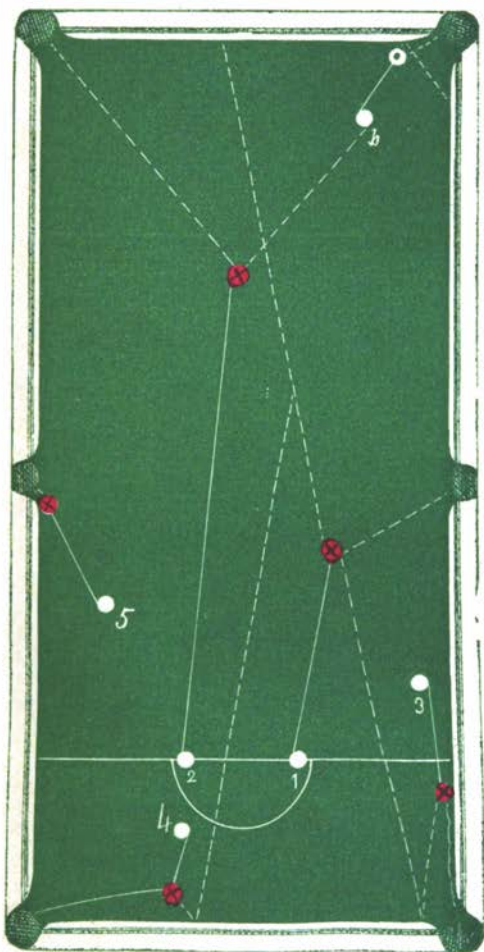
To the same Frenchman who gave us "tips" is due the credit of the discovery of low twist, or, as it is more commonly termed, screw. Some time before Carr astonished visitors to Bath, Mons. Mingaud, a well-known professional, was a political prisoner in Paris, his incarceration having been caused by a too free expression of opinion. In his place of confinement was a billiard-table, to which Mingaud had access and daily turned his attention, the practice serving admirably to while away the long tedious hours. In time he became skilful, but frequent disappointments through his cue sliding off the ball caused him to set his wits to work, and ultimately to devise the leathern tip. Then followed discoveries consequent on the invention, until his power over the balls became surprising even to himself. When almost perfected in the management of the cue, he sent it forth to the

world, but kept to himself the more important features, and did not disclose them until after his release.

A few years later he became known as the great master of the game. He could nurse a break, screw, and cause his ball to follow with the utmost nicety and certainty. Happening once to be travelling through the northern part of France, he entered a *café*, where he found a player relating his adventures in Paris to an admiring and attentive group. His successes had been great at billiards. He had met Mingaud, who was a very fair player, but hardly the expert he had presumed he would find. Probably Mingaud could give him three in twenty-one. He had improved himself in Paris, and would show them the latest strokes.

Then came a waiter with the balls, and the narrator proceeded to attempt, and lamentably fail in the demonstration of, certain hazards. After laying aside his cue, Mingaud quietly advanced, took it up, and struck the white ball, which, after contact with the red, recoiled upon him. Affecting extreme horror, he dropped the cue, and summoned the waiter, to whom he explained that when he had pushed a ball

PLATE I.



LOSING HAZARDS.

forward it ran backwards. The spectators were incredulous, and, in reply to their entreaties, Mingaud attempted another stroke, but with the same result. The balls were seized, and condemned as "tormented by a devil," and the waiter proceeded to obtain a new set. During his absence, Mingaud proposed a trial with the new-comer from Paris, who, only too happy, agreed to play, and, being the "crack" of the district, to give five points' start. At first he was allowed to win, became exultant, and eventually was bold enough to express an opinion that the great Mingaud would be but a poor match for him. Suddenly the tables were turned; Mingaud played him at evens, then gave points, and eventually beat him with a start of fifteen in twenty-one. The spectators were interested at the outset because their townsman won, then amazed at the curious strokes exhibited by the stranger, who now screwed, now followed, and continued scoring, sometimes the full game, without allowing his opponent more than a single stroke.

"And now, Monsieur," said Mingaud, addressing his discomfited adversary, "do you

feel equally certain of your ability to encounter the best player in Paris?"

"I defeated many experts there. You must be the devil. None other could possess so entire a mastery over the balls. I shall play you no more."

"No," replied our discoverer, "there is no need for any further exhibition on your part. But before we part I would impress on you the great disadvantage of not speaking the truth."

"Monsieur, I do not comprehend; I—"

"Quiet! There is no reason for a noise. My explanation is very brief. I am called Mingaud, and I think you will admit my skill is somewhat above yours. Had you not boasted so outrageously, I should have contented myself with remaining a spectator."

Many players have claimed the credit of discovering the side twist; but it seems most probable that Jack Carr, then a marker at Bartley's rooms, Bath, was the first to recognise and put it in force. The mace alone had been employed in playing until about the year 1800, and then followed the introduction of wooden or ivory-ended masts, which were

shortly superseded by cues with leathern "tips." After these came the side twist, which, I understand, was found out thus :

When alone, Carr would devote himself to practising various strokes, and amongst others a losing hazard off the spot from baulk. At first he attempted the feat by force of arm and power of cue. But the balls jumped badly ; and he commenced a series of strokes low on the ball. He often by this means got near the corner, and one day, striking his ball below the centre and on the pocket-side, had the satisfaction of scoring the hazard. Often afterwards he tried the stroke, and found himself fail in one particular only—his ball frequently came in contact with the top cushion, and suddenly bounced off. To oblige it to cling to, was therefore his object. He played the stroke by means of what is now called the opposing side, and had the satisfaction of making the hazard two or three times in a dozen attempts. Then he began to discover that a slight turn of the wrist in the delivery would answer the purpose of a powerful hit, and that the slower the twist the better control the ball was under. Afterwards he essayed hazards from

the centre spot, playing from baulk, and eventually was able to score them with certainty, and so softly, that the object did not pass the baulk line after doubling off the top cushion. Having made himself master of these and similar strokes, he accepted wagers about making them, but, fearful of losing his secret, always pointed his cue at the centre of his ball, and only changed its direction the instant prior to the stroke.

Everybody was surprised at the mysterious evolutions he caused the balls to perform, and so great was the demand for the secret, that Carr took upon himself to practise an ingenious fraud on those who attended his rooms. He procured a large number of pill-boxes, and filling them with what he called "magic chalk," supplied them to hundreds of eager patrons at the modest price of 2s. 6d. each. Of course they proved perfectly useless, but Carr's necessities obliged him after a time to dispose of the fruits of his keen observation, and the "cat," once "out the bag," soon became common property.

He, however, paid a visit to the continental countries, and there, amidst the gabble of

Frenchmen, Italians, and Spaniards, cautiously exposed his wares, and succeeded in reaping a golden harvest wherever he went. Stories are still extant of the brother professionals he "cleaned out;" but notwithstanding his many successes, there were good reasons for his abrupt return to England, where, with hardly a *sou* in his pocket, he was compelled again to begin the world, and that, too, amongst players who had worked out the stroke he had so recently brought to light.

PLAYERS I HAVE MET.

IN a previous chapter will be found facts relating to my introduction to the game of billiards, and also to the spot-hazard. After leaving the trade to which I was apprenticed, I went to Oldham and became a marker. It was there I engaged in my first match with a well-known professional named "Pendleton Tom." He played on my table and I on his, it being in fact a "home and home" contest for 20*l*. I beat him both times, and then went to Glasgow; where, in the year 1844, I think, John Fleming, the then well-known billiard-table manufacturer of Edinburgh, was matched against me, 500 up even, for 100*l*. a side. It proved a pretty close game, and we became 485 all. Then Fleming fluked a six-stroke while attempting a cannon, and so won off the balls.

About this time I also met Charles Ham-

mond, a celebrated Liverpool player, and we were pitted against each other at the English, French, and Russian games, the best of eleven heats of 100 up. Hammond gave me ten in each 100, and I won on the balance at all the three.

A Leeds man named Tom Broughton next "broke a lance" with me; but after beating him a match of 500 at Leeds on his own table for 100*l.*, he forfeited 10*l.* on account of a second trial which was to have taken place at Huddersfield

In 1845 I became manager of the rooms at the Union Club, Manchester; and there saw a great deal of good amateur play. Seven years later I left, and took the Griffin Hotel, Lower Broughton, where Starke and I played two more matches at the American game for 100*l.* a side. I gave him 300 in 1000, and he played so well in the first, making breaks of 115 and 99, that he beat me by 42 points. In the second I gave 275 start only, and won very easily indeed.

After leaving Broughton, I took rooms in Cross-street, Manchester; and afterwards, in 1861, became lessee of the Saloons at Saville

House, Leicester-square, where I stayed three years.

Hitherto no mention has been made of metropolitan cueists; I will now proceed to make a few comments on them. The question of second-best player is not easy to decide. I have often been asked for my opinion, which has invariably been given in favour of Alfred Bowles of Brighton; who, unlike some other candidates for second honours that I have met, could generally make the spot-hazard when he got it. I recollect being at Oxford with him in 1861, and on two successive nights he scored runs of 73 and 151, and 109 and 91. The first game I lost by 62, and the second I won by 50; but to accomplish this task I had to play all I knew; and amongst my breaks were 101 and 180. On the following night we had a third match, when I got the balls "jawed" in an elbow and ran up 246, going "out" from 756. At this time we were only playing exhibition games, but we nevertheless had some very stout tussles, and no one yet has ever held me at the points as Bowles used to do. I have not met him for some

time, and therefore cannot speak of his "form." I am told, however, by persons who should be able to judge, that he is even more skilful than of yore.

Charles Hughes has generally been singularly unfortunate when opposed to me. On the occasion of our first meeting, in 1861, he had many admirers and supporters, and lots of confidence at the commencement. I gave him 300 start; but at 467, after a break of 136, including 40 spot-hazards, I had raised my score to a level with his; and eventually he reached 556, when I finished the game, after 1 hour 56 minutes' play. Subsequently we have met on several occasions, but very frequently the result has been in my favour. Still, Hughes is a first-class player. No one touches the balls with greater nicety or effect; but, like the rest of us, he has a weak point, and *will* attempt roundabout cannons whenever he leads.

Others amongst the second rank are Jos Bennett, John Herst, my eldest son, and W. Cook jun. Bennett plays a careful, defensive game, never misses an opportunity, and seldom offers a chance. Herst is a very bril-

liant winning-hazard striker, with a pretty style, and wonderful aim and precision. J. Roberts jun. plays a dashing game, with great power of cue, and is, like Cook, good at the spot-hazard. The latter, however, excels in touch most players that I ever met.

From the above remarks it will be gathered that I think a contest for the title of second-best player would prove a hard fight amongst six professionals. As, however, Bowles declines competition in public, "second honours" may be said to have but five candidates.

The third class is headed by William Dutton, on a par with whom are Lewis Kilkenny, W. E. Green, George Mulberry, Alfred Hughes, George Davis, W. C. Hitchin (now in Australia), Tom Morris, Harry Evans, and John Smith; to any of whom I have been in the habit of allowing 350 in 1000.

SHARP PRACTITIONERS.

THE HEAD OF MY PROFESSION.

UNDER the above title a short story appeared in *Chambers's Journal* some years ago; and as it was evidently written by an expert, and is extremely interesting, I have quoted such portions as chiefly attracted my notice. The opening scene is supposed to have occurred fifty years since, and runs as follows:

“ One night, while I was playing a match with a footman in the Borough Walls' den, a young Irishman entered the room and stood looking on. He was buttoned to the chin in a seedy coat, and trod in a pair of new hob-nailed highlows. The room was crowded, and some of the insolent wags of the place began exercising their wit at the expense of the newcomer. He bore it good-humouredly enough, answering only with a ready joke and a rather smart retort; until one of the blackguards,

presuming on his quietness, shouldered a cue, and, walking backwards, brought the butt-end in his face. The next moment the aggressor was sprawling on the floor, and the poor Irish boy in a fighting attitude, ready for whomsoever should present himself. The fallen man rose and rushed to the encounter, but in two minutes had had enough of it, leaving the Irishman triumphant.

“The visitor showed the best possible temper, apologised to the company for the interruption his presence had occasioned, and begged that the play might be resumed; and in a few minutes such order as was usual was restored. It appeared afterwards that Pat Meagher—so was the stranger called—had been a marker in Dublin; that he had landed at Liverpool without a penny a fortnight before, and had tramped down to Bath, supporting himself with his cue on the route. He soon proved himself an admirable player, beating me at our first encounters; though I was able to return the compliment after becoming acquainted with his tactics. He had the peculiar faculty of bringing his ball to a dead stop after striking another, at whatever distance—

a feat often of much value, and which I never saw accomplished so surely by any other man. He played but a few nights at the den, for he had the sense to see that if he became notorious there his chance among the upper circles was lost. A few months after his arrival I saw him, habited like an officer in undress, playing with a Right Honourable at B——'s subscription-tables. Here he gained a certain notoriety, and no inconsiderable cash. It being an understood thing that he would play any amateur for any amount, B——, without my knowledge, matched me against him for a contest of twenty-one games. I could not refuse to play the match, and it came off on Christmas-eve, in the presence of over a hundred spectators. At the end of the nineteenth game I was the winner of eleven, and of a large amount of money which changed hands on the occasion, though I neither had nor coveted any of it.

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“I went down by the Dover coach in April 1824, and one evening entered a room in Snargate-street, where I sat and watched the game. One of the players I recognised as

a garrison-officer. He won the game, and his adversary declined to play any more, on the plea that he had no chance with him. The victor then challenged the room; and as no one accepted the challenge, I rose and offered to play him myself. He eyed me from head to foot rather superciliously, and with a kind of haughty condescension, rolling the balls as he spoke, told me to lead off. Annoyed at his pomposity, I allowed him but a single stroke, and then carelessly made the game off the balls. He was pleased to attribute this first result to accident; but the accident recurred again and again, to the mirth of the company and his intense mortification. To give him some chance of winning, I proposed that he should take five of the pockets to my one. He accepted the offer, but still did not win a game, and finally left off without even a momentary advantage. This affair created quite a sensation in the room, and I was asked to favour them with my company on the following evening, when perhaps I might meet with a worthier antagonist. I consented, and presented myself on the morrow accordingly. The room was full, and several of the new-comers

were anxious to measure their strength against me. My pride was roused, and I showed them all that they had no chance whatever in the contest. I had refused to play for money from the first, and it was this that puzzled them, while it secured for me their respect.

* * * * *

“ It was about nine o'clock in late November as I left home one night and proceeded in the teeth of the wind towards the old jetty, where the monster breakers were bursting in thunderous peals on the masses of huge pebbles, round and big as cannon-balls, whose tremendous rattling, as they were dashed to and fro, gave out a sound like the clapping of millions of giant palms, and which wrought most powerfully and agreeably on my imagination. I had seated myself on a fragment of a beam, and was peering through the darkness at the heavy circling masses of water, when I felt a hand on my shoulder. I started to my feet. There stood a dim figure before me, motioning in dumb-show—for no voice could be heard—and beckoning me away. I rose, nodded acquiescence, and followed as he led

on towards a shed under the cliff, where a light was burning. When under the lee of the building, and sheltered from the loud roaring of the billows, he turned short round and presented a figure which I have good reason to remember to my dying day. He was a man of about fifty-five years of age, not more than five feet in height, with a prodigious hunch on his shoulders, yet standing as upright as a dart. A long pale visage; a nose like an eagle's beak; a pair of deep-sunk gray eyes; an ample brow, prominent chin, and thin bloodless lips: such was the aspect which he turned suddenly towards me, with the not very courteous inquiry:

‘I say, young fellow, who the devil *are* you?’

‘Really,’ said I, ‘I may return the inquiry with interest, and with more show of reason. What is your business with me?’

‘You need not take offence; there is none intended, I assure you; quite the contrary. Here is my card, and I am to be found at the Ship.’

“I took the card, held it to the light, and read the words, ‘Louis Crannel.’

‘Your name is strange to me,’ I said; ‘I have still to learn your business with me.’

‘I wish to know who you are, and what is your profession,’ he replied. ‘My motive for that is not mere curiosity. If you desire concealment, of course I say no more; but it strikes me you do not.’

‘You are right,’ I said; ‘I have no motive for concealment;’ and I told him my name, address, and daily employment.

“He affected the utmost astonishment. ‘Do you mean to tell me,’ he asked, as if utterly incredulous, ‘that you are such an infatuated ass as to work at a trade for about thirty shillings a-week, and yet play such a game at billiards as I have seen you play?’

‘Pshaw!’ said I; ‘billiards are an amusement only; I could not make a living by billiards.’

‘The deuce you couldn’t! Hark ye, young man, you have the means of independence in your hand, and you don’t know it. Now, listen to me. With such skill at billiards as you have, and such knowledge of the world as I could teach you, you might gain any amount of wealth you chose.’

‘Or, which is just as probable, might lose what little I have.’

‘Not at all. If you are afraid of that, I will make you an offer. You shall quit your trade, and place yourself under my charge. I will take you all over Europe; you shall make the grand tour at my expense; I will defray all charges of travelling, living, and clothing; you shall visit all the capitals, shall have your own valet, and live like a lord, and I will give you a clear three hundred a-year for yourself.’

‘In return for which,’ said I, ‘I am to play where you choose, to win when you choose, and to lose when you choose!’

‘Just so,’ said he.

‘Thank you; I will have nothing to do with it.’

‘You will be sorry for it, my lad; and if you are such an idiot as to go grinding at a beggarly trade for a few shillings a-week, when you might realise an independence in a few years, you deserve to suffer.’

‘Good-night!’ I replied, and strode away home as fast as I could.

“On the following day Crannel renewed his offer; but I told him that there was no pro-

bability that I should change my determination. Eventually, however, I accepted his proposition in terms with which the reader is already acquainted; and we drew up a duplicate agreement at his hotel, which was mutually signed, and of which each of us retained a copy. The agreement bound me to him for three years, though it only covenanted that I should render him my services whenever called upon for the salary named—no reference being made to the nature of the services.

“A night’s repose restored me; and the next morning an ‘artist’ made his appearance, who took my measure, and in a few days sent in such a magnificent wardrobe, made in the recent Parisian fashion, as qualified me, in appearance at least, for any society in Europe. Meanwhile, Crannel made me aware of the particulars of his plan. I was to assume the character of an English country gentleman of fortune on his travels. I was to be passionately fond of billiards, and about as clever with the cue as country gentlemen usually are—playing a wild game in a reckless, cautionless way, but, for obvious reasons, playing only for moderate stakes. It would

be his part to drop in occasionally during my play, when he would make his own bets, either in my favour or against me, as he chose, and I was to win or lose according to signals agreed upon between us. In order to avoid suspicion, I was to conceal my real strength, even when it was most required, and to win, when to win was imperative, as if by accident rather than design. With regard to the connection between us, it was agreed that we should not appear too intimate, or, on the other hand, too distant and reserved; we were to be casual acquaintances, on good terms with each other, and sometimes winning each other's money at a quiet morning game.

“All these preliminaries being settled, I spent a couple of days in private practice at a French table—the continental tables being very different from those to which I had been accustomed—in order to familiarise myself with their peculiarities; and then we started by separate conveyances, I and my valet leading the way, for Brussels.

“At Brussels, the game began. There were hundreds of wealthy Englishmen there, and there were the usual number of sharks of all

nations assembled to prey upon them. I was well received, and was, I believe, set down in many a private memorandum as a pigeon easy to be plucked. Crannel managed his affairs with consummate address. He gave the signal for me to lose almost constantly, day after day, even when I knew that he had heavy bets depending on my play, and though he had to pay my own losses as well as his. I could not understand it, and one night, after a repetition of the enigma, begged an explanation. He then informed me that the supposed losses he had endured were to confederates—the real one being my own small stakes—and that I should see the result of this policy very soon. He was right in his prophecy. The confederates, who seemed to have won so much, excited the cupidity of others, and they having staked large sums, the signals suddenly changed, and I had to win. By what appeared the wildest and most fatuous play, I won game after game, which the most suspicious could only attribute to accident or the most unheard-of luck. The losers doubled their stakes, and lost again; and now, in lieu of the feigned thousands lost, the solid thou-

sands poured in. So artfully did my patron control his greed, resigning even large sums when it was policy to do so, that no symptom of mistrust appeared; and for several weeks he went on reaping the golden harvest.

“Suddenly he announced his intention of starting for Berlin, and requested me to give my valet the necessary orders, to call in my accounts and settle them, for we should depart in twenty-four hours.

“One morning, while lounging along the Boulevards at Paris, and peeping into the shops for some new fashions—I had become an arrant fop by this time—I stumbled suddenly upon my old Bath friend and quondam schoolfellow, Ned B——. He was overjoyed beyond expression to see me, and, as it very soon appeared, not without reason. I saw, the moment our greeting was over, that he was striving with the blue-devils, and getting the worst of the strife, and I naturally inquired what was the nature of his grievance.

“He replied with a groan and an ejaculation of thankfulness at having fallen in with me. Then seizing me by the arm, he lugged me off into a private room of a neighbouring *esta-*

minet, and, bolting the door, began his tale of woe. The burden of the whole was, that he had fallen into the hands of a cunning professor of our common craft, whom he had mistaken for a pigeon, and who, according to the stereotyped system, had led him on by first allowing him to win—had turned the tables on him at the critical moment, and had on the night last past plundered him to the tune of four hundred sterling, promising him his revenge at the next meeting. B——'s eyes were opened now that it was too late, and his money nearly all gone. He saw his master in the wily Austrian, and was convinced that if he played again, it would be but to increase his losses. He was at his wits' end when he met me. I was the only man who could help him. Would I take his place that night—engage the Austrian, and win back the money?

“I professed my readiness to do what I could; but I doubted whether his antagonist would be willing to play with a stranger for such sums as B—— had lost.

‘There is no fear of that,’ said B——. ‘We can lead him into it easily enough. Will you come?’

“ I could not refuse, and therefore I despatched a note to Crannel, informing him that I had met an old friend, and should not be home till late. Early in the evening B—— drove me across the water to an establishment near the Palais du Luxembourg, where we were admitted to a private room, and commenced playing together. At the hour appointed the Austrian came in and took his seat. He was a young fellow about my own age, and not likely soon to penetrate the artifices in which I was now such an adept. Having lost a couple of games to B——, I handed him a note in payment, and declined playing again, on the ground that he was too strong for me; adding that I would try a game or two with the stranger, if agreeable. The Austrian rose and expressed his willingness, if B—— would defer their engagement for a while. This was of course arranged, and we began to play. We began at eight in the evening, and left off about dawn. We began playing the silliest game imaginable on both sides, and left off like finished masters of the science, skilled in all the difficult refinements of which it is susceptible. I knew, before I had played an hour,

the whole strength of my adversary ; while he remained ignorant of mine almost to the close of the match. It was not till my friend had won back all his money that I began to throw off my disguise. I then piqued my adversary by criticising his play, and so soured his temper that he played worse. When all was over he was cleaned out to the last franc, and B—— and I had a thousand francs each of clear gain. We parted in the glimmer of the morning, B—— giving him his card and offering him his revenge whenever he chose to claim it.

* * * * *

“About the middle of August there arose a rumour of a new star in the billiard world. This was a young Russian, who was said to have reaped the highest honours in St. Petersburg, and to have beaten every opponent who had ventured to meet him. As usual, the most exaggerated reports were circulated regarding him ; and he must have been a magician, working by enchantments, if half that was said were true. It was inevitable* that

* After the event narrated above which was soon noised abroad.

I should be pitted against him. Everybody talked of this consummation, and was eager to bring it about. Crannel did not start any objection; and my admirers making up a considerable purse, the affair was decided on. The match was to come off in the Palais Royal by daylight on the Sunday. I had never seen my opponent up to the hour of our meeting; and when, with Crannel, who had betted liberally on my side, I repaired to the spot, what was my astonishment in recognising in the renowned Russian my once shirtless antagonist Pat Meagher, whom, as a lad, I had defeated at Bath! It is true he looked the Russian well in a pair of dark whiskers and a Cossack moustache; and he talked Russ most glibly with a friend who accompanied him. Still there was the unmistakable Irish face, and the undeniable brogue flavoured his Slavonic speech. I was glad to see he did not recognise me; but I was determined to seek him out and have a private conference, if possible. In stripping for the match, after we had shaken hands, he dropped a card from his vest-pocket; in a moment I had secreted it unobserved, and the contest began.

“ But for my previous knowledge of Meagher’s play, and the points in which his strength lay, I might probably have been beaten, and that summarily. As it was, the contest was a succession of wary sparrings, in which nothing brilliant was either done or attempted. Had a drawn match been possible in billiards, this would have been drawn. It ended in my winning, through the failure of an almost impossible stroke which, at the last crisis, my adversary was compelled to attempt, and which left the game in my hands.

“ The morning after the match I rose early and drove in a *fiacre* to the address on Meagher’s card, which bore the inscription, ‘ Ivan Mearowitz, Hôtel de la Paix, Rue Richelieu.’ It was one of those grim old hotels where you knock and are let in by an invisible porter. A voice directed me to the second door ‘ *au quatrième* ;’ and on sounding it with my knuckles, Pat, who was in bed, bawled out ‘ *Entrez,*’ and I walked in. He was flustered at seeing me, and began stuttering apologies in three languages at once.

‘Is it possible,’ I said, ‘that you did not know me yesterday, Pat?’

‘Bedad,’ said he, ‘it must be possible, I reckon; for I don’t know you now for anything but the man that bate me yesterday.’

‘Don’t you recollect me at Bath five years ago?’

‘Whew! botheration! If I hadn’t a presquintiment of something of the kind, I’m a Dutchman! That accounts for the milk in the cocoa-nuts. O, be the Vargin! but it’s meself that’s glad to see ye, anyhow.’

‘Well, and what have you been doing these years?’

‘Och! won’t I tell you all about it? But not here, not here, my friend. Faith, the divole incarnate ’ll be here in a jiffy, and he mustn’t see you. Do ye see that windy yander wid the green venaytians?’ and Pat, rising from his bed, pointed across the court.

‘I see it. What then?’

‘Cross the coort, mount the t’other stairs, and go into No. 15 on the third floore. I’ll be wid ye in a twinklin’.’

“I did as he requested, feeling assured, from his eagerness and excitement, that some

interesting revelation awaited me. In less than ten minutes he made his appearance in an old dressing-gown, and having bolted the door of the closet, which was but a receptacle for lumber, seated himself on a box, and commenced a rather remarkable narration. I shall not give it in detail, out of consideration for the reader's patience. The gist of it may be briefly extracted, and was to the following effect: Like myself, Pat Meagher had been picked up by a speculating patron, and carried off to St. Petersburg, where, according to his own account, he had won a mint of money for his owner, receiving but a miserable stipend for himself, and ungentlemanly treatment into the bargain. His tyrant was one Mortier, a cashiered French officer. Meagher assured me that he had won for him a hundred thousand roubles in St. Petersburg, and as much more at Moscow, the villain coolly bagging the whole. Pat's hatred to the man was almost demoniac; and he seemed possessed with the idea that he should be driven to murder him before their contract was expired, and which had yet two years to run. My affection for Crannel was somewhat of the

same stamp; and, by way of consoling each other, we mutually anathematised the villains who had us in their grasp.

“But Meagher was not content with cursing his enemy; he had a plan which he had long been revolving in his mind, and which his encounter with me would enable him to carry out. He proposed at once, and with an almost savage vehemence, that we should turn the tables upon our tyrants, and, as they had so long done by us, enrich ourselves at their expense. The scheme struck me as excellent, as well from its simplicity as from the retributive justice it involved, and I agreed to it cagerly and at once.

“Soon after seven next morning Meagher and I were fleeing along the road to St. Cloud, to the residence of M. Florian, who had entered into the scheme, and with whom we were to concert measures for putting it into execution. M. Florian was a model dandy of that era, of graceful figure, exquisite manners, and fine accomplishments—musician, artist, linguist, and gambler, the idol of the sex, and the most careless, agreeable, and good-humoured rattlepate in the world. He received

us in an elegant saloon, hung with the masterly productions of his own pencil, sang us an operatic air to his own accompaniment, arranged our little plan on the simplest grounds and the most liberal terms, gave us his note of hand for a round sum to fall due in a few weeks, ordered up a grand *déjeuner*, and, that discussed, drove us as far back as Auteuil in his own carriage.

“The reader may perhaps suspect that M. Florian was little to be relied on; if so, he is mistaken. The honour that exists among—ahem!—among gentlemen of certain pursuits is as spotless as the snow, and is rarely violated. Pending the whole duration of our threefold contract, Florian behaved with the rectitude of a judge in ermine, and the precision of a banker.

* * * * *

“One night Mcagher’s patron, Mortier, who came to the café where we played with the scowl of a fiend on his brow, and in a state of furious excitement, as was always the case when he drank freely, began to vociferate violently and to bet heavily on his protégé. M. Florian, who was present, immediately in-

dicated that I was to win, and accepted all Mortier's proffered bets, in addition to those he had already made. It chanced that he had scarcely accepted these pledges, when one of those accidents, which are always contingent on the board of green cloth and which the most experienced players cannot always guard against, gave Meagher such a decided advantage in the game as should, and would under ordinary circumstances, have secured his winning it. Mortier now redoubled his clamour, and offered very heavy odds, challenging the whole room to accept them. Florian instantly did so, and they were accepted also by Crannel to a very unusually large amount. The game went on, and I recovered my lost ground so far that, as it drew towards the close, I had scored as many points as my opponent, and two points more, made by either of us, would win the game. It was Meagher's turn to play, and his ball being under the cushion, he gave a miss; which, while it was the right play, was also good policy for us, since, had any accident sent one of the balls into the pocket, all would have been over. It was now my turn, and

there was a winning hazard on the balls which at any other time I could have made with ease and certainty. Up to this moment of my life I had never known what it was to be nervous; but now a panic seized me, the cue trembled in my hand: if I did not win, I knew that Florian would lose more than all three of us could pay. I essayed to make the stroke, but there were two hundred thousand francs depending upon it; I felt the eye of Crannel upon me, and every sinew in my frame vibrated. Calling for a glass of iced water, I drank it off, and then, endeavouring to think of something else, hastily struck the stroke. The red ball, instead of dropping into the pocket, struck the small angle of the cushion, rebounded, and kissed my own, the two then stopping, one on each side of the pocket, with a space between them barely wide enough for a ball to pass through. There were a hundred eyes looking on, but not a lip moved, only a suppressed groan arose for an instant among my partisans.

“It was now Meagher’s turn to play, and it was almost impossible for him to strike either ball without winning the game, in which case

we were ruined. He did not seem at all disturbed, but lowered his cue to play. I thought he would take the only course open to him, and make a foul stroke; instead of that, he drove his ball sheer between the other two, without touching either of them, and ran a 'coo' in the pocket; thus losing the game.

“Affecting the utmost horror at what he had done, he dashed down his cue, and began tearing his hair and blaspheming. I of course knew he had done it on purpose; but the thing was so difficult, so apparently impossible, that the spectators did not suspect foul play—none of them, with the exception of Mortier, who, having already his suspicions aroused, was now convinced of the justice of them, as well as enraged to madness at the heavy losses he had incurred. With a countenance livid with fury, he rushed towards Meagher, and, yelling a desperate oath, dealt him a savage blow on the face.

“A horrid scene ensued. The Irishman flew at the aggressor's throat, and would have strangled him on the spot but for the interference of a dozen strong arms, which tore him away. Frenzied beyond all control of himself,

he burst out with a torrent of invective, abuse, and rabid curses, and leaping on the table, called heaven and earth to witness that he would not move thence alive without the heart's blood of the villain that had struck him. Mortier at first responded only by a sárcastic sneer, and turned his back upon him. But the Irish blood was not to be so appeased. Branding his patron as coward, and heaping on him the foulest charges, Meagher continued to denounce him as a robber, assassin, traitor, and *forçat*; and called on the company to listen while he gave them the veritable history of the monster.

“Mortier, who had started at the word *forçat*, again winced, and turning sharply round, ‘Let us have weapons,’ he said; ‘the fool shall have his way!’ Springing on the table, he folded his arms, and awaited the issue with a suppressed eagerness which showed how deep should be his revenge.

“Rapiers were brought: it was notified to both the combatants that if either of them quitted the table he would be instantly disarmed, held to be defeated, and incapable of resuming the strife. Then M. Florian drew a

chalk-line across the centre of the cloth—the weapons were delivered to each, and the duel began.

“Meagher, to whom the delay had afforded a moment for reflection, which he had wasted in fuming and stamping, advanced boldly to the encounter. Mortier, who was the shorter by nearly a head, instead of opposing him in the usual attitude, stood bent forward in a half-circle, with his rapier-point quivering above his head. Some rapid passes took place, and Mortier was seen to be bleeding from two slight wounds; but he was cool and wary in proportion to the peril—parried the deadly lunges of his tall foe with unvarying certainty, and at length, springing forward with in his guard, instantly shortened his weapon, and thrust it sheer through the breast of the poor Irishman, who leaped with a wild cry into the air, and fell on the table a corpse.

“Paralysed at the sight, I was gazing horror-struck at the lifeless body, when I felt a hand grasping my shoulder; it was Crannel. ‘We must to cover,’ he said; ‘the police will be here in a minute, and you will gain nothing by their courtesies, you may depend upon it.’

“That was the last game of billiards I ever played to the profit of Louis Crannel, who, at my request, paid me off the same night, giving me to understand that he knew I had played him false, but that, having taken his measures accordingly, I had not injured him, though I had intended to do so. I reproached him in my turn with his systematic and cold-blooded rascality and selfishness, and we parted.

“Mortier got a sentence of a year’s imprisonment for the duel, one month of which he actually suffered. Poor Meagher was buried as a Russian officer, and was registered at Père la Chaise under the name of Mearowitz. M. Florian and I divided his effects between us, and I had seven thousand francs for my share of Mortier’s losses, all of which were ultimately paid. How this sum and much more which I had gained over the devil’s back was subsequently dissipated under another part of his person, it boots not the reader to know. Poverty, the ultimate lot of nearly all gamblers, has been mine for many a weary year. With mature age came dyspepsia and nervousness, and then all my reliance on all

my skill as a billiard-player vanished. Of all accomplishments this is the one that requires the most perfect condition of the physical faculties, and no man who is conscious that he possesses either nervous system or ventral organs need expect to excel in it."

THE "DUTCH BARON."

Pierce Egan, in a volume of *Sporting Sketches*, published in 1820, gives the following interesting anecdote :

"The gentlemen of the green cloth were put out of cue by a hero of a hazard-table imported from the Continent, a few years ago, by one of the squad ; who, while he pretended to be playing the losing game, was shrewdly suspected of going snacks in all that rolls into the pocket.

"The Dutch Baron was introduced by his friend, who happened to have known him at Hamburg. He played in a crowd of billiard amateurs and professors, many of whom were rich, and lost about one hundred and fifty guineas with the utmost *sang-froid*. Upon his retiring, his friend told the company he

was a fine pigeon, a Dutch Baron, who had emigrated from Holland with immense property, and who would as readily lose ten thousand pounds as ten guineas. Some asked, 'Is it the Gala Hope?' 'No,' replied others, 'he is in hands that will not let him slip awhile.' 'Is it the Princess Amelia's house Hope?' asked another. 'Who is he; who is he?' was eagerly inquired. 'A Dutch Baron, as rich as a Jew,' was answered in a whisper.

"No Batavian laid out a hundred and fifty guineas so well as the Dutch Baron. The whole corps of riflemen flocked around him, like a swarm of fish at a piece of bread. But little P., well known at Bath, who thought he best knew how to make his market, like a man of business, applied to the Baron's friend to have the first plucking. The friend, as a great favour, engaged to use his influence; little P. was at the billiard-table the first man in the morning, that he might secure the play in his own hands. The Baron came; to it they went. Little P. kept back his play; the Dutch Baron played but poorly—fair strokes he often missed; but whenever he was at an

important point he won, as if by accident. On they went—Hambletonian and Diamond. Little P. was afraid of frightening the Baron by disclosing the extent of his play; the Baron played so as to persuade everyone he knew little of the game. The contest was, who should play worst at indifferent periods; and who, without seeming to play well, should play best at important points. The Baron won on all great occasions, till little P. had lost about 100%. But the Baron managed so well that no one thought he could play at all; and although little P. was sickened, yet the bait of 150 guineas found plenty of customers. Some of them, the greatest adepts in the kingdom, gave the Baron at starting three points in the game; but the Baron's accidental good play was so superior, whenever a great stake was down, he at last gave three points to those who had given him three points, and still beat them — by accident. And before the billiard knowing ones at Bath would stop, the Baron had won nearly 10,000*l.*, with which he made a bow and came to London.

“ But this Dutch nobleman's fame tra-

velled almost as fast as himself, and he was found out; not, however, till he had sweated some of the most knowing gentlemen of the cue.

“He concealed his play so well, that no one could form an idea of its extent. To the best billiard-players he gave points, and always won on important occasions. He seemed to be a very conjurer, commanding the balls to roll as he pleased; and there was nothing to be named, that it is not supposed he could accomplish.

“But the most entertaining part of his story is the style of reprobation in which the professors of the cue spoke of his concealment of his play. They execrated him as guilty of nothing short of cheating; they—whose daily practice it was to conceal their play, and angle on the gudgeons with whom they engaged—they bitterly reviled the Dutch Baron for retorting their own artifice, and entrapping them in their own way.

“And who was the Dutch Baron? asks everyone who hears of his achievements. In Hamburg he was the marker at a billiard-table.”

MR. ANDREWS.

In a little work on billiards published in 1801, and entitled *Instructions to play the Game with ease and propriety*, I find the following :

“ Mr. Andrews was born to an easy and independent fortune, but commenced life at a time when he was incapable of judging of the world or of himself, so led away was he by a single passion; for he was not actuated by any other. He devoted himself entirely to the blind goddess, and worshipped her incessantly in the form of two ivory balls. He was remarkably thin, not very tall, and a perfect vacuum with respect to every possible idea except billiards. So infatuated was he in pursuing this game to attain the summit of excellence, that he sacrificed nights, days, weeks, months, and years at it. At length he arrived at such a degree of perfection, as well in the theoretical as in the practical part of the game, that there was no player in Europe could equal him except one, who was the celebrated Abraham Carter, that kept

the tables at the corner of the Piazzas, Russell-street, Covent-garden. Mr. Andrews was the most devoted adept of this game that ever nature produced; he seemed but to vegetate in a billiard-room, and indeed he did little more in any other place. He was a billiard valetudinarian in the most rigid signification of the expression. He ate, drank, slept, and waked but to promote the system of the balls. His regimen was tea, toast-and-butter for breakfast, for dinner, and for supper. It might reasonably be imagined that so regular a process would obtain all the advantages that could result from the sciences.

“ He won considerable sums, but knew not the value of money; and when he only played for 5*l.* or 10*l.* took no pains, but seemed perfectly indifferent about winning or losing. There was a latent *finesse* in this, but it did not operate. He was laying by for bets, but as they were seldom offered, the strength of his play being known very well, he often lost by repeated small sums very considerable ones. It is generally believed, however, that he has played for more

money at billiards than any other person ever did.

“The following is a remarkable circumstance. He won one night from Colonel W—e upwards of 1000*l.*, and the Colonel appointed to meet him in the city next day to go and transfer stock to him to the amount lost. Being in a hackney-coach, they tossed who should pay for it. Mr. A. lost; and upon this small beginning he was incited to continue gambling till he lost the whole sum won from Colonel W—e the night before. When the coachman stopped to set them down, he was ordered to get up again and drive them back, as they had no occasion to get out.

“By similar pursuits Mr. A. lost very large sums which he had won at billiards; and in a few years hazard and other games at chance stripped him of every shilling he could command. He had still left a small annuity, which he endeavoured to dispose of, but it was so securely settled upon himself that he could not sell it; otherwise it is probable it would soon have been transferred to the gaming-table.

“He very lately lived in a retired manner in Kent, where he declared to an intimate friend that he never knew contentment while he was rolling in money. But since he was obliged to live upon a scanty pittance he was one of the happiest men in the universe.”

SPOILING A TIP.

The Compleat Gamester, by R. Seymour, published in 1750, has the following :

I shall relate a piece of knavery that is well known to the town, though at present not much thought of, which was committed a few years past by a person who was grown weary of leading a solitary life behind a counter, who turned gentleman at large, in expectation of making his fortune much quicker than by attending to labour and industry. He soon became master of the art and mystery of billiards, as will appear by the sequel of the story.

R. and B., two persons of distinction, made it their diversion to meet every day in Pall-mall and pass away many hours at billiards,

which drew a vast concourse of people together to see them play, though at the first outset they played but for trifles. R. was a better player than B.; therefore, to make the match as equal as possible, R. gave B. one, which really made their game so uncertain that anyone might have had his choice, though it were for 100*l.*

At length they came to play for larger sums, which took wind and drew all the sharpers about the town to the place.

Though the match continued some time with little or no advantage on either side, the sharpers took R.'s side, knowing him to be the better player, and he was always steady and cool, win or lose. Yet it did not answer their expectations; the games were always precarious, and betting money on them was thought to be like licking honey off thorns. They resolved therefore to stand neither till an expedient could be found out to cause B. to beat R.; and it was not long before they effected it, as will appear instantly.

You must know that both R. and B. bought their own sticks, and were so very curious that they had drawers with lock and key made for

each of them to put their sticks into in the billiard-room.

After many debates how these sharpers were to take in the company, the person who quitted the counter (I shall call him E.) was thought the properest person to put their design into execution.

The first step he took was to possess himself of R.'s favourite stick, which he constantly played with. Notwithstanding the lock and key, he took it away unknown to any but his companions, and had prepared an instrument for the purpose of shaving or paring away each end of the stick, and left in the centre a rising undiscernible to the eyes of the most curious, and then put the stick again in its place.

When R. came afterwards to play with the stick, B. beat him several advantageous games; for R. frequently used to hit B.'s ball on the wrong side, so beat himself, imagining all this time that his hand was out, and not in the least suspecting the fault to lie in the stick. The confederacy by this had their ends. At last the man of the house (not being in the secret, and having lost his money by backing

R.) suspected the cheat; and upon inquiry he found out the cause, and straight acquainted R. with it; which surprised him mightily for the present, perfectly knowing B. to be a man of more honour than to be capable of acting such a part. R., finding himself thus surrounded by thieves and sharpers, never came to the house afterwards. This you may believe caused some talk and noise in the town, but the affair ended thus. Everyone kept what they had got; the man of the house lost both his money and two very great benefactors; and all the satisfaction he ever got was at last to find out the place where E. had bought the instrument.

A LAND AT BILLIARDS.

In a sporting work published in 1828 called *Crockford's, or Life in the West*, the following amusing story is told:

As spring is the season for birds to mate, so autumn is the season for "Greeks" to pair and go on a professional tour. A route is generally selected which they have not traversed before (as they commonly, wherever

they go, leave some awkward recollections behind them), and where they are not likely to cross the path of others of the honourable fraternity.

If they happen (which is not unfrequently the case with the lower class of "Greeks") to get "nosed" upon (pointed out) in one place, they move off to another, where they are not known, and thus fall in with many good country flats.

The higher order of these gentry, by subscribing to the libraries, musical meetings, and county balls, &c., command a wide sphere for selecting their "friends."

When they get acquainted with a man of property in the county, whom they have no opportunity at the time of "landing," but have the prospect in view, they give, if he expresses any thoughts of visiting the metropolis, letters of introduction to one of those who work with them, whose name and rank are somewhat imposing.

At the commencement of August, Mr. Friske, alone, directed his steps westward of London to reconnoitre, it being preconcerted that he was immediately to inform his patron

if any "game" could be turned up. In consequence of this agreement, a few days after his departure he forwarded by post, franked, the following despatch :

" Plough, Cheltenham, August 22, 18—.

" DEAR HULSE,—This place is full of company, and of the best description. At every step a flat is to be turned up, with as little trouble as game over a good preserve. At present I have not made a guinea, but am out of pocket all my expenses. I'm in strong scent for something worth while. 'Few flats, but good ones,' should be our motto, for the danger of exposure is less in proportion to the fewer instances that occur.

" At the ball held at Worcester last week I was introduced to Mr. Frederick Courtnay, son of the high sheriff of ——, who is so immensely rich. I have met him several times since, and we have become very intimate. Part of his father's property lies in the county of Sligo. Were you down here, we might manage a *sly go* at the old gentleman's coffers. I can do nothing alone. He bets a little upon racing, but I am quite out

of the way of hearing how they come off; therefore I leave races alone. He talks of passing the winter in London. I expatiated upon the advantages of an introduction to you, which I have promised to give him. As he is fond of dancing, I represented the facility he would then have of going to Almack's and all the crack balls. He was uncommonly pleased at the idea. He has not long left Oxford, where the lads not only obtain a smattering of the classics, but think they get pretty knowing. 'The half-knowing ones,' as you used to say, 'make sometimes the greatest flats.' He prides himself upon billiards, and is a daily visitor to ——'s rooms. Welldone could give him ten points and beat him easily. Should there be nothing down in town, you and Welldone had better come down *immediately*.

"I am now on the point of meeting him for a ride together to Great Malvern. He has an old rich aunt at the Well Houses. Excuse haste. Adieu.

"I am, dear Hulse,

"Faithfully yours,

"P. FRISKE."

A few hours after the receipt of this found Lord Hulse and Captain Welldone on their way to Cheltenham, travelling with all imaginable speed.

On their arrival at the Plough, Friske was at the theatre, witnessing Colonel Berkeley "stalking his shapes" through a part amidst the loud whispers and titters of his numerous fair acquaintances.

When he returned from the play he found Welldone and his lordship discussing with great relish a grilled chicken and mushroom-sauce, and a cool bottle of claret, by way of a restorer from the fatigues of the journey.

Mr. Friske. Bee the poors, I'm glad you've come. I have the finest flat in tow imaginable. Hay puts up here, but hay has gone to bed these two hours.

Lord Hulse. You are one of the best fellows in the world at picking up flats. You ought to be retained upon Crockford's establishment; you would soon fill up the vacancies made by those who by their losses to it are compelled to move off the scene into retirement.

Mr. F. Bee St. Patrick, Hulse, no bad

thing to bay in Crockford's "red-book" for a good sinecure, as Mr. ——, Lord ——, Sir —— ——, and a few more lookers-out for his "hell" are, or to receive a good bonus out of what a man may drop who you take there becase you can make nothing of him yourself. How shall we manage Mr. Courtney? Hay goes to Thompson's well avary morning before braikfast; so Hulse and I will lounge to them as if by chance. Way shall be sure to mait him."

Lord H. Good. Do you think he'll bleed handsomely at billiards?

Mr. F. Properly humoured, I have no doubt of it.

Lord H. Well, then, Welldone must be kept in the background. You introduce me to him the first opportunity, and we'll contrive to repair to the billiard-rooms. Welldone must come in by chance, and appear not to know us. I'll play him a rub or two, and throw up my cue. It will then be open for Welldone to take him up, and he must lose to him at first. He will thus be worked into a confidence of his superiority of play, and be induced to bet high. You must back him thick and thin against Welldone with Well-

done and me. Should I see opportunity, I will make a few bets round the room. Well-done must have 500*l.* to show.

The next morning Lord Hulse and Mr. Courtnay were introduced to each other at the Wells, and the three returned to the Plough to breakfast. During the repast the conversation was lively: the pleasures of the country, the amusements of town, and sporting subjects, were all dilated upon; but a match at billiards was the pivot upon which they all turned. It was soon agreed that Lord Hulse and Mr. Courtnay were to play; and for that purpose, when breakfast was over, they adjourned to the billiard-rooms.

Lord H. I suppose, Mr. Courtnay, you are a good player?

Mr. Courtnay. Among the middlings, my lord.

Lord H. I play wretchedly.

Mr. C. Marker, let me have that cue I played with yesterday.

Marker. Here it is, sir.

Lord H. Give me a nice cue, not too heavy. You can give me points, I should think.

Mr. C. We'll play a game or two even,

and we shall then be better able to judge of each other's play.

Lord H. Very well. We'll play for a pound, to make the game interesting. I shall only play a rubber or two.

Mr. C. A pound a game? Done.

The first game his lordship soon lost. While the second was being played Captain Welldone came into the room without stirring a muscle of recognition to his friends. After observing a few hazards, and when the game was Lord Hulse 12 to Mr. Courtney's 7, he offered to back his lordship at three pounds to two.

Mr. F. I'll take your thray to two, sir.

Captain Welldone. It's a bet, sir. I'll bet it again.

Mr. C. Done, sir.

A Stranger. Will you bet it again, sir?

Capt. W. No; I've quite enough on it.

Lord Hulse lost the game. He also lost the third and the fourth, when he threw down his cue, exclaiming he really could not play.

Mr. Courtney won of Lord Hulse four pounds, and of Captain Welldone thirteen; having made also several bets with him. The Captain *lost* to Mr. Friske twenty-five pounds.

Capt. W. I'll play you a game, sir, if you like.

Mr. C. I don't mind, sir; but I don't know your play.

Capt. W. A very indifferent player. I think, from your style of play with your late antagonist, that you can give me points. My game is no better, if so good, as that gentleman's.

Mr. C. Will you go first, or shall I?

Capt. W. I always think the fairest way is to string for first.

In the trial, Mr. Courtnay's ball was nearest the cushion.

Mr. C. 'Tis my first.

Capt. W. We'll have some trifling bet—a pound the game, and two pounds the rub.

Mr. C. As I have won of you, sir, I don't mind.

Mr. F. Shall we have a bait, sir?

Capt. W. With all my heart—five pounds a game, if you like.

Mr. F. Done, sir.

Captain Welldone, to make it appear he was a novice, and to mask his excellent play, held his cue most awkwardly, and made a bad bridge for it. He missed his cue now and

then, but still made some good cannons and hazards, and won two or three games out of six or seven.

Capt. W. You are too much for me, sir; you can give me odds.

Mr. C. Well, sir, if you think I can, take the white hazard.

Marker. You can give the red, sir.

Mr. C. Well, score him three.

A few more games were played, still to the disadvantage of the Captain, who at last gave over play, pretended to be out of humour, and swore roundly.

Capt. W. Marker, how stand the games?

Marker (looking at the slate). One pound the game, two pounds the rub.

Five short rubs	£20
Three long do.	9
By bets, 3 <i>l.</i> to 2 <i>l.</i> three times	6
Do. 10 <i>l.</i> to 1 <i>l.</i> once	1
	—
	36
Lost before	13
	—
	£49

Forty-nine pounds, sir.

Capt. W. (taking out his pocket-book; and flourishing the large roll of notes with which he was purposely furnished). Forty-nine pounds to you, sir. There are fifty pounds; be good enough to give me a sovereign.—And now, sir (turning to Mr. Friske), what do I owe you?

Mr. F. (reads from a paper):

Five short rubs	£50
Three long do	15
By bets	27
	—
	92
Lost before	25
	—
	£117

A hundred and seventeen pounds, sir.

Capt. W. A hundred and seventeen pounds, eh? Give me three pounds, sir; here are twelve tens.

Mr. F. (pocketing the money). You've been unlucky, sir.

Capt. W. A little so; a mere trifle.

Welldone made an appointment for the morrow to have another trial, and then left the room. Friske gave the marker five pounds,

and Mr. Courtnay two. Lord Hulse took some bets from the strangers round, and picked up twenty-two pounds. Lord Hulse, Mr. Friske, and Mr. Courtnay then returned together to the Plough, ordered dinner, and retired to dress.

Captain Welldone soon after found his way by the back staircase to Lord Hulse's dressing-room, where Friske also was.

Mr. F. Shall we try to make him play at cards?

Lord H. No; we have not been friends long enough. Besides, Welldone and we must continue to appear to be strangers for the present; we must not appear in it at all. We shall work him at billiards to-morrow, to a dead certainty; for he's in ecstasies at his success to-day, and regrets he did not bet with Welldone as high as Friske did.

Mr. F. Hay has not much of the ready, I believe; but his bond would be good for tahn thoosand.

Lord H. His papa keeps him short, eh? Well, his bond would be no bad catch. Now let's see how we stand on the morning.

W. lost to C. by backing H..	£13
Do. himself	36
F. gave the marker	5
H. lost to C.	4
	—
	58
Deduct won by H. of strangers	22
	—
Out	£36

Out just twelve “goldfinches” each upon a good adventure.

While these happy expectations were being indulged in by these worthies of the Plough, the understrappers of this kind of drama, who come in for their gleanings, were not idle.

The marker told his master, who was absent during the previous scene, all the particulars. The master cursed his ill stars that, in being away, he did not leave word where he could be found—a precaution generally taken by all billiard-table owners, who make a shrewd guess of what is going forward, and reap a harvest accordingly. Indeed, there are but few tables which have not their regular “Greeks,” who work for the table, and

divide the plunder with the owner, which is received in secret.

The marker in the evening went also to a public house, to smoke his cigar (so common has that practice become), and take his glass of grog, where he was in the habit of meeting with the sharks connected with the billiard-rooms in London, who move to watering-places, &c., at this season, and from whom he gains some useful information of certain visitors from that hotbed of loose fry.

The marker himself did not know one of the parties, nor could he at all learn by the description he gave of them, or the inquiries he made.

However, he said sufficient to put a good many upon the *qui vive* that there could be something got, which caused the rooms to be fully attended on the morrow.

But to return to the Plough.

Lord Hulse, Mr. Friske, and Mr. Courtenay smoking cigars and drinking iced punch.

Mr. Courtenay. I shall be most happy to see you, my Lord Hulse and Mr. Friske, at my father's seat in November. It is the

largest in all the county, and we have the finest preserves of game in those parts.

Lord H. You are extremely kind, sir; but when you once get me there, you will have a great difficulty to rid yourself of me again. I am an incessant sportsman, and where I take up my quarters for sporting, d—me if I like to leave them till a bird cannot be turned up for many miles round.

Mr. C. You are a good shot, then, my lord, I take it?

Lord H. Yes, so-so; but if I were as good a shot as you are a billiard-player, I should never miss my bird, as you never miss a hazard when you are intent upon making it.

Mr. C. My lord, you flatter me. I think I do play pretty well, though; I certainly made some beautiful strokes to-day.

Lord H. Yes, d—d fine. I'd back you for twenty thousand against that gentleman you played with after me. I could beat him myself; he could not play at all. I am informed he is a man of immense wealth.

Mr. C. Do you think he is as rich as

my father? My father has fifty thousand a year.

Mr. F. Take a pinch of snuff, my dair sir; it is some of Pontet's best mixture.

"Fifty thousand a-year!" added Friske in an undertone. At the same time he received a severe tread upon his foot from Lord Hulse, whose coolness never forsook him.

Mr. C. It is the most delicious snuff I ever took.

Mr. F. Then pray do me the honour to recaive a canaistair of it. I never travail without a good stock to halp my friends in the country to some, where no good can bay obtained. Buonaparte was a nice lad to take snuff. All grate men (opening his box for a pinch) take snuff; it clairs the haid.

Mr. C. I'm afraid I should be robbing you, or I would accept your polite offer.

Mr. F. Not at hall, sir, not at hall. Bee the poors, my own father would not bay more wailcome. You shall have a canaistair to-morrow.

The trio soon separated for repose.

The next day the party were at the bil-

liard-rooms by the time appointed. Welldone, not to appear too eager, did not arrive for nearly half an hour after, the whole of which time Mr. Courtnay was in a fidget, and almost apprehended that he would not come. He held cue in hand, and had the end well chalked. The room was full of persons, each forming different ideas and different plans for the guidance of their conduct. Welldone on his entrance was recognised by two or three present who had seen him play at Gregory's in town; but they took no notice of him. They would not spoil a good thing, but make the most of it they could upon the sly. Welldone, seeing so many persons present, wanted a private room, but there were only two rooms, and both considered public, therefore the request could not be granted. The gentlemen took off their coats for the encounter. The Captain had his own cue, which he never travelled without, and which his groom brought for the occasion.

Captain W. You beat me shamefully yesterday, sir; I think I must have five points from you to-day. I have no confidence.

Mr. C. I'll give you the red hazard

again to-day, and, if I beat you, you shall have five.

Capt. W. Very well. We bet a pound the game and two pounds the rub, as before.

Mr. F. I'll bait you tahn poonds the game.

Capt. W. You shall, sir.

A few games were played with alternate success on both sides. The game became interesting to the bystanders, who made bets among themselves, and money was soon changing masters. While the Captain was playing this "off-and-on" game, Lord Hulse, Mr. Friske, and the Captain confined their bets to themselves, excepting when the Captain offered a curious heavy bet upon a game he intended to lose, which he well judged would not be taken, and did not like his play when he intended to win, by which hints they managed to win of indifferent persons what they could.

At length Mr. Courtnay on a game was nineteen to the Captain's five, and it was the latter's play. The balls were so situated on the table that it appeared impossible to score off them.

Capt. W. I'll take two hundred to five that I score and make the game.

Mr. F. I'll bait you, sir, twice over you don't.

Mr. C. I'll bet you two hundred to five.

Capt. W. Done with both of you. I'll take it again.

A Stranger. I'll bet you, sir.

Capt. W. Done, sir.

Many smaller bets, down to shillings, were depending on the event.

The Captain now "let out" his play. He first well chalked his cue from a piece of fine chalk he had in his waistcoat-pocket. He then put his left hand flat upon the table, in order to twist a cannon, place the red ball over the middle pocket, and bring his own ball into baulk a little to the right. This stroke was beautifully executed. The Captain's ball spun with a sure and steady force from the white ball to the cushion, receding from which, it glanced slightly off the red ball, leaving it at an angle of about a foot from the centre pocket, and came within the baulk an inch of the line. The stranger who had betted the Captain two

hundred to five began to "smell a rat," and retreated behind the other lookers-on unobserved towards the door, to be ready for a start in the event of the Captain's following up such fine play.

The cannon made the Captain seven; he then made five "jennies" (pocketing off the red or white ball into the middle pocket) off the red ball, bringing it each time close upon the same spot, and won the game with one point to spare.

Capt. W. I never made such lucky strokes in my life. Where is the gentleman who betted me two hundred to five?

A Stranger. Some one in a white hat went out just now in great haste upon your making the last stroke, sir.

Marker. Shall I run after him, sir?

Captain Welldone, whose experience taught him to know that it was one of those tricks often practised in billiard-rooms, and that the fellow probably had not two hundred pence, at once said, "O no, it's no use; let him go and be d—d. I begin to feel peckish—shall we have something to eat, sir?"

Mr. C. If you please, sir.

Capt. W. Your friends perhaps will join us?

Lord H. I'm not hungry, sir.

Mr. F. I don't care if I do have something to hate.

Capt. W. Marker, send for some anchovy sandwiches and a couple of bottles of champagne in a pail of ice. How do we stand, marker?

Marker. You have won, sir, three long rubs and two short, and you have lost two long rubs and one short.

Capt. W. I've won, then, one long and one short rub on the balance.

One long rub	£3
One short rub	4
By bet	200
	£207

“What initial,” addressing Mr. Friske, “shall I put against your name, sir?”

Mr. F. Pay (P), if you plaze. But you shall have the money if you choose (pulling out his pocket-book).

Capt. W. O no, sir; I'm sure you are a gentleman. However, sir, you need not fear,

you will win it all back.—Marker, put down against P,

One long rub . . .	£10
One short rub . . .	20
By bet . . .	400
	£430

You shall increase your bets, if you like, gentlemen.

Mr. F. I'll bait you fifty pounds the game if you'll play avan, not without.

Mr. Courtnay, whose courage was restored by a couple of glasses of champagne, and who reflected besides upon the beating he gave Lord Hulse and the Captain the day before, without hesitation said, "I'll bet you fifty pounds the game and a hundred the rub; but you must take no odds."

Capt. W. I'm not fond of betting so high, but never mind, it shall be so.—Marker, we now play even.

When *Mr. Courtnay* made a tolerably good hazard, "Beautiful play!" "Excellent stroke!" "Never saw so fine a stroke!" flowed like honey from the lips of Lord Hulse and *Mr. Friske* into his ears. *Captain Welldone*, by

allowing Mr. Courtnay to get too close upon game in order to save appearances and make it look a "tight match," lost a few games he did not intend to do, although Mr. Courtnay became so agitated from his feelings, from what he drank, and the heat of the day, that he often missed his cue and oftener the easiest hazard. Those about the room at length would only bet one way, and there were no takers.

At nine o'clock Mr. Courtnay found it was of no use, and gave over play. He lost 5300*l.* Mr. Friske 7540*l.* to Captain Welldone and Lord Hulse; the latter besides won quietly from the spectators 78*l.* The owner of the table picked up his money as well as the marker in a small way.

Mr. Courtnay settled the next day. He paid 1300*l.* down and gave a *post-obit* for the remainder, being the best arrangement that could be wrung from him. He was deucedly chagrined at his loss, but he attributed it greatly to his own shocking bad play, in which idea Lord Hulse and Mr. Friske concurred, though they could have told him that the Captain did not play within eight points of his game at any one period of the match.

When Lord Hulse, Mr. Friske, and Captain Welldone met to talk over the affair after settlement, Mr. Friske said he thought they could stick Mr. Courtnay for 10,000*l.*; but Lord Hulse, though he agreed such a thing might be done, thought that it was not advisable then to go further, but they would "have him" in town in the winter; adding that his father was old, and that "when he came into the fifty thousand a year," imitating Friske, "he would be as good as an annuity to them."

Captain Welldone left Cheltenham the next day for Brighton, where Lord Hulse and Mr. Friske agreed to meet him for the purpose of taking a range of the watering-places upon the Sussex and Kentish coasts.

Mr. Courtnay arrived in town in the winter, and met Lord Hulse and Mr. Friske on the banks of the Serpentine river, viewing the skaters.

Their acquaintance was renewed, and soon after Lord Hulse introduced Mr. Courtnay to Crockford's Club, of which he was instantly made a member.

In consequence of Mr. Courtnay losing

largely at that "hell," and therefore of the *excellent* introduction, Lord Hulse obtained 2500*l.* for the bond, a great part of which, upon the division taking place between the three, was lost at the French-hazard table, a result confidently expected, or so much would not have been given for the bond.

Mr. Courtnay's father died soon after, and the bond was immediately paid without scruple or delay.

PART II.

HOW TO PLAY IT.

DEFINITION OF TERMS.

ANGLE. The space between the points at which two lines meet or diverge from each other.

American spot, The. A spot just above the baulk-line, on which the pink ball is placed prior to commencing a game at American billiards.

Angled. When the striker's ball is hidden by the corner or elbow of a cushion from another ball.

Balls. In the English and French games three are used, and for American billiards four.

Baulk-line, The. A line at the lower end of the table, behind which balls are not playable when the striker is in hand.

Baulk, To make a. A baulk is made by forcing the red and the striker's ball behind the line.

Bricole. In order to play bricole, a cushion must be struck first.

Bridge. A rest for the cue, formed by the left hand of the player.

Break, A. A run ; any number scored consecutively.

Break the balls, To. Whoever commences the game, whether with a miss or by hitting the red ball, is said to "break."

Baulk-pockets. The two lower pockets, those behind the baulk-line.

Coup. A coup is made by forcing the striker's ball into a pocket or off the table, without contact with another ball.

Cramp-strokes. Certain *tours de force*, which are always interesting to watch, and may sometimes prove serviceable in a game.

Cues. Instruments used by the players ; they are thick at the butt or lower end, and taper to the top, which is covered with leather, their length, weight, and thickness varying.

Cue-rack. A rack to hold cues.

Cannon. A cannon is made by causing the striker's ball to hit the other two.

Choice of balls. The players usually "string" for choice.

Cramp games. Games in which one player cramps himself by giving certain advantages

to his opponent; as, for instance, the "one-pocket" game, the "go-back" game, &c.

Centre spot. The spot between the middle pockets.

Double. To force the object-ball against one or more cushions. In this manner many winning hazards are made.

Double baulk. When the red and white balls are doubled behind the baulk-line.

D, The. The half-circle from which both players open the game, and place their ball prior to striking when in hand.

Dead straight. When the object-ball, the striker's ball, and the pocket to be played for are in a direct line.

Drag, The. A kind of low twist, which alters the course of the striker's ball, or causes it to stop almost directly on the place previously occupied by the object.

Double strength. Losing hazards and canons are often played thus, the double being used as a means of bringing the object ball into a convenient situation after the stroke.

Elbows, The. The corners or mouths of the pockets.

Foul stroke. A stroke made in violation

of the rules, amongst which it will be found duly described.

Following stroke. When the striker's ball is caused to travel after the object.

Fancy stroke. A stroke made rather to show off the player's powers than in accordance with what is termed "the game."

Full ball. When the striker's ball meets the object at the central point.

Fine ball. When the striker's ball comes slightly in contact with either side of the object.

Forcing hazard. Any difficult losing hazard played with the intention of trying to leave the balls well situated.

Fluke. A piece of good fortune for the player; a hazard or cannon made by accident.

Game, The. Playing certain hazards or cannons which are considered good policy.

Game off the balls. Finishing the game from any point without ceasing to score.

Game. When the number of points agreed upon or understood by the players is attained by either, the marker calls "game."

Half-but. A long cue furnished with a

rest, and used when the striker's ball is inconveniently situated, and too far away to be reached with the ordinary cue.

Handicap. When several players compete at certain points allotted to them according to their skill.

Half-ball. When the striker's ball meets half the surface of the object.

Hard ball. When the striker plays very briskly.

In hand. Prior to the opening of a game both players are said to be "in hand," as they also are when their ball is pocketed.

In baulk. When the balls, or any of them, are behind the baulk-line.

In play. When a player is in hand, and both balls are above the baulk-line, they are "in play."

Jenny. A losing hazard made into a middle pocket from baulk, the object being an inch or two from the cushion and below the pocket.

Jigger, The. A slang term for the rest.

Kiss. When a collision between two balls occurs after the first contact they are said to kiss.

Losing hazard. Pocketing the striker's ball off another.

Low stroke. When the cue meets the striker's ball below the centre.

Line ball, A. When the centre of a ball is directly on the baulk-line it is termed a line ball, and cannot be played at if the striker be in hand.

Mace. An instrument formerly used by all players, but now by ladies only.

Marker, The. The person who scores and calls the game.

Miss. A miss is given when the striker's ball does not hit either of the others. Some are accidental, others by design.

Miss in baulk. A miss in baulk is given with a view to prevent an adversary, when in hand, playing at the striker's ball.

Masse. A twisting top stroke.

Marking-board. A board marked with figures, and fitted with counters, by means of which the game is scored.

Middle pockets. The two pockets opposite each other in the centre of the side cushions.

Miss cue. When, for want of chalk, or from any other cause, the cue slips off the side of

the ball, and thus defeats the striker's intention.

Nursery, A. When the three balls are within an inch or two of one another, and a long score is likely.

Not playable. Balls directly on or behind the baulk-line are not playable by whoever is in hand.

Non-striker. The non-player.

Open the game. Whoever is unwilling to play for safety, and attempts an uncertain score, is said to open the game.

Object-ball. The ball played at.

Out of baulk. When a ball is above the baulk-line.

Pair of breeches. In playing from baulk, a pair of breeches may be made by scoring an ordinary losing and winning hazard with the same stroke.

Plain ball. The white ball is often thus distinguished from the spot white.

Pool. A winning hazard game in which several players may join, on certain conditions named in the rules.

Pyramids. Also a winning hazard game, usually played by two persons.

Pyramid spot. The spot between the billiard spot and the centre spot.

Pool-board. A marking-board for pool.

Pockets. The six bags with which each table is fitted to receive the balls.

Pocket-mouths. The entrances to the pockets.

Pool-basket. A narrow-necked, bottle-shaped basket, used in drawing the balls at pool.

Quarter-butt. A short butt, rather longer and much heavier than a cue, tipped with leather at the thick end, and used in playing up the table to double on balls in baulk.

Quill stroke, The. A losing hazard made into the lower or middle pockets from a ball partially overhanging the baulk-line: the player's ball must be pushed, not struck, and the object barely grazed.

Red ball, The. The coloured ball which is spotted at the opening of a game.

Recoil. To draw back the player's ball after contact with the object by low twist or a top stroke.

Run, A. A break; any number scored successively.

Spot white. A white ball in which are fixed two small black spots, to distinguish it from the plain white.

Spot, The. In billiards, the spot at the top of the table between the pockets.

Spot hazard. Whenever the red is cut or driven off the spot into any pocket.

Scratch. A sort of miss cue.

Spider, The. A skeleton rest, used chiefly in pyramids when a ball is behind the player's, so that he cannot make a natural rest.

Soft twist. A low, gentle twist; very effective when skilfully used.

Score, The. The state of the game.

Score, To. To make a hazard or cannon.

Screw. To cause the striker's ball to recoil or twist back to any desired position.

Slow stroke. A gentle stroke.

Stick. When the balls are hit very hard, and sent flying in all directions, the player is said to have given them "stick."

Stab. When the player's ball stops dead on the place occupied by the object.

Striker's ball. The player's ball.

Safety. Playing carefully, to leave an opponent as few chances as possible of scoring.

Striker, The. The player.

Side stroke. When the player's ball is struck on either side. If the angle is to be made obtuse, the action of the ball is quickened after contact; if acute, it runs slower.

String, To. At the opening of a game, the choice of balls and lead are usually strung for. Each player spots his ball in the D, and they play simultaneously up the table, so as to double the balls back to the lower cushion. The player whose ball stops nearest is entitled to the choice and lead.

Twist. Causing a ball, by means of a peculiar turn of the wrist, to take a more or less obtuse course.

Table, The. Every full-sized table is 12 feet long by 6 feet $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. It has a slate bed and six pockets, and is covered with green cloth.

Top stroke. Striking a ball very high.

Triangle, The. A shape made of wood, and used in placing the fifteen pyramid balls.

Tip, The. The leathern wad at the top of the cue.

Top cushion. The higher cushion opposite the baulk end.

Top pockets. The pockets at the spot end of the table.

Winning hazard. Whenever an object-ball is pocketed, a winning hazard is made.

White ball. The plain white.

BILLIARD-ROOMS AND TABLES.

SPACE, ventilation, and a firm floor are the chief requisites for a billiard-room. Without size there can be no ease, without steadiness no accuracy, and, unless the apartment be airy, there is little chance of comfort. For the accommodation of a full-sized table the dimensions should be at least 22 ft. long by 16 ft. wide. Nowadays miniature tables are much in vogue, and I append a list of sizes and spaces proportionate to them :

<i>Table.</i>		<i>Room.</i>	
ft.	ft.	ft.	ft.
12	by 6	22	by 16
11	,, 5½	21	,, 15½
10	,, 5	20	,, 15
9	,, 4¼	18½	,, 14
8	,, 4	17	,, 13
7	,, 3½	16	,, 12½
6	,, 3	14½	,, 11½

There should be no projections in the shape of mantelpieces, while a couple of recesses are

useful for holding cue-racks. If the room is on a ground-floor it will most probably be moderately firm; but cross walls, or at any rate extra rafters, are necessary to give increased support in an upper story.

A description of the table and its construction I shall extract from the *Sportsman* of January 20, 1868, written on a visit to Messrs. Burroughes and Watts' factory in Soho-square. After showing that this firm now "turn out" on an average over 300 tables a year—more than double the number built by them in 1860—the following facts are stated:

"A popular error is in supposing that full-sized tables are in length exactly double their breadth. This is not the case; the precise measurement of the bed should in all cases be 12 ft. by 6 ft. $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. The slates, obtained from Bangor or Aberdovy, in Wales, vary between 1 in. and $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in thickness, and may be either four or five in number, according to the fancy of purchasers. On their arrival in town they are cut to size, and then screwed together on a massive bed known as a 'banker,' whose supports rest in 7 ft. of earth. Fine sand and a huge flat iron or 'float' are next placed on the

slates, and two men continue rubbing down inaccuracies for a couple of days or so, until a perfect level has been obtained. As a test, the straight-edge and a piece of tissue-paper were called for and laid on a rough bed. In some parts the paper could easily be drawn from beneath, but on a properly-levelled table it remained tight. The cushions are of equal importance, and it requires great ingenuity to adjust them firmly and to maintain correct angles. For public rooms the 'native' rubber is in all cases used; but unless the cushions receive due attention, they speedily get out of order. In private houses, where it is important that they should be hardly ever unscrewed, or where the temperature is likely to vary, vulcanised rubber, which is not affected by heat or cold, comes to the rescue. Moulded cushions have been tried, but without success; they speedily become hard, and are altogether undesirable. The 'native' cushions are fastened together in strips an eighth of an inch in breadth, while for the vulcanised cushions only two thicknesses are employed. Of course, the former will carry a ball much farther than the latter. It is almost needless

to state that the wood-work about a table requires to be both well-seasoned and solid. After remaining on hand a long time, it is cut as required, then hot air assists in keeping it dry. Veneer forms an expensive item, and choice lots cost as much as half-a-crown a foot. We next arrive at the cloth, varying in price from eighteen to thirty-four shillings per yard. West of England wool is preferred to Yorkshire, not only on account of its finer quality, but because the makers put it through water, which produces a better colour. Probably more difficulty is experienced in obtaining well-seasoned balls than any other article connected with billiards. They are cut from the 'points' or small teeth of African elephants, females preferred, and must be kept to dry quite twelve months before condition for use is attained. Heat shrinks them very greatly, and a set of new balls has been known to crack all over in a single night, simply through being allowed to remain near a fire. Cues cannot be made of better wood than ash, and the grain should run from the point to the butt."

I recently selected a cue made of ash, with

a mahogany butt, which has, I understand, become very popular, and is now called the "Roberts cue." Tips vary with tastes; mine is a broad one (tip, I mean), but many excellent players, including Charles Hughes and W. Cook jun., use fine points. Cues range between 14 to 17 oz. in weight, and are from 4 ft. 8 in. to 4 ft. 10 in. long.

The standard size for match balls is now $2\frac{1}{16}$ th in. in diameter. Larger sets are occasionally made, but heavier cues are necessary for twisting and hard strokes.

Few tables are spotted alike, but, in my opinion, the red ball should be placed at a distance of $12\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the top cushion. The baulk-line is determined by the ivory indicators on the wood-work of the cushion. The depth of the D must be $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 21 inches across it, measured to the middle of each D spot. The centre spot should be placed between the middle pockets, the American spot half-way between the centre and baulk cushion, and the pyramid spot half-way between the centre and top cushion.

The other *impedimenta* of the room require little notice except the gas. The

steadiest and most suitable burners are the ring and the Argand, both of which give forth steady lights. There should be a treble T fitting, with apparatus for fixing six shades, viz. two over the centre lights and two over each end. If Argands are used, six burners only will be required; if bat's-wings, eighteen—three in each ring—will be necessary to insure steadiness.

It is almost needless to mention that amongst the fittings are required sixteen pyramid-balls and a triangle, twelve pool-balls, one or two sets of billiard-balls, together with marking-boards and counters for each game. A quarter-butt, rest half-butt and rest long-butt, spider and cushion rest, are supplied with the tables and cues. The balls are sometimes deposited in cloth bags, but a box filled with bran keeps them always clear of concussions, and also moderately warm.

[The chief table-makers are Messrs. Burroughes and Watts, Soho-square; Messrs. Cox and Yeman, Brompton-road; and Messrs. Thurston and Co., Catherine-street, Strand. To avoid partiality, the names are printed in alphabetical order.]

STRENGTH.

PRIOR to entering upon this chapter, I have a few words to say on a subject which, in my opinion, has been rather "overdone" by most writers about billiards. They allude to a correct attitude as a *sine quâ non*, and predict that no person can ever become skilful who does not form a scientific "bridge." For my part, I cannot see, so long as the cue has a regular groove to work in, and the player balances himself evenly, what very material difference these supposed essentials can effect in his game.

An easy, graceful style is, of course, more desirable than a cramped and awkward one; but there is no reason why a man who has no pretensions to elegance should not become a sound player. Steadiness, however, is indispensable; and it is requisite also that the hand, the cue, and the bridge be on a level;

but no reason can be advanced why the fingers of the hand which forms the bridge should not remain open, or why the player should not bend his knees, or keep his legs wider apart than has been laid down, if he feels so inclined. No one need fear that these trifles will prove any serious obstacle.

The firmest bridge, perhaps, that can be raised is at a distance of eight inches from the ball; but it is entirely a matter of taste. I know several fine players who keep quite ten inches away. The cue ought to be held lightly between the fingers and thumb for almost every stroke. Exceptions are when the player's ball lies close under a cushion, or when a firm or a pushing stroke is desirable; then the cue must be shortened and grasped tightly. Softness of touch is one of the most necessary attainments at billiards; hence the reason for a loose hold of the cue. A ball wants striking pretty much as a lady touches a piano, or as a horseman handles the reins. Firmness, yet gentleness, should be the chief characteristics.

Having posed the cue, the eye should next be turned on the object, and the stroke made without restraint. Attention and practice:

alone will train the player so that a single glance is sufficient to register the spot which must be struck in order to achieve the stroke. I attribute the thousand and one easy shots I daily see missed simply to the fact that the striker fails in the last moment. He has taken up a suitable position, and due regard has been given to aim; but the instant before striking he falters, the eye is unquiet, and instead of resting on the object, it leaves and settles upon the player's ball. Thus he breaks down in hundreds of cases where the knowledge of the game which he possesses rendered it almost certain he would succeed. This case applies especially to winning hazards, in the making of which only one point on the object can be hit in order to score.

About the angles I have very little to say. Taking it for granted that my pupil can strike a ball, let him place it on the right-hand spot in the D, and force it to the top cushion, with the intention of causing it to double back over the left-hand spot. When he can do this, then he may try a shot off the side and top cushions, and follow by testing at different strengths each cushion, until a knowledge of something

like the whereabouts of the ball after the stroke has been gained.

Mathematical or geometrical principles applied to billiards are all humbug. The tyro must learn the angles as he learns to make a hazard—by time and attention. Tables differ by reason of little discrepancies or improvements in their manufacture, and cushions are faster or slower according to the weather; so that an angle which gives a certain result one day may vary an inch or more if the same experiment be tried the next. Besides, look at the disastrous effects of the slightest deviation in a problem. Suppose a cushion happens to be a trifle defective: all ideas of mathematical accuracy must be abandoned at once; but you may still carry on the game without any material disquietude of mind—ay, and win it too, if you gain an advantage or are the better player.

When an idea of the angles has been obtained, the beginner may try a few simple shots, than which none are more serviceable nor easier than losing hazards from baulk into either of the middle pockets.

The object should at first be spotted for a

gentle stroke; and the player, having seen his ball glide into the mouth a few times, will begin to gain a notion of the theory of the losing hazard. He may follow with finer or fuller balls, and vary the positions until he makes himself moderately certain of scoring when the angle is not very difficult. By way of a change, easy cannons from ball to ball can next be adopted, and an occasional winning hazard. It will, however, be found advantageous to stick pretty much to "losers," which are the mainstay of our game, and on which I shall have more observations to make hereafter.

The most important feature in billiards next calls for notice, viz. "strength of the table." By strength I mean position after the stroke. This is in reality the great secret; and no amount of attention to individual cannons, nor the most surpassing brilliancy in hazard-striking, can make amends or act as a substitute for lack of command over the strength of the cushions. All arguments about strange tables and different speeds are worthless. A good player is seldom or never at fault. He begins perhaps with a trifling

mistake, but it acts as a warning; and two or three strokes are sufficient to give him such an insight into the condition of the table as to enable him afterwards to adapt himself to the circumstances. Many a time I have known superior address in the art of making strokes defeated by opponents of very limited execution, simply because the victors played to "points." They *finessed* and gave misses, whilst their more accomplished but less cautious opponents attempted uncertainties, and thus defeated themselves by leaving the balls in such places as rendered scoring easy.

Hard hitting is destruction to the game of anyone. If players would but content themselves with moderate strength, they would at once improve fifty per cent at least. Unluckily there is as much "show" play and similar nonsense in billiards as in most other games of skill, hence the lack of defence. In cricket an opposite feeling exists. Everybody wants to hit, and hit hard, so that very few practise the equally important matter of attack. Hence the superiority of the batting over the bowling. If every cricketer would turn his attention a little more to "trundling the leather," the

game would become evenly balanced. We should then have a set-off against hard hitting, and every batsman would understand better the variety of classes of balls he receives, and, knowing how to hold his wicket against them, there would be less "sky scraping." On the other hand, if billiard-players could only be persuaded to look to position as well as the hazard or cannon, we should have a greater number of skilful cueists, and more scientific and longer breaks.

With tables at their present stage of quality every man who is an adept at scoring, and has any pretensions to judgment, ought to make his thirty or forty off the balls, at least, once in half-a-dozen games of 100 up. Perhaps one of the best methods of learning the speed and angles is for a player of moderate calibre to encounter a less able adversary, and allow him five pockets to one, or four to two. He is then obliged, if desirous of success, to frequently double the red ball into the vicinity of his own pocket, and thus keep his opponent employed in driving it away.

Pool and pyramids are good mediums through which to arrive at the speed of the

cushions; but they do not otherwise improve a billiard-player's game, except in the matter of winning hazards.

To attain skill in scoring, and for the practice of breaks, no game affords more opportunities than the "go back," varying from a dozen to twenty or thirty up, as may be arranged. Its principles are well known to all players; but, for the benefit of the uninitiated, I have explained them and given the regulations in another portion of the work.

LOSING HAZARDS.

PLATE I.

DIAGRAMS serve to give an idea of some of the positions frequently to be met with in every game of billiards. I cannot teach strokes by their aid alone, but they will assist in suggesting to beginners what course ought to be pursued under certain circumstances.

The first plate contains a number of common losing hazards, all very easy, but not the less useful on that account. In every case the striker's ball is represented by the plain white. We have in No. 1 the simplest and most useful hazard the table affords a chance of. It can be scored with the butt of the cue just as well as with the point. The only difficulty lies in setting the ball played with at the correct angle; that once done, the stroke is I might almost say bad to fail at. In the case

given the player's ball must be struck in the centre, and the red on the right side, so that the white will slide from it into the pocket. The object then goes to the top cushion, and rebounds according to the strength with which the stroke has been effected. So long as any player can continue scoring into either of the middle pockets, with any certainty of forcing the red back into a place from which he is likely to make another hazard, he need try no other stroke, wish for no better break. Many professionals have made twenty consecutively into the middle pockets, but, as in the case of the spot hazard, the stroke becomes trying after a few times, and players generally break down at the position, hardly ever at the hazard.

No. 2 is a similar, but, on account of the greater distance the balls are apart, less certain shot. The object, if hit hard enough, is forced on the top cushion, thence to the side, and usually rests somewhere over one of the centre pockets, or else near the baulk-line.

No. 3 represents a following stroke, the player's intention being to effect a losing hazard by the aid of the side stroke. He plays

almost full on the red, sends it to the lower end, and having a strong twist on, his own ball runs down the cushion till it drops into the pocket. Obviously, the conversion of a winning into a losing hazard, especially when the balls are within the baulk, must be of great advantage, and as there are many chances in favour of its being made, I strongly advise beginners to give a few hours to the study of the stroke.

No. 4 is a forcing hazard, requiring a little left side, so as to insure a score. It may be played with almost any strength above a certain point, if the object be hit finely enough, but a slow shot will fail to score.

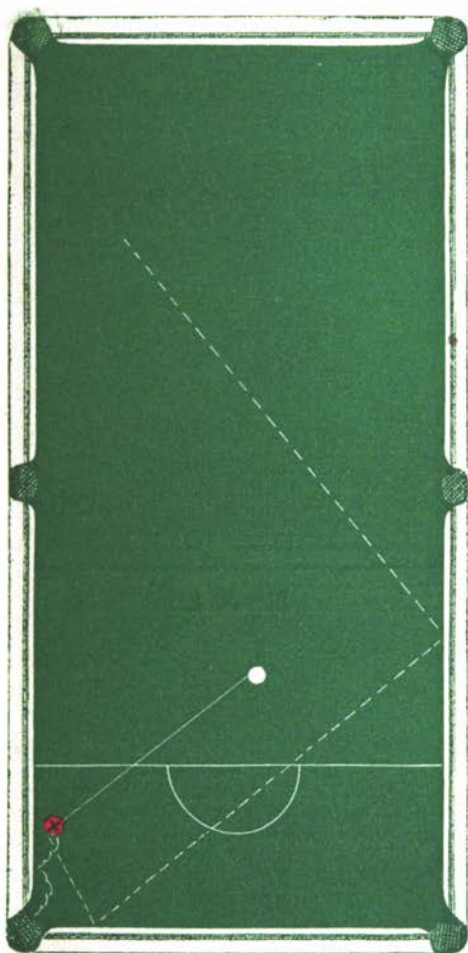
No. 5 is a following hazard, often of great use when in hand. A little left side helps to render it easier, and it may be made as slowly as the striker chooses.

No. 6 shows a similar position to No. 3, and by a follow a white losing hazard assumes the place of an undesirable "pot." The object doubles off the angle, and is thus got rid of.

PLATE II.

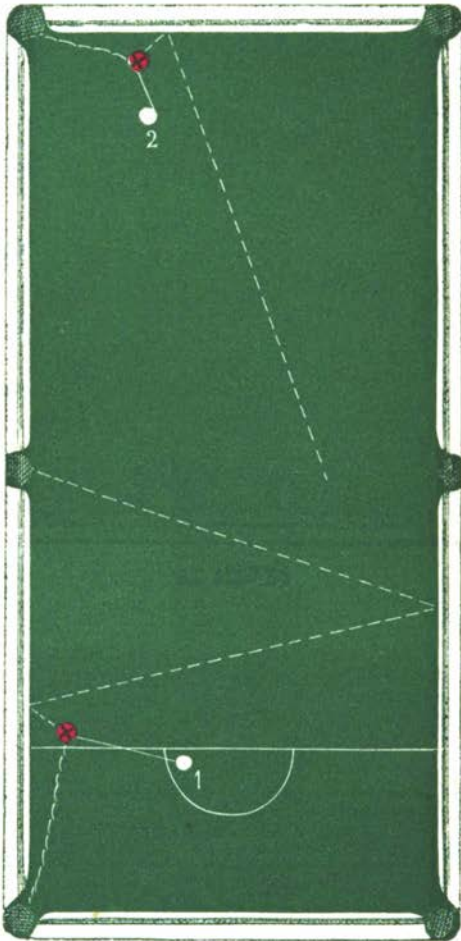
The hazard from the red in the position in-

PLATE II.



A FORCING HAZARD.

PLATE III.



TWISTING LOSING HAZARDS.

licated is perfectly simple, but on attempting it the reader will find it is, unless three only be required to conclude the game, all but useless. A cannon off the white is rather roundabout, and therefore not very certain; while, even if scored, the chances are against a break being left. By playing the stroke shown, however, the balls must be left together, and, better still, the player will be able to spot in the D. Some practice will be required in order to become perfect in the hazard, which is made by playing with a strong right side, high and full on the red, which doubles up the table out of the way. The white then takes the cushion, and after one or two slight rebounds runs into the pocket.

PLATE III.

Position No. 1 often presents itself, and a six-stroke may sometimes be made, the winning hazard being doubled frequently. For the losing hazard the player's ball must be struck low, with a gentle twist.

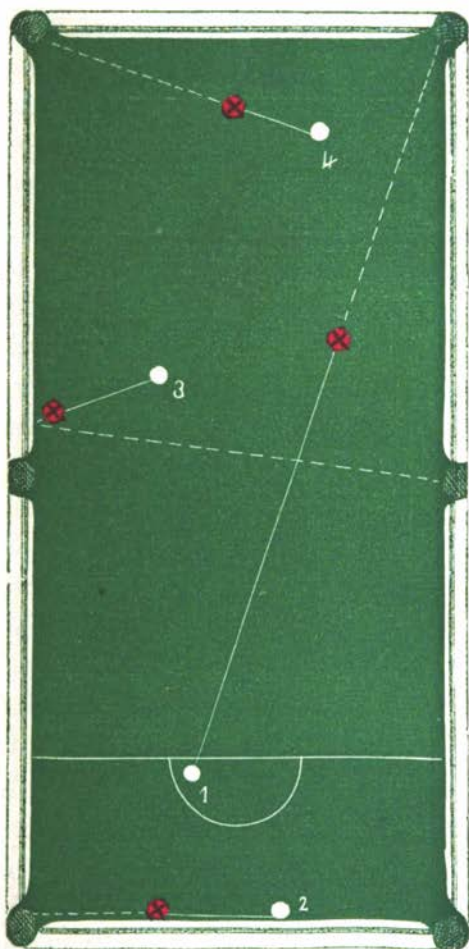
No. 2 is a similar shot, only much easier, and may be played as slowly as the striker chooses.

WINNING HAZARDS.

PLATE IV.

ONE plate is, in my opinion, sufficient to illustrate the manner in which winning hazards are made. I have therefore represented a straight shot, a double, a cushion hazard, and a spot hazard. The last mentioned alone need be dwelt on at any length. It is the most effective and one of the simplest of strokes; but difficulties nevertheless literally surround it. The best position is shown on the diagram, and the player may continue to chalk his cue, make the hazard, and pull his ball back with a recoil as often as he can. Soon, however—perhaps at the second or third attempt—he will get a shade too high; then he must play a soft, almost full following stroke, so as to leave his ball on the other side of the table. This time he has run too far, and is half an

PLATE IV.



WINNING HAZARDS.

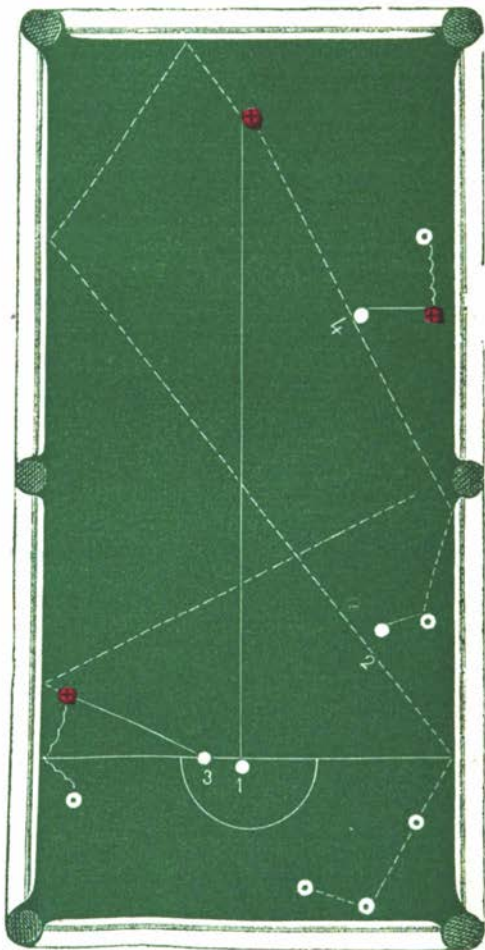
inch or more lower than he intended to be. He must therefore use a twist, and seek position after a friendly visit to the top cushion. The hazard is made again; but the striker is now close up behind the spot, and on the next essay is compelled to push his ball so that he hits the top, then the side cushion, and leaves himself just without the elbows of the pocket. The losing hazard into the opposite corner is too difficult; so the spot is again attempted, this time with a cut, and the player's ball rebounds from four cushions before again assuming the desired place at the head of the table. Being now somewhat below and on the left side of the red, it is this time found advantageous to play a slight follow with a strong right side; and by this means the original position is not improbably gained, where the recoil may be again brought into use. Thus we have six different ways of playing this stroke.

Amongst the "Incidents in my Career," which will be found in a former chapter, I have related the story of my introduction to the spot-hazard; but one thing, I think, is not stated, viz. that in many games of importance

I have played solely to get to the spot; and after losing my position sometimes thrice in a break, I have again manœuvred the red over a middle or some other pocket, and if at the lower end, played a winning hazard, leaving my own ball again within a few inches of the spot.

This is one of the hazards that must be played softly; and thus no person who has not practised the stroke regularly should attempt it, or the red will some time ere long be left in an undesirable position.

PLATE V..



CANNONS.

CANNONS.

PLATE V.

EXECUTION at billiards ought not to be cultivated so sedulously as delicate manipulation. Cannons offer all the chances for brilliant strokes, and many players have often been tempted to try them in preference to losing hazards. As I have previously explained, cannons are only useful at intervals, and when it is impossible to strike a hazard without detriment to the break on hand.

In the diagram before us I have shown four important strokes. The first (No. 1) is a cannon from the red ball, on or near the spot, to an adversary's ball in the baulk. Supposing the positions of the objects were changed—viz. if the red were over a baulk-pocket, and the white near the top of the table—I should counsel a miss under the left side above the middle pockets, because, if in trying a cannon the stroke failed, the red would be left in a dangerous position.

No. 2 illustrates a cannon from the spot-

white below the middle, on to the red on or near the spot. It must be played with a moderate strength, in order that safety be obtained in the event of a breakdown; while if, on the other hand, the stroke be scored, the opponent's ball will be doubled off the cushions near the centre of the table, and a losing hazard probably left.

No. 3 indicates a five stroke, the red being just without, and the white a few inches within, the baulk. To make the double, the red must be hit almost full, but not too hard, and a little twist employed for the cannon. If the hazard be not scored, the red is sure to stop in a good position, unless the strength of the stroke forces it above the middle pocket.

No. 4 is a twist cannon often in use, and extremely easy. The striker's ball should be hit low on the left side, and the red nearly full, so that the opponent's ball be met on the lower side.

I feel that elaborate diagrams of fancy cannons are useless; and as I write for beginners more than for experienced players, my object has been to discover first principles to them rather than *tours de force*.

PLAYING BREAKS.

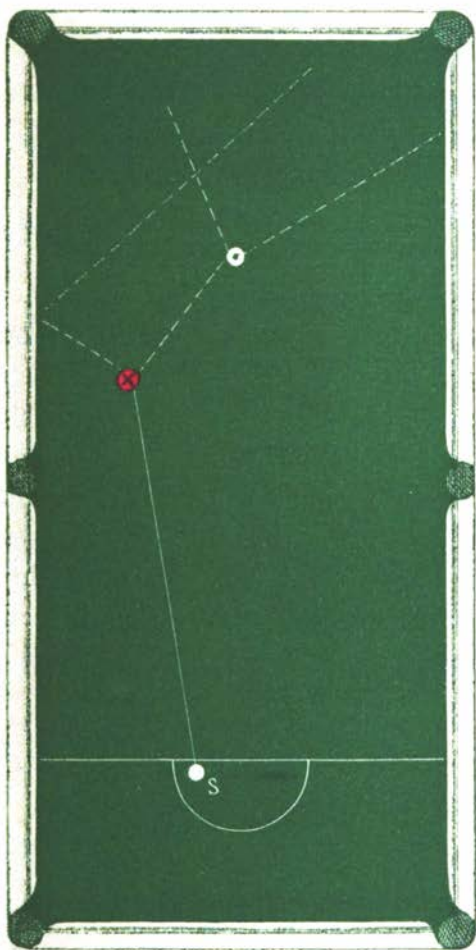
Two series of plates are employed to illustrate the remarks contained in this chapter. No attempt has, to my knowledge, before been made to show by diagrams how breaks should be played; and I have therefore caused drawings to be executed of the probable positions of the balls after certain easy strokes, and the best way of manœuvring them, in order to insure a succession of hazards and cannons.

FIRST BREAK.

PLATE VI.

THE reader must suppose that several losing hazards have already been made into the middle pockets, and that lack of strength has failed to carry the objects back to desirable positions. The balls, as shown on plate vi., are easy to score off from the D, either by a cannon from the red, or by a losing hazard off the white into a top corner. A practised player would attempt the latter, and probably keep his opponent on the table. But to a learner I should recommend the former. The red must be hit with what is termed a quarter-ball, so that the spot-white be cut on the left and forced over to right side, whilst the red doubles off the cushions.

PLATE VI.



CANNON OFF THE RED.

PLATE VII.

The balls having stopped, as shown on plate vii., there is a choice of three strokes : a cannon off the spot-white and double over the right middle, a winning hazard from the red into the right top pocket, or a cannon off the red. The last is, I think, the best ; and when played with a cut off the right cheek of both balls, will leave a good chance for future scoring.

PLATE VII.



CANNON OFF THE RED.

PLATE VIII.

A red winning hazard or a cannon is here at the option of the player, who, if wise, will select the latter, and cut the spot-white across the table. The red will thus be met full, and forced either into the pocket or else near the shoulder, leaving a chance of a simple stroke next time.

PLATE VIII.



CANNON OFF THE SPOT-WHITE.

PLATE IX.

If the red be not pocketed, and the balls remain near the positions indicated, let the winning hazard be made with a little "follow" on the striker's ball, so that it rests near the top cushion.

PLATE IX.



RED WINNING HAZARD.

PLATE X.

It is from this point easy to play for a losing hazard in the left middle, and to put the red over the left top pocket. I should, however, recommend a gentle cannon, which will force the red off the cushion towards the centre of the table, and if the striker's ball hits the spot-white finely enough, an easy losing hazard will be in his hands.

PLATE X.

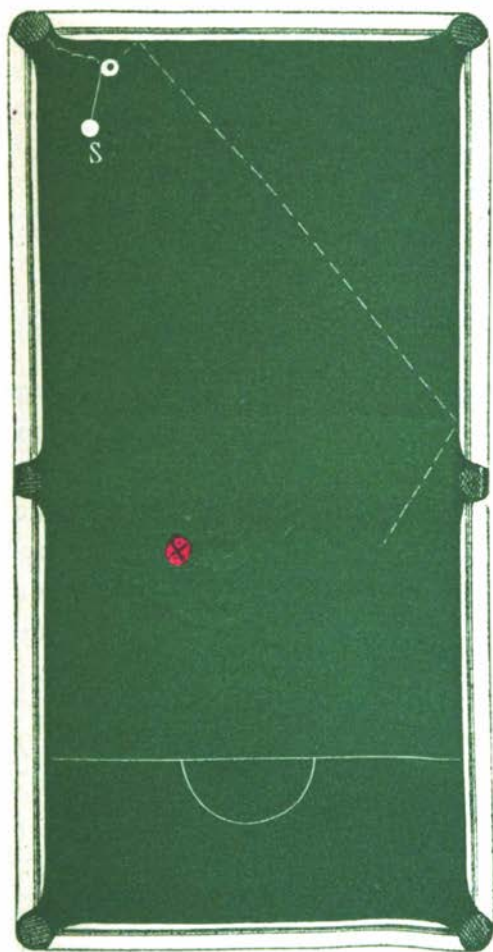


CANNON OFF THE RED.

PLATE XI.

By playing a moderately full following stroke for a losing hazard, the spot-white will now be doubled over the right middle pocket, and, both balls being well situated, the striker may continue his break of "losers." The six strokes shown yield a total of 13.

PLATE XI.



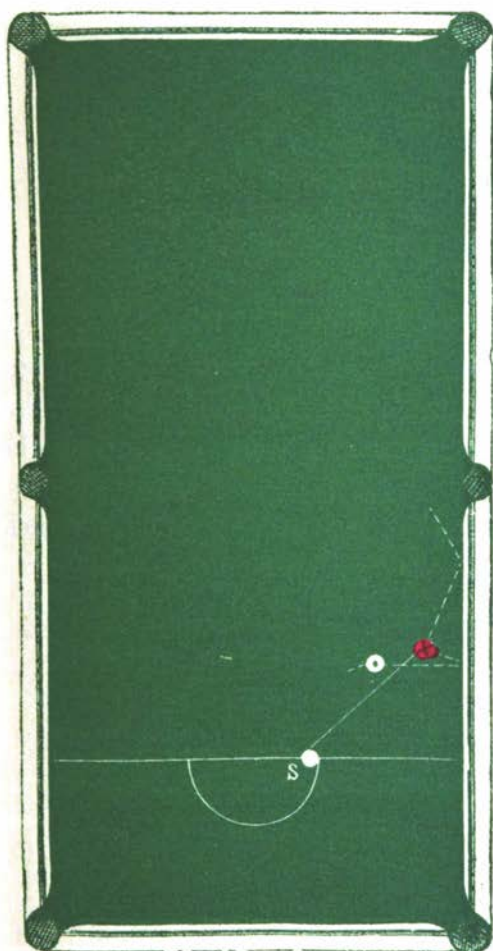
LOSING HAZARD OFF THE SPOT-WHITE.

SECOND BREAK.

PLATE XII.

Many players would spoil this break at the outset by making a cannon off the spot-white. Consideration, however, for a second will show that the stroke given is the most advantageous. A gentle shot off the red with a little right side will double it into a good place over the middle, and also effect the cannon.

PLATE XII.

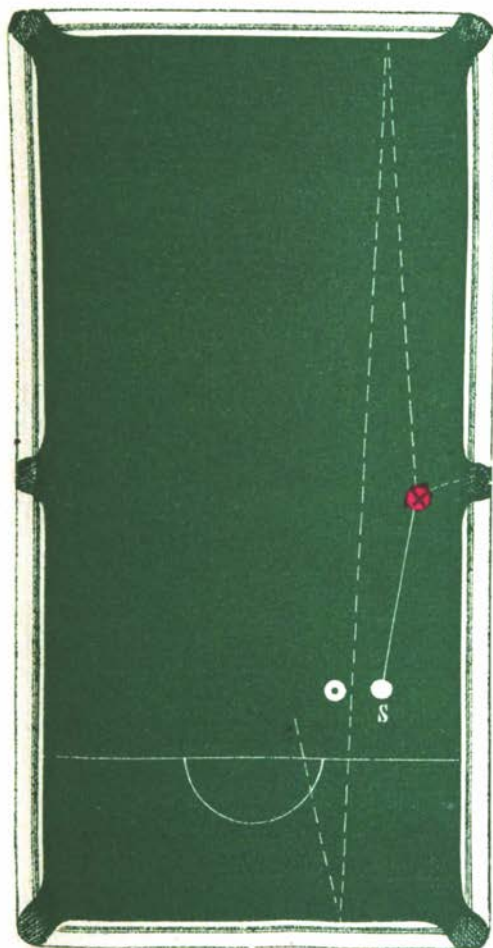


CANNON OFF THE RED.

PLATE XIII.

A losing hazard played with a high following stroke will force the red to the top and into and out of baulk. If a gentle hazard be tried, the red may not improbably meet the shoulder of the top pocket, and run the chance of the break being spoiled.

PLATE XIII.

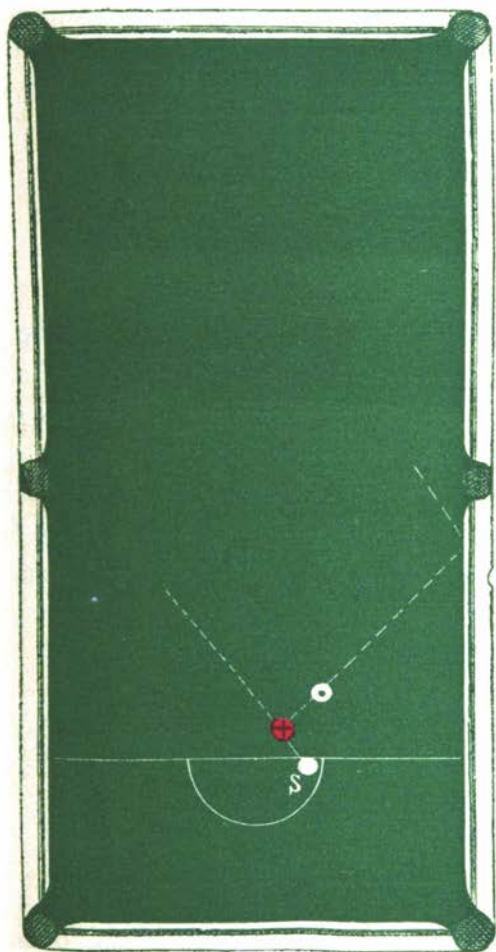


LOSING HAZARD OFF THE RED.

PLATE XIV.

The third shot drives the red towards the left middle, and follows after the spot-white, which is doubled over the right middle, leaving an easy score off either ball.

PLATE XIV.

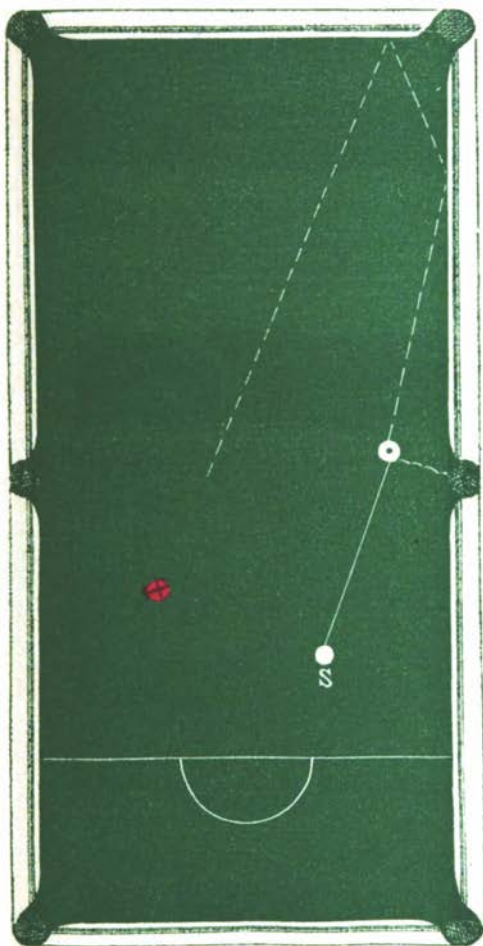


CANNON OFF THE RED.

PLATE XV.

Many players would here hole the red gently, and leave their ball under the left cushion, so situate that a losing hazard could be made off the spot-white next time. I advise, however, having an eye on a break of "losers" into the middles, that a little twist be employed, and the white doubled from the side and top.

PLATE XV.

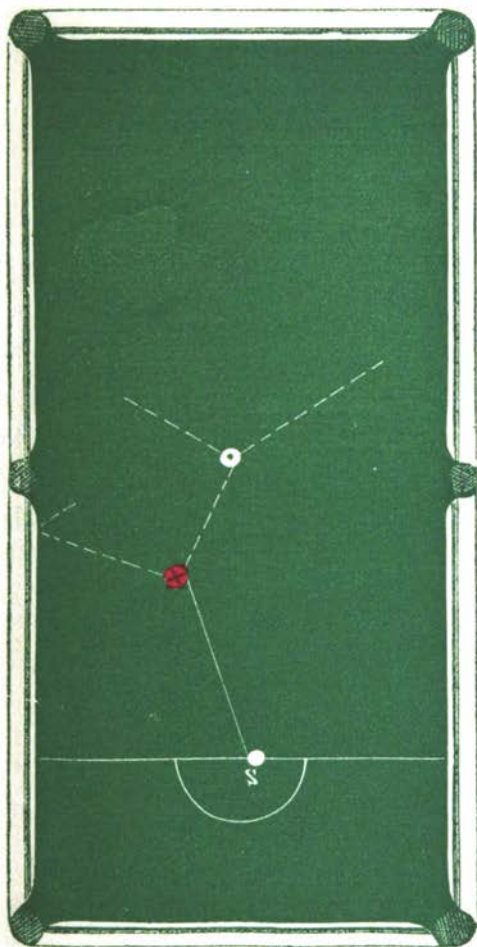


LOSING HAZARD OFF THE SPOT-WHITE.

PLATE XVI.

At the fifth stroke an easy losing hazard might be made into the left centre pocket, but the red would be driven by most amateurs on the spot-white, and the position of the balls thus left uncertain. A cannon off the red, cutting both balls on the right, is therefore the best game.

PLATE XVI.

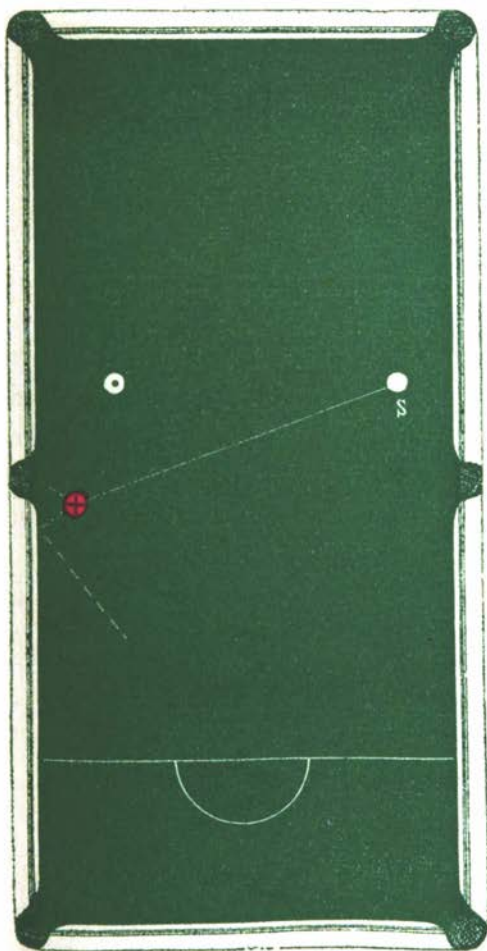


CANNON OFF THE RED.

PLATE XVII.

Some persons would attempt a fine hazard, a sort of "jenny," off the spot-white; others to cut the red in; and others, again, to cannon. I prefer a lightly-touched following "loser" off the red—not a cut, or else the object will travel into baulk.

PLATE XVII.

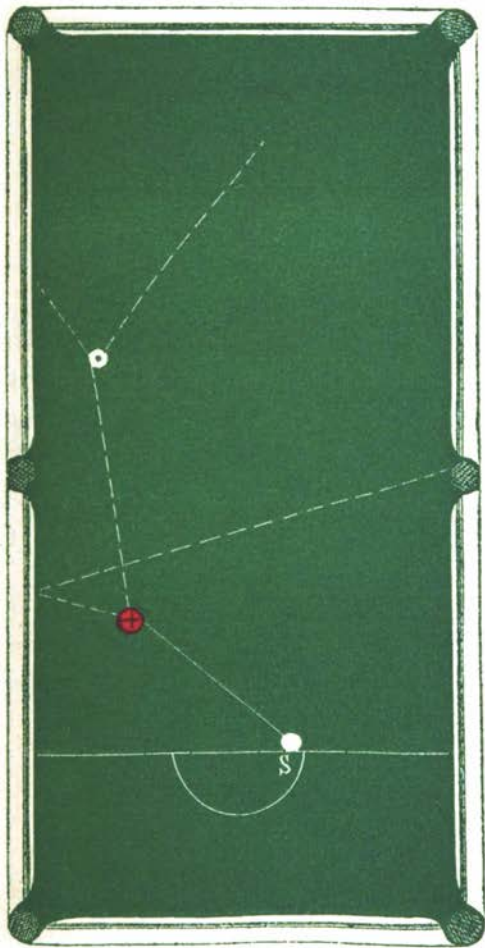


LOSING HAZARD OFF THE RED.

PLATE XVIII.

Here again is the choice of a red "winner" and following cannon. But the stroke shown is better than either. The red will not probably be doubled over or into the right middle, and the spot-white driven up to the spot.

PLATE XVIII.



FIVE STROKE—CANNON AND DOUBLE THE RED.

PLATE XIX.

If the red be not pocketed, proceed to make the winning hazard ; but if it is, then an easy five stroke will remain, and, the balls thus at the disposal of the player, he may continue scoring at pleasure. The eight strokes given of plates xii. to xvii. yield a total of 24.

PLATE XIX.



FIVE STROKE—RED WINNING HAZARD AND
CANNON.

A PRACTICAL LESSON.

A CELEBRATED writer—Thackeray, I think—once made allusion to billiards as a game in which “three ivory balls are pushed about by two men with sticks.” The description was very simple, but not the less true for all that. Still, we can hardly halt at this point; otherwise there would be little necessity for my attempting to offer the opinions which many years’ experience has assisted me in forming. Some players are not satisfied with merely hitting the balls—they look for results; and a few of them advance a step beyond—they anticipate consequences. Those who venture thus far, however, are in the minority; and it is chiefly relative to what follows each stroke that my remarks in the succeeding pages will be directed. I do not prophesy the attainment of a high stage of eminence to every reader who may practise my precepts; but, without being egotistical, I hope to be able to

put many in the way of improving their game to some extent. Players are born for the most part, not fashioned to order on short notice. Hundreds of thousands of men learn what has been called the "theory" of billiards, but few—and it is rather humiliating to be compelled to feel that such is the case—arrive at any considerable degree of skill.

Nearly a quarter of a century ago, when I first attempted the spot stroke, the apparent hopelessness of my task often stared me in the face. Sometimes I failed at the hazard, sometimes in my attempts to gain the best position for leaving another; and often I broke down badly between hazard and position. There are more difficulties allied with this than with any other stroke. If a moderately good player were allowed to place the red ball on the spot, and to take up such ground behind it after each shot as would leave a simple stroke, he might score several times; but let him try to make in this manner, say fifty or a hundred hazards successively, and the chances are that the strain on the nervous system would prove too great, and probably failure would visit him in the very moment of triumph. Again, to

effect position alone even, wonderfully nice manipulation must be brought to bear, or else the player's ball rolls too far, or not far enough, or the cushion takes the twist too freely, or the cue-tip does not bite, and so a disappointment through the lack of strength of the recoil ensues. The instant before a stroke is most trying; and to make it with accuracy, and also with due allowance for future hazards, requires that the body be in complete training, and that the eye and hand act in perfect unison with one another. My greatest achievement was a break containing 104 consecutive spot hazards, and although very naturally pleased at having exceeded 100, I felt heartily glad when its monotony ceased.

Great scores come seldom, at once proving that the best player has in reality very little command over the balls after all. Sometimes, of course, you cannot make a mistake; every stroke is successful, the situations are perfect, and you may continue until your total is increased by a large number. You feel almost unlimited power; the balls are in your hands; you have only to strike, and continue adding points. Then the evil hour arrives; Fortune

transfers her smiles to your opponent, who in turn has unbounded success. You become out of humour, and ill at ease; the chance of good breaks is apparently left, which you spoil at the outset by cutting instead of driving the balls. They become separated and difficult to score from. Had you played thicker on the red by the sixteenth part of an inch, it would have been forced into an angle at the top of the table, leaving the choice of hazard, or cannon, or both. Here you come down to your level again, and find you are but mortal notwithstanding your vaunted state of perfection.

The operation of billiards is purely mechanical. Brains are hardly required for its treatment, certainly not more than an average share. You begin with a few given strokes, and if properly taught, and of an observing turn, you watch their productions. Failure brings its disasters; success its results. You discover by degrees what to guard against, and what to cultivate. At first you have an idea that the attainment of certain *tours de force* is necessary to the improvement of your game, and, contrary to the advice of instructors, you waste much time on their practice. Then,

having gained certain consequent notions about your own proficiency, you call them into requisition, and it is not until after repeatedly breaking down in games, probably of interest, that the all-important secret dawns on you. Brilliant all-round cannons and dashing hazards are useless, except for show. *Steadiness*, *strength*, and *caution* are the true tests of a player. No reliance can be placed in the flashy hard hitter, whose greatest pleasure is to receive commendation for the cannon off five cushions, in the accomplishment of which he intended to strike but three.

Cannons to an unskilful player are necessarily the easiest strokes, because the width on both sides of the two balls offers a surface equal to nearly $6\frac{1}{4}$ in., whilst pocket-mouths are little more than half that size. Beginners, therefore, always commence by preferring cannons to hazards. Players, on the other hand, make losing hazards their chief study, and through the medium of side, twist, and screw effect them with greater certainty, if not with more ease, than they would cannons. But this is not all. In making a cannon doubts must always be entertained about where

to place the two balls hit by the player's, and the merest variation from the marked-out line defeats the probability of a break. On the other hand, when scoring a losing hazard, you have only to look to the future of the ball played upon. Your own, you know, will be "in hand." Besides, a cannon counts but two; a hazard from the red fifty per cent more; and that in itself is a great consideration. Cannons are extremely useful in their way. They often act, when accomplished, as the finding of a missing link assists in "tacking" together a chain of evidence. They bring the balls into play, and allow the striker to continue his break of losing hazards, which would otherwise have been imperilled.

However two balls may be situate on the table, there is only one spot on the "object" to be struck in order to produce a winning hazard, and that is the point which would be gained if a direct line were drawn through the centre of the ball aimed at to the centre of the pocket which it is intended to enter. Winning hazards are therefore the most difficult of all strokes, and are seldom attempted in proportion to losing hazards or cannons. One of

the prettiest, and at the same time the most useful, shots is effected by converting a winning into a losing hazard, by running through the object—a following stroke. From a white ball the advantage is obvious, and it is frequently advantageous to force the red by the means described into a place where a series of easy losing hazards will be left at the disposal of the player. Individual shots of this class should be carefully practised, as it is by their means that a sequence of hazards or cannons or what not follows. Certain given strokes, termed by players “the game,” should be carried out as strictly as the various “leads” at whist. A false step shows weakness, which is always an opponent’s strength, and the merest shade of benefit derived from a mistake generally leads to the discomfiture of whoever makes it.

There are only two ways of playing billiards—playing to win and playing to lose. If you mean to win, attempt nothing but what seems profitable, and endeavour by every fair means to rout your adversary. Always “pot” his ball when you are likely to gain by it, and never mind if he or spectators consider your

doing so an improper proceeding. Should any person express such an opinion, set it down to his ignorance of the game. Whenever the balls seem tolerably safe, give a miss under some distant cushion, and if the marking-board shows that you are in the background, do so with a view of scoring off the red, should your opponent follow suit, as he probably will, with another miss. Never "open the game" when you are ahead; but if, on the other hand, you are behind, and have a cautious antagonist who will not throw a chance away, you may sometimes attempt a forcing hazard or cannon. If you score, it may be the means of turning the scale in your favour; if you fail, you will probably lose, and as you would doubtless have been beaten had you shown the greatest amount of steadiness, the result arrived at is the same, though the modes of attaining it have varied.

About the side stroke. I hold it a golden rule "never to trust edged tools in the hands of any but skilled workmen." No person nowadays can ever hope for success unless he is able to apply the side stroke properly; neither need he expect to win a game at "any points"

against a player if he attempts fancy screws and twists in the contest. Three or four hours of sound instruction from an adept would prove of great service to every learner, and teach him more than knocking the balls about for six months with another beginner. I recognise perfectly too as a fact that proficiency comes by practice; but I must premise that the novice knows *what* and *how* to practise. He ought to have a clearly-defined object in every stroke. If he attempts a hazard, he should know whether a hard or gentle, or a thick or thin, stroke is necessary, or whether side or twist or follow is required for its accomplishment. The amount of accuracy with which strokes are made is attained in proportion to the time spent on them; and this also may be said with regard to the position after the stroke.

A man with an aptitude for billiards may learn to play simply by putting in force his own observation, but he would get over the *pons assinorum* of first steps in very much less time by trusting himself to the guidance of someone who can point out his mistakes and make suggestions that will be of

advantage to him. As soon, however, as ordinary shots are within his reach, and when he can use the "niceties of the game" with a moderate amount of certainty, time and application alone can aid him in reaching the state of proficiency to which he aspires. An opponent able to give a few points is always desirable, as fresh situations present themselves, and are scored from during every break; and a careful learner carries them in his mind and tries them at his leisure.

After practice and judgment in the strength used, comes a quality equally requisite with either: I mean nerve, for without it a player makes but an indifferent show if he meets a better man than himself. One of the chief points in the game of most professionals is reliability. If they attempt a common stroke, you may be certain they will score it. Perhaps almost as good a word as nerve is confidence, and it better expresses here what I mean. By labouring daily at the game proficient are imbued with a feeling they knew not at the outset; but, in order ever to retain it, they must constantly play. If they do not, the eye loses its correctness and the

hand its cunning. Take a professional from his rooms, and keep him away from a table for a month; and then let him attempt a few "fancy" strokes. He will be sure to break down lamentably; and even if he succeeds in scoring some of them, probably he leaves both balls so safe that neither hazard nor cannon is possible from either. Other virtues in a player are patience and good temper. Both should be maintained through the greatest difficulties. If they be not, lack of confidence ensues, the nerves are ruffled, and good play is at an end.

I recollect one day, whilst engaged at the Union Club, Manchester, being waited on by a gentleman well known in sporting circles and a fine chess-player. At his request we visited a room some little distance away, and there secured a private table. After dismissing the marker, Mr. R——d said: "Now, Roberts, I want you to put me in the way of a few of the things not generally known. If I am satisfied with what you impart, you will earn a 'pony.'"

Feeling somewhat surprised, I asked an explanation, and he told me that for weeks

he had been daily losing considerable sums to a friend, who was evidently a better player, though not much, than himself.

We tried a couple of games at my request; and as I was naturally anxious to lay hands on the promised reward, I noted his style and form particularly. His idea of the angles was moderately correct, but he had no notion whatever of safe play.

After asking him to leave the balls to me, I showed him a score of twisting hazards and cannons, each excelling its predecessor in point of difficulty and the ease with which it was made. At length he said: "To accomplish those shots is just what I want. Teach me all of them. We'll begin at once."

An hour's constant practice would have given him some of the desired skill; but I knew, although he thought differently, that it would have proved utter ruin to any hopes he felt of defeating his adversary. I therefore thought over the best means of doing him the service he required; and, calling on him again to oppose me, I played a host of the simplest possible strokes, and, by sheer regard to position, and setting aside any attempt at the dis-

play of strength of cue, pointed out to him his mistake and the weakness of his game. I explained every shot, described the best methods of scoring from positions which arose, and taught him to seek for safety, to dribble gently up to his adversary's ball when attempting a "pot," and to give misses on occasions when he thought an almost impossible cannon was "the game." I explained also why it was unwise to touch his opponent's ball if it happened to lie near a cushion; why an uncertain red winning hazard should always be struck with a fair strength, and why it was not policy to try cannons off the white ball at any time, if they were equally easy from the red. We separated after a good many hours, agreeing to meet in a few days for another lesson.

In the interval he tried some of the shots, and I saw, but did not apprise him of the fact, that his improvement had been considerable. A week later his adversary, who had gone to Scotland, was to return, and by that time I found that Mr. R——d had become a better player by quite fifty per cent. He offered me the "pony," saying I had fairly earned my reward, but I refused its acceptance until he

had gained the victory I anticipated. In their next contest Mr. G——m, his adversary, led off as usual, and was somewhat surprised, even at the outset, to find a miss scored to him, instead of Mr. R——d's usual opening. "On the day" my pupil won 347*l.*, thus retrieving a great portion of his losses, and I duly received what he called the "whitebait," viz., the odd 47*l.*, feeling very well satisfied with the fruits of my teaching. Mr. G——m has parted with a good deal to his opponent since, and cannot even to this day imagine how the improvement in his play was brought about.

The above instance is only a single one amongst thousands where a few lessons have made an immense difference in a man's play; and I maintain that any professional or high-class amateur can teach a beginner more in six hours than he will discover, when alone, in as many months. A young player may hammer the balls about for years, without making much progress; but if the when and wherefore are suggested to him, he will readily fall into the vein, that is, if he has any aptitude at all for billiards. I meet gentlemen at play occasionally whom I knew ten years ago,

and they have not improved an iota. They dash the balls about, growl when an obvious mistake occurs, and express their pleasure when a chance shot leaves them a break of which they never dreamed.

In the lesson I gave to Mr. R——d references are made to certain strokes at given seasons, beginning with the "pot." Gentle play on your adversary's ball will leave him in or near the point of the angle, so that he will experience, at all events, some difficulty in scoring from a cramped, awkward position.

In giving misses, especially when the red lies close, always do so with a view to the ensuing stroke; but, after holing your opponent, it is better, if possible, to make a baulk, or, at all events, to double the red behind the line.

Always play a losing hazard, and either hard enough or softly enough to prevent the ball staying in or returning to baulk, otherwise you will, in all probability, be obliged to give a miss, and may possibly leave a hazard from the red open to your adversary.

A doubtful winning hazard should be moderately hard hit, but if it is within your

power, you may "dribble," or "stick," or "screw," or take whatever course seems likely to be most profitable.

Cannons off the white, when not over certain, are bad play, because after the rebound the balls will very likely come together near the red, leaving an assortment of strokes in the event of a failure.

If, in leading, your opponent gives a miss, and his ball stops over either of the baulk pockets, it is policy to play for a cannon, because the chances are in favour of your scoring if your ball be spotted correctly.

Twisting in off the red at the outset is simply nonsense, and ought never to be attempted, except by players of great strength of cue and truth of aim.

Should your adversary give a miss and stop his ball in the D, at the opening of a game, a miss under the side is the best play. See, however, that you do not leave a "jenny," or even the chance of a cannon from ball to ball, but roll into such a position that your opponent's only method of scoring is by a following side stroke. This he will probably not attempt.

My advice in the matter of cautious play must not be construed wrongly. I do not advocate a "funky" game. If you feel capable of scoring, try the stroke, especially if it be a losing hazard; for the advantages of being able to spot your ball, after the shot, in any part of the baulk circle are immense.

Kiss cannons are rarely played, but they deserve the notice of all experts. I know no professional more successful in scoring them than Christmas, of the Cocoa-tree Club, a finished cueist.

It is always advisable, when trying a cannon off the red, to attempt a double also, if the use of a little side or twist will insure your scoring with as much certainty as an ordinary stroke.

To make a twist, always chalk your cue before the attempt, and if it requires a very low stroke you may flatten your bridge a trifle, so that you get nicely under the centre; but, above all things, be careful that the butt of your cue is on a level with its point.

Recollect that hard hitting defeats the natural angles, but always try a stroke of medium strength in preference to an extremely high side stroke.

In conclusion, let me impress on you never to consider you have lost until the marker calls "game:" the chances are so numerous that you know not what may turn up.

POOL AND PYRAMIDS.

Who wins money at pool? is a question not readily answered. Still, there are men making a tidy income out of the game, without being guilty of anything like sharp practice. For instance, amongst the numerous gentlemen amateurs at the West-end clubs, amongst army men, and amongst members of the Universities, a great deal of pool is played, and, as at all games of skill, proficient must come off with a trifle "to the good." In public rooms, amongst average players, I believe gains and losses are pretty equally divided, and that the owner of the table is the person chiefly benefited. Pool is, even with moderate stakes, an expensive game, and should seldom be indulged in by persons of small means. In addition to the money investment, it involves the loss of much time, and has proved ruinous to hundreds of men in business. Very few can content themselves with half a dozen quiet

games; they must play all night, and every night, and, worse than that, every day, for many hours more than they ought to spare; and, in addition, continue increasing the stake as the small hours approach.

Pyramids is a still more dangerous game than pool, and hardly anybody attempts it without "burning his fingers." It affords more opportunities for swindling than either billiards or pool; and those of my readers who play must be strongly impressed with the fact that a game at pyramids is "never lost until it is won." How many amateurs will recollect meeting that nice gentlemanly fellow to be found in so many rooms? He, I mean, who gives you two balls, and bets half-a-crown on the game and a shilling each on the balls. You score five or six before he makes a start, and are so much encouraged by your success as to wager, on his suggestion, a crown each on the remainder of the balls. He does nothing startling; but somehow you always find yourself "tucked-up" under a cushion, and continually giving misses; and as he takes all the balls, you are eventually mulcted in a good many pounds instead of crowns.

So much for the moral side of the question: now to the scientific. Every man—I don't know why—thinks if he can do nothing else, he can at any rate “play safety.” On this account alone he joins in pools or attempts pyramids with players altogether above his calibre. Lots of people hold in dread a good winning-hazard striker; but the confident man of the class I have mentioned cannot be “stalled-off” by any loss or adversity of fortune. He is unable to see that safety, and scoring the easiest but missing moderately difficult shots, will not win him the pool, or even assist him to divide. He never imagines that in reality every other player could give him three or four balls at pyramids, nor would he entertain the fact were you to make the suggestion.

Without sound nerves fine hazard striking cannot be performed, and if you are unable to “take your own part” amongst the “lives,” depend on it all the safety in the world is useless. Recollect that somebody follows and plays on you; if close, and the shot is a long one, he probably hits you hard, and then you are equally liable with the others to be killed

off. Amongst skilful cueists "doubles" are the most deadly strokes, as they are in many cases the least expected.

Having obtained an advantage in pyramids, endeavour by every means you can think of to keep it. Caution on your part will tend to irritate your adversary, and whenever you lead and continue to play a strong defensive game, depend on it he will occasionally "let out" for doubtful hazards. His ill-success will bring about your conquest, and the cooler front you can show the less he will like the match. Once flurried, he becomes easy prey. Whatever you do, never be tempted to try hazards above your skill, unless the chances are in favour of your being able to beat a safe retreat by "sticking" your ball under the shade of a cushion, some distance away from any of the reds. A great advantage in all winning-hazard games is the power of stopping the player's ball on or very near the spot previously occupied by the object, and a little "drag" will generally effect what you have in view. It is hazardous at all times to hit hard, and endeavour to gain position by rebounding from several cushions, so "stab" shots

should be a good deal practised, as they will often answer the purpose equally well.

Many persons take part in pool before they are able to tell to an eighth of an inch what part of the ball they are going to strike. Of course experience ought to set them right, and so it would in time; but I want to explain to them the necessity of leaving the game untouched, unless the other players are no stronger than themselves. Above all, let me again impress on them that the only way to effect a hazard is to hit the object in a direct line with the centre of the pocket, and to let the eye rest on the ball *played at* during the instant before the stroke.

Save for the purpose of obtaining position, the side stroke is useless at pool or pyramids, as it is the object, and not the player's ball, which requires dividing. Perhaps side is most useful when attempting cuts, as you can the better direct the course of your ball, and keep it away from, or oblige it to cling to, a cushion.

Never play for a "life" with a slow stroke, unless at single pool, or it is a certain hazard, or there is a friendly cushion near.

In a pool of eight or nine, attempt strokes that you would pass by and try for safety when only five are playing. Luck has a great deal to do with success when a large number of balls are on the table. You may be kissed over a pocket, or "sold," or left close, and it is therefore policy to try all reasonable hazards.

A five pool is best liked amongst players, because there is a fair stake at issue, the chances are more against individuals, all get plenty of play, and no one has long to wait for a stroke.

At three pool I like to try doubles, with safety in view of course, and never attend to any person who howls out, "That's not three pool!" There cannot, in fairness, be such a thing as favour amongst opponents; everybody ought to do what is most conducive to his own victory and the discomfiture of the rest of the players. Therefore it is advisable to leave a stroke or attempt it, just as you feel disinclined or confident.

Never throw one "life" away because you can then star two or three, and especially do not adopt such a course if the nearest ball to

your player's be near the middle of the table or over a pocket.

Before attempting a hazard always observe the position of your player and of his player, because you may go for a "life" more boldly if the latter be in an open part of the table.

When it comes to single pool, never attempt any other than a certain hazard. Always double yourself away under a distant cushion, and do not attend to what anyone may say about your being "funky." Depend on it, care and watchfulness will give you advantages, even when opposed to better hazard striking and less steadiness. In opening the game always use a little "drag," which will allow you to play with a fair strength, and still prevent your ball rolling far.

Never, at pyramids, attempt what is called a "smash" from the baulk end, as there are only two pockets before you. In some positions, however, when behind the balls at the top of the table, you may do so; there are from that point four pockets open, and the chances are of course greater in favour of a hazard.

If you are in the habit of playing pyra-

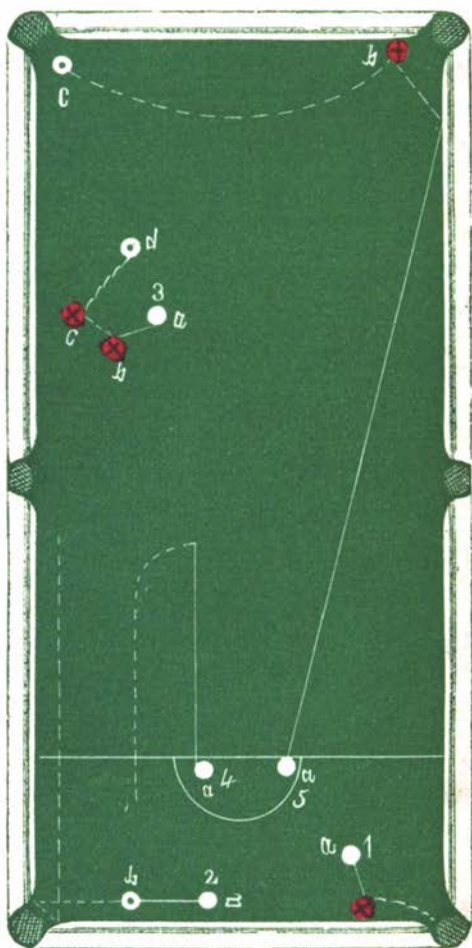
mids with one regular opponent, and, from any cause, you give up play for a week, the odds are, if he has practised meanwhile, that on your next meeting the victory will be an easy one for him. He ought, in fact, to have given a ball.

Or if you leave pyramids for billiards, the circumstances on your return to the game will be of a similar character. Winning hazards are, to begin with, difficult of accomplishment; and your "touch" gets out of order for safe play after the comparative hard hitting of billiards, or in the event of the abandonment of the game for even a few days.

Winning-hazard games are dangerous, as the means of entrapping beginners into high play; and one of the most favourable devices by sharpers is to find a victim who will give two or three balls at pyramids, or allow an extra "life" at single pool, provided the expert shall use one hand only. When a man's skill with one hand is known, an even match may be readily enough made; but in the case just put it is unfair in the extreme, because to most amateurs any professional used to the one-handed style can give a ball, often two or

three, at pyramids. The disadvantage of only being allowed one hand is not so great as most people think ; for the player is not forced to poise his cue every time : he may use the cushion as a rest, and when the half-butt is needed a long bridge may be made. Twist and side, and in some cases screw, can be applied ; and altogether it is a very deceptive method of play.

PLATE XX.



CURIOSITIES OF THE GAME.

CURIOSITIES OF THE GAME.

PLATE XX.

WHAT have been termed "fancy" strokes cannot claim any other connection with the game than that they are shown on a billiard-table; and nothing is more likely to prove destructive to good play than attempting them in a match. In order, however, to amuse such of my readers as are desirous of knowing what really can be done, I have added, on plate 20, five curious shots, none of which have ever, to my knowledge, before been published, though they are known to most experienced players, save No. 4, which requires the use of the *masse* or top-twist, the cue being held perpendicularly. They are perfectly simple, and I will proceed to describe them in the order in which they are numbered.

1. A is the player's ball, and off the red a losing hazard may be scored by striking A high on the right, and causing it to come in contact with the red on the pocket-side. A curve in the manner indicated will then be described by A. The stroke wants playing very softly.

2. I first found out the losing hazard No. 2 about twenty-five years ago, and am not aware that it was ever played before. A few times in important matches I have accomplished it successfully, and but for the fact of its occurring so seldom I should have placed it amongst the rest of the losing hazards. A is the player's ball, and B the spot-white. By striking A high on the left, and meeting B full, the latter is forced into the elbow of the pocket, then doubled on to the opposite angle, and thence up the left side of the table out of baulk. A, by means of the side employed, clings to the baulk-cushion and makes the hazard. The stroke in itself, when the balls are properly placed, is a certainty, as the object is compelled to get out of the way of the striker's ball. They must, however, in the first instance, be both perfectly parallel

with the cushion, about three-quarters of an inch away from it, and a foot or so apart.

3. Figure 3 is an American double cannon, and often used at the four-ball game. A is the striker, B the light red, C the red, and D the spot-white. By playing with a low stroke very fine on B, the course of the striker's ball is so altered that the first cannon will be scored on C, which is met full. Here the recoil comes into force, and A runs back, as indicated by the dotted line, on to D; thus making a ball-to-ball right away and a ball-to-ball pull-back cannon by the same stroke. I have known players of skill quite incredulous about the second score; though of course, when shown how, they made it at the first attempt.

4. Berger was extremely clever in giving a miss in baulk without touching a cushion. He used a perpendicular stroke, hitting his ball near the top on the side closest to him. It was thus forced over the line, turning under and under. Shortly it stopped, and then, turning over and over, rolled back into or near the D. Many curious cannons are effected by the *masse*, which I have no oppor-

tunity to illustrate, except on a billiard-table, where I shall be always glad to show them to visitors.

5. No. 5 is similar to No. 1, both being effected by a kiss. A is the player's ball, B the red, and C the spot-white. By striking A very high, and obliging it to meet the cushion, as shown in the diagram, it will rebound on to B, and kissing off, make a cannon on C.

There are scores of other strokes used as a medium for betting, as cannons through a pool basket or into a hat, the "dip" which enables players to place three balls together, and after drawing the centre one away jump it over the other two, everybody but those in the secret being under the impression that it passed between them, &c. &c. &c.

With the fingers, too, a lot of really clever shots may be performed, because far more twist can be brought into force than with the cue. Berger is surprisingly skilful, and though several Frenchmen have been introduced to me as his equals, I have not seen one who, as the Yankees would say, can "hold a candle to him."

RULES FOR THE CHIEF GAMES PLAYED ON THE BILLIARD TABLE.

THREE games only are common in this country, viz. the English game of billiards, pool, and pyramids. The first of these takes rank, in my opinion, above all others; the second affords amusement to a number of players at once; and the third is the principal medium for gambling on the "board of green cloth." Other games are occasionally played, as the American, French, Go-back, One Pocket, &c.; and for these I have appended the rules principally in vogue. The white winning, white losing, red carambole, and other games, are obsolete; and these, together with a number of continental styles of play usually treated of in works on billiards, I have omitted to notice, because English players know nothing of them. Our national game is without an equal for the beauty of its situations, and for the number and diversity of its strokes. The French are extremely skilful on their

small tables in scoring cannons; and the Americans are always falling out because of the constant desire to introduce new methods of play. Their chief drawback at present is the "push-shot," of which we shall hear no more within a few years.

THE ENGLISH GAME.

(Revised in 1868 by John Roberts, the Champion.)

1. The choice of balls and order of play shall, unless mutually agreed upon by the two players, be determined by stringing; and the striker whose ball stops nearest the lower cushion, after being forced from baulk up the table, may take which ball he likes and play, or direct his opponent to play first, as he may deem expedient.

2. The red ball shall, at the opening of every game, be placed on the top spot; and replaced after being pocketed or forced off the table, or whenever the balls are broken.

3. Whoever breaks the balls must play

out of baulk, though it is not necessary that he shall strike the red ball.

4. The game shall be adjudged in favour of whoever first scores the number of points agreed on, when the marker must call "game;" or it shall be given against whoever, after having once commenced, shall neglect or refuse to continue when called upon by his opponent to play.

[The scores are counted as below.]

5. A two stroke is made by pocketing an opponent's ball, or by pocketing the striker's ball off his opponent's, or by making a cannon; to effect which, the striker must cause his ball to strike both the others.

6. A three stroke is made by pocketing the red ball, or by pocketing the striker's ball off the red.

7. A four stroke may be made by pocketing the white and spot-white balls, or by making a cannon and pocketing an opponent's ball, or by making a cannon and pocketing the striker's ball, the non-striker's ball having been first hit.

8. A five stroke may be made by scoring a cannon and pocketing the red ball, or by a

cannon and pocketing the striker's ball after having struck the red ball first.

9. To effect a six stroke, the red ball must be struck first, and the striker's and the red ball pocketed, or by a cannon off an opponent's ball on to the red and pocketing the two white balls.

10. A seven stroke is made by striking an opponent's ball first, pocketing it, making a cannon, and pocketing the red also, or by making a cannon and pocketing the red and an opponent's ball, or by playing at an opponent's ball first, and pocketing all the balls without making a cannon.

11. An eight stroke is made by striking the red ball first, pocketing it, making a cannon, and pocketing the striker's ball; or by hitting the red first, and pocketing all the balls without making a cannon.

12. A nine stroke is made by striking an opponent's ball first, making a cannon, and pocketing all the balls.

13. A ten stroke is made by striking the red ball first, making a cannon, and pocketing all the balls.

14. If the striker scores by his stroke, he

continues until he ceases to score, when his opponent follows on.

15. If when moving the cue backwards and forwards, and prior to a stroke, it touches and moves the ball, the ball must be replaced to the satisfaction of an adversary, otherwise it is a foul stroke ; but if the player strikes, and grazes any part of the ball with any part of the cue, it must be considered a stroke, and the opponent follows on.

16. If a ball rebounds from the table, and is prevented in any way, or by any object except the cushion, from falling to the ground, or if it lodges on a cushion and remains there, it shall be considered off the table, unless it is the red, which must be spotted.

17. A ball on the brink of a pocket need not be "challenged;" if it ceases running and remains stationary, then falls in, it must be replaced, and the score thus made does not count.

18. Any ball or balls behind the baulk-line, or resting exactly upon the line, are not playable if the striker be in baulk, and he must play out of baulk before hitting another ball.

19. Misses may be given with the point or

butt of the cue, and shall count one for each against the player; or if the player strikes his ball with the cue more than once a penalty shall be enforced, and the non-striker may oblige him to play again, or may call upon the marker to place the ball at the point it reached or would have reached when struck first.

20. Foul strokes do not score to the player, who must allow his opponent to follow on. They are made thus: By striking a ball twice with the cue; by touching with the hand, ball, or cue an opponent's or the red ball; by playing with a wrong ball; by lifting both feet from the floor when playing; by playing at the striker's own ball and displacing it ever so little (except whilst taking aim, when it shall be replaced and he shall play again).

21. The penalty for a foul stroke is losing the lead, and an opponent may, if he chooses, have the red ball spotted and himself break the balls, when the player who made the foul must follow suit, both playing from the D. If the foul is not claimed the player continues to score if he can.

22. After being pocketed or forced off the

table, the red ball must be spotted on the top spot, but if that is occupied by another ball the red must be placed on the centre spot between the middle pockets.

23. If in taking aim the player moves his ball and causes it to strike another, even without intending to make a stroke, a foul stroke may be claimed by an adversary.

24. If a player fails to hit another ball, it counts one to his opponent; but if by the same stroke the player's ball is forced over the table or into any pocket, it counts three to his opponent.

25. Forcing any ball off the table, either before or after a score, causes the striker to gain nothing by the stroke.

26. In the event of either player using his opponent's ball and scoring, the red must be spotted and the balls broken again by the non-striker; but if no score is made the next player may take his choice of balls, and continue to use the ball he chooses to the end of the game. No penalty, however, attaches in either case unless the mistake be discovered before the next stroke.

27. No person except an opponent has a right to tell the player that he is using the

wrong ball or to inform the non-striker that his opponent has used the wrong ball; and if the opponent does not see the striker use the wrong ball, or, seeing him, does not claim the penalty, the marker is bound to score any points made to the striker.

28. Should the striker, in playing up the table on a ball or balls in baulk, either by accident or design, strike one of them without first going out of baulk, his opponent may have the balls replaced, score a miss and follow on, or may cause the striker to play again, or may claim a foul and have the red spotted and the balls broken again.

29. The striker when in hand may not play at a cushion within the baulk (except by first going up the table) so as to hit balls that are within the line.

30. If in hand, and in the act of playing, the striker shall move his ball with insufficient strength to take it out of baulk, it shall be counted as a miss to the opponent, who, however, may oblige him to replace his ball and play again.

31. If in playing a pushing stroke the striker pushes more than once, it is unfair, and

any score he may make does not count. His opponent follows on.

32. If in the act of drawing back his cue the striker knocks his ball into a pocket, it counts three to the opponent, and is reckoned a stroke.

33. If a foul stroke be made whilst giving a miss, the adversary may enforce the penalty or claim the miss, but he cannot do both.

34. If either player takes up a ball, unless by consent, the adversary may have it replaced or may have the balls broken; but if any other person touches or takes up a ball, it must be replaced by the marker as nearly as possible.

35. If, after striking, the player or his opponent should by any means obstruct or hasten the speed of any ball, it is at the opponent's or player's option to have them replaced, or to break the balls.

36. No player is allowed to receive, nor any bystander to offer, advice on the game; but should any person be appealed to by the marker or either player he has a right to offer an opinion; or if a spectator sees the game wrongly marked he may call out, but he must do so prior to another stroke.

37. The marker shall act as umpire, but any question may be referred by either player to the company, the opinion of the majority of whom shall be acted upon.

THE FOUR-HANDED GAME.

The rules of the English game govern four-handed billiards, which differs only in the number of players, there being four instead of two. If A and B are partners, opposed to C and D, a couple of them string for the lead, which the winners may take or reject. Supposing A breaks, either C or D may follow, but the order once begun must be retained throughout, and in the event of anyone missing his turn he shall not be allowed to use his cue until the others have played and he is entitled to go on; while any score of his partner, who may have taken his wrong turn, shall, if discovered before his second stroke, be disallowed, and the break be considered at an end. Anyone may offer advice to his partner, and point the desired course, but he must not touch or interfere with his cue, or chalk the cushions, or indicate with his finger

whilst the stroke is being played. It is usual to play 63 up, and the losers pay for the use of the table.

Sometimes the four-handed game is played, and whoever makes a hazard goes out and lets in his partner; or two consecutive misses, a *coup*, or knocking the balls, put out the player. These methods, however, are rather stupid, and only practised amongst the *mediocre* class of players.

THE THREE GAME.

Three persons may play, each scoring all he is able. Whoever loses the string breaks, the next nearest follows, and the winner succeeds him, using the ball first played with. For instance: A breaks with the plain ball, B follows with the spot, C goes on with the plain, A with the spot, and C with the plain. So the game continues, and whoever first gets 50 wins. As may be imagined, this game is but seldom practised except amongst persons well acquainted with each other, as it admits of lots of sharp practice.

THE ONE-HANDED GAME.

Many players are extremely skilful when using one hand only, both at pyramids and billiards, and they are able to meet opponents of moderate address on the handicap terms of one hand against two. No rest is allowed to the one-handed player, but he may use the quarter, half, or long butt, and balance any of them on a cushion.

THE ONE-POCKET GAME.

This was Kentfield's strongest game, and he really knew it very well. The more skilful player usually takes the left top pocket, and his object is to keep doubling the red ball as near to it as possible, because every time his adversary makes a hazard into that pocket, it scores against him. On the other hand, if the better player makes a hazard into any of his opponent's pockets, the score counts against him. It is usually played 32 up.

THE GO-BACK GAME.

Let A and B, the former a good, and the latter an inferior, player, oppose each other under any of the conditions stipulated below ; game 21 or more up.

A to score out at a single break, if not to go back to "love;" B meanwhile counting all he can score.

A to go back when B makes a losing hazard.

A to go back when B makes a winning hazard.

A to go back when B makes a cannon. e

A to go back when B makes either a losing hazard, a cannon, or a winning hazard.

In the four cases above B continues counting, no matter how often A goes back. So that a good player may sometimes score 100 or more before he gets his 21, or B wins.

POOL.

(Revised by J. Roberts in 1868.)

1. As many balls as there are players must be put into a basket, shaken, and given out, one to each, by the marker. Then the players play progressively, as the colours are placed on the pool marking-board, white spotting his ball.

2. Each player has three lives at starting. Red plays from baulk on white and yellow, on red, and so on, until the number is run through, each person playing at the last ball. If, however, a miss be given or a *coup* or losing hazard struck, then the next player plays at the nearest ball.

3. If a player should lose a life in any way, the next player goes on at the nearest ball to his own; but if the player's ball be in hand,

he aims at the nearest ball to the centre of the baulk-line, whether in or out of baulk. When a ball is played on and pocketed, or forced off the table, a life is taken off the score-board.

4. Should a doubt arise respecting the distance of balls, it must (if at the commencement of the game, or if the player's ball be in hand) be measured from the centre spot in the half circle to the top of the supposed object-ball; but if the striker's ball be not in hand, the measurement must be made from his ball to the others, and in both cases decided by the marker, or by the majority of the company. Should the distance be equal, the owners of the nearest balls must draw lots.

5. The baulk is no protection under any circumstances.

6. The player may lose a life by any one of the following means: by pocketing his own ball; by running a *coup*; by missing a ball; by forcing his own ball off the table; by playing with a wrong ball; by playing at a wrong ball; or by playing out of his turn.

7. Should the striker pocket the ball he plays on, and by the same stroke pocket his own or force it over the table, he loses a

life, and not the person whose ball he has pocketed.

8. Should the player strike a wrong ball, he pays forfeit to the person whose ball he should have played at.

9. If the striker misses the ball he ought to play at and strikes another ball, whether he pockets it or not he loses a life, and not the person whose ball is hit: in the former case the striker's ball must be taken off the table, and both should remain in hand until it be their respective owner's turn to play.

10. If the striker, before taking his aim, inquires which is the ball he ought to play at, and is misinformed by any one of the players, or by the marker, he does not lose a life: the balls must, in this case, be replaced, and the stroke played again. .

11. If any information be required by the player respecting his ball or his turn to play, he has a right to an answer from the marker or from the players.

12. When a ball or balls touch the striker's ball, or are in line between it and the ball he has to play at, so as to prevent him hitting the object, they must be taken up, so as to allow a

clear cut on both sides of the object ; and after the balls have ceased running those so taken up must be replaced.

13. Or if a ball or balls are in the way of a striker's cue, so as in any manner to incommode him, he can have them taken up.

14. When the striker takes a life, he may continue to play on at the nearest ball as long as he scores a winning hazard, or until the balls are all off the table ; in which latter case he places his ball on the spot.

15. The first person who loses his three lives is entitled to star, by paying into the pool the same sum as at the commencement, for which he receives lives equal in number to the lowest number of lives on the board.

16. If the first person out declines to star, the second out may do so ; and if the second refuses, the third may ; and so on, until only two persons are left in the pool : in which case the privilege of starring ceases.

17. Only one star is allowed in a pool.

18. If the striker should move his or another ball whilst in the act of making a stroke, it is considered foul ; and if by the same stroke he pockets a ball or forces it off the table, the

owner of that ball does not lose a life, and the ball must be considered in hand; but if by that stroke he should pocket his own ball or force it off the table, he loses a life.

19. If the striker's ball touches the one he has to play at, he is at liberty either to play at it or at any other ball on the table; and he may take a life if he can score a winning hazard.

20. After a hazard, if the striker should take up his ball or stop it before it has done running, he cannot claim the life or the stake from the person whose ball he has pocketed; it being possible that his own ball might have run into a pocket if he had not stopped it.

21. If before a star two or more balls are pocketed by the same stroke, including the ball played at, each having one life, the owner of the ball first struck has the option of starring; but should he refuse, the persons to whom the pocketed balls belong must draw lots for the right to star.

22. Should the striker's ball stop on the spot of a ball removed, the ball which has been so removed must remain in hand until the place is unoccupied, and then be replaced.

23. Should the striker's ball miss the ball played at, no person is allowed to stop it till it has ceased running, or struck another ball, except the striker, who may stop it when he pleases.

24. If the striker should have his player's ball removed, and his own ball stop on the spot it occupied, his ball shall be taken up and his player's replaced, and the player shall play on the nearest ball.

25. If the striker has a ball removed, and any other than the next player's ball should stop on the spot it occupied, the ball removed must remain in hand till the one on its place be played, unless it should happen to be the turn of the owner of the one removed to play before the one on its place; in which case that ball must give place to the one originally taken up, and then be replaced.

26. If the corner of a cushion prevent the striker from hitting his player, he can have any ball removed for the purpose of playing at a cushion first. [It is customary to allow the player to remove his ball into a suitable position and play, but he cannot take a life.]

27. The two last players cannot star or purchase, but they may divide, if they are left with an equal number of lives each; the striker, however, is entitled to his stroke before the division, except in the case of a miss or *coup* by the player last dead.

28. All disputes must be decided by a majority of the players.

29. The charge for the play must be taken out of the pool before it is delivered up to the winner.

SINGLE POOL.

The spot-white and plain white are drawn from the basket and used by the two opponents. White spots, and spot-white plays. The only objects are winning hazards and safety. Each player has three lives, and whoever loses them first loses the stake placed in the pool-box. Lives are paid for as at pool, and after making a winning hazard the striker spots his ball.

BLUE PETER.

A common game now amongst poolers is the "blue peter," the blue ball being introduced

to act as a fourth in a three-pool. It is placed on the centre spot, and after a hazard the player may try to score a "blue peter," for which he receives, if the stroke be accomplished, a stipulated sum from *each* player. The blue is then spotted again, and if the striker's be the nearest ball, he is entitled to hole the blue again as often as he is nearest.

EVERLASTING POOL.

Perpetual or everlasting pool is played with the pool balls, and may be continued *ad libitum*, each competitor scoring as many lives as he can, and forfeiting a certain stake agreed on whenever he is pocketed, in which case he awaits his turn and plays from baulk. Sixpence an hour is taken from each man by the marker for the table, and any player may retire from the game when he chooses, as there is no stake put in the pool-box.

NEAREST-BALL POOL.

The baulk protects at this game, and if all the balls be behind the line, the striker must,

if in hand, lead to the top cushion, or plac his ball on the spot. If, however, all the balls be in baulk, and the striker is not in hand, he must play at the nearest ball; and if the striker be within the baulk, and he has to play at a ball out of the baulk, he is allowed to have any ball taken up that may chance to lie in his way.

ITALIAN SKITTLE POOL.

1. The game of the Italian pool is played thirty-one points up. Four balls are used, two being white, one red, and one blue, and five skittles are placed in the centre of the table.

2. Each of the skittles is numbered, viz. the first opposite the baulk is numbered 1; the one to the right, 2; the one opposite to the first, 3; the opposite to the second on the left, 4; the one in the centre, 5.

3. The red ball is placed as in the cannon game, the blue one beneath it; the two white ones are kept by the two players who have to play first.

4. The players having once paid their pool, the marker will distribute to them the number indicating each one's turn to play, then replacing into the basket the small balls from one to sixteen progressively, he will secretly give another number to each player, which is to be deposited in a small numbered drawer kept for the purpose of showing each player's turn to play.

5. The small numbered ball secreted in the drawer counts to the owner as many points as marked on the ball.

6. In order to win the pool, it is necessary that between the points made in the game and these on the hidden ball the player should have thirty-one points, neither more nor less ; beyond this number, player is dead.

7. The player whose turn it is to play first has to strike the red ball ; he who is to play second strikes the blue one ; the players that follow may use any of the four balls.

8. To make points, it is necessary to knock down the skittles, each of which counts as many points as is its number ; and by whatever ball these skittles are knocked down they always count. But a ball knocked out of the

table destroys all the points made by the stroke.

9. Any ball knocked out of the table, or missed, will be replaced in the position it had occupied at the beginning of the game.

10. If a ball occupies the spot of a fallen skittle, it is taken away, and placed as in rule number 9. And if it happens that any of the skittles should remain standing up out of its place, its distance will be measured from the skittle in centre; and should the distance be at least equal to the length of a skittle, it will be considered as fallen.

11. Any player reaching twenty-nine or thirty points has a right to stop on his declaring so: he continues, however, to play in his turn only; the points that he makes count for the previous player, whether to his advantage or disadvantage. Thus, if this latter should die, viz. by overstepping the thirty-one points, the points of him who has stopped will count either to the profit or loss of the other player that precedes him, who has died, and so forth. The player intending to stop has to declare so directly after having reached the twenty-nine or thirty points required.

12. Only one player is allowed to stop; should, however, two wish to stop, both of them will have to produce their hidden numbered ball; and the number of the latter being added to the points made in the game, he who counts less dies, and in case of their points being equal, he who declared last his wish to stop dies.

13. The survivor, from among all the players that have died by overstepping the thirty-one points, wins the pool.

14. He who knocks down the four outside skittles, leaving the centre one only standing, makes what is called royal, viz. he wins the pool.

15. The player reaching precisely thirty-one points, and not declaring himself winner before another player stakes, loses his right, and his points are reduced to only thirty.

16. The stakes made by the player when it is not his turn to play, count for nothing. Each player should watch his turn, and before proceeding to another stroke should see whether his points previously scored have been marked on the board.

SKITTLE POOL.

1. Twelve pins are used, two black and ten white, four on the left side and five on the right, and one at the top, and two in baulk, and the three billiard-balls. The side-pins are placed 4 inches from the cushion, and 27 inches apart, commencing on the left with No. 3 on the baulk-line, then No. 2, then a 4, and then 1. No. 5 is 8 inches from the top cushion, and the red ball spots 4 inches behind it. The right side begins No. 1, then a 6 with the black pin 2 inches behind it, then a 2, and then a 4; the other black pin between the left corner spot and the centre of baulk, and a 10 pin on the corresponding right side, the spot-ball on the left corner spot, and the plain on the right. Numbers should be placed opposite each pin, to facilitate the scoring.

2. The game is 31 up, and lots must be drawn by colours or numbers, so that the players must play in rotation, as at common pool. Any player who knocks down a black pin with a ball is dead, and may star any number of times, but comes in without any

points he may have made, the purchase to be the same as the pool.

3. Any number of players can play in a pool.

4. Each player has one stroke, in rotation, and No. 1 leads off with plain ball from its spot, the right corner of baulk, and must strike the red ball before a pin to score. No. 2 plays from the left corner with spot-ball on either red or white. And all players, after the first two strokes, play at or with any ball they please, till the game is over.

5. Any ball occupying the place of a fallen pin must be spotted where it belongs, and then the pin; and should the plain ball stop on the place of the red or spot ball, or *vice versa*, the balls change places for their proper spots.

6. Anyone playing out of turn cannot score, and the player who should have played has the balls replaced as near their original positions as possible, and goes on.

7. The charge for the game to be taken out as at the ordinary pool.

8. Anyone starring and not having a stroke has his purchase returned.

9. Foul strokes are made as follows: by knocking down any pin while taking aim or before the balls have ceased rolling, by playing out of turn, by playing with the wrong ball at starting, by making a miss or coup, or jumping off the table without striking a ball before a pin.

10. Running in, or jumping off the table after scoring, is not foul.

11. A miss must not be given wilfully.

12. Anyone making a foul stroke cannot score, and the next player proceeds.

PYRAMID.

(Revised by J. Roberts in 1868.)

1. PYRAMID is played with sixteen balls; viz. fifteen red, and one white.

2. The coloured balls are placed on the table in the form of a triangle, the lowest ball or point to stand on the winning spot.

3. The players string for the lead, both use the white ball, and whoever pockets the greater number of red balls wins, and receives from his opponent the difference between their scores. [For instance, if A and B play for 1s. a ball, B holes 9, and A 6, A owes 3s.]

4. Whoever wins the string may play first or order his opponent to do so.

5. The next player plays from the spot on which the white is left by his opponent, ex-

cept it should have been pocketed or forced off the table, in which case he plays from the baulk as at the commencement.

6. None but winning hazards score in favour of the player, and the same rules are generally to be observed as at common pool.

7. If either player gives a miss, pockets the white ball, or forces it over the table, he loses one; that is to say, he must place one of the coloured balls which he has pocketed on the winning spot, if unoccupied; if occupied, the ball must be placed on the billiard-spot, or, if that be occupied, half an inch behind the winning spot, and a point taken from his score. But if he has not scored, he is said to owe one, and must pay it when he is able.

8. If the striker holes his own ball, or forces it over the table, and at the same time pockets one or more of the coloured balls, or forces them over the table, he gains nothing by the stroke: the coloured balls so removed must be spotted on the table, together with one of the striker's coloured balls, as a penalty.

9. If the white ball touches a coloured one, the player may score all the coloured balls he pockets; he cannot give a miss.

10. Should the striker move any ball in taking aim or striking, he loses whatever may be scored by the stroke.

11. If the striker forces one or more of the coloured balls over the table, he scores one for each.

12. When all the coloured balls but one are pocketed, the player who made the last hazard continues to play with the white ball, and his opponent uses the red, as at single pool.

13. When only two balls are on the table, should the striker hole the ball he is playing with, or make a miss, the game is finished, and his opponent adds one to his score.

LOSING HAZARD PYRAMID.

The balls are set as in the game of pyramid pool; and the same rules are applicable, except that losing hazards are played for from any ball instead of winning hazards. After a hazard, the striker is allowed to continue from baulk, and may have any ball he chooses

taken off the table and scored to him. As at pyramids, any number of persons can play.

SHELL OUT.

Two or more can play at this game, for which the pyramid-balls are used. A certain order is decided by giving out the pool-balls; and whoever pockets a ball receives a stipulated sum from each player, and continues so to do as often as he scores. Shell out is a "shy" game for a public room, and should not be entered upon amongst strangers for more than very moderate stakes. Every player contributes twopence towards the table; and when the fifteenth ball has been taken the game is considered at an end. Foul strokes are penalised as at pyramids.

AMERICAN BILLIARDS.

THE following are rules newly revised by Michael Phelan :

RULE I. ON STRINGING FOR THE LEAD.

Whoever, playing from within the "string-line" against an outside cushion, brings the returning cue-ball nearest the head cushion, which is the one at which the players stand, is entitled to choice of balls and lead. Provided,

1. That, in stringing, the player's ball has not touched his opponent's, while the latter was at rest.
2. Nor has fallen into any of the pockets. In either case the player loses choice and lead.
3. Should the cue-balls, both being in motion, come in contact, the strokes are invalid, and must be played over.

[As soon as the lead has been won, the light-red and deep-red balls are to be placed on their appropriate spots. This regulation, it will be understood, is intended more particularly for match games. In ordinary games, where it is usual for the marker or table-keeper to spot the balls as soon as he brings them to the table, it shall be optional with the players to remove them or not. But in no case must the cue-ball, while being "strung," come in contact with a red ball, which, when once properly spotted, is not to be moved aside. The player whose ball comes in contact with a red, or the other white while it is at rest, forfeits his claim to choice of balls and the lead. Should both cue-balls come in contact with a red, the players must "string" again.]

2. In "stringing," it is required that both cue-balls shall be struck simultaneously, or so nearly together that one ball cannot reach the lower cushion before the other has been put in motion.

RULE II. ON LEADING.

1. The player who wins the choice of balls and lead must either roll his ball down toward the lower cushion, as an object for his adversary to play at, or else compel his adversary to lead off, as above described.

2. In leading, the player's ball must be played from within the string-line, and struck with sufficient strength to carry it beyond the deep-red ball on its appropriate spot at the foot of the table. But it must not be played with such strength as to repass, after having come in contact with the lower cushion, the deep-red ball. Nor yet must it touch either red ball, nor lodge on the cushion, nor fall into a pocket, nor jump off the table. In any of the cases mentioned in this section, or in case the cue-ball is not struck with sufficient strength to pass beyond the deep-red, it shall be optional with the adversary (Player No. 2) to make No. 1 spot his ball on the pool spot nearest the lower cushion, or lead again; or he may take the lead himself.

3. No count or forfeiture can be made or incurred until two strokes have been played.

[For the purposes of Section 3, the "lead off" is considered a stroke, and no forfeiture of points shall be exacted either for the compulsory miss made by the leading player, or for his ball falling into a pocket.]

4. Once the lead is made, the game is considered as commenced, and neither player can withdraw except under circumstances specified in Rule VII.

RULE III. ON OPENING THE GAME.

1. The game is opened by player No. 2 playing on the white ball at the foot of the table.

2. Should he fail to hit the white first, or fail to hit it at all, he forfeits one point, which shall be added to his adversary's score. Should he pocket himself after hitting a red ball first, he loses three points, even though he may have subsequently hit the white.

[Hitting a red ball first, at the opening of the game, when the white is the only ball that can be played directly upon, is tantamount to a miss. Hence the penalty of three for a pocket when a red ball has been struck first.

The red, when disturbed, must be replaced upon its proper spot, if vacant; if the spot is occupied by another ball, the red must remain off the table until its spot is uncovered and all the balls have ceased rolling.]

RULE IV. ON FORFEITURES.

1. If the striker fails to hit any of the other balls with his own, he forfeits *one* point, which, as well as other forfeitures, must be added to his adversary's score.

[There are two exceptions to this rule. The first occurs in leading off, and has already been explained. The second is where the cue-ball, while at rest, is in contact with another ball. Then the player does not forfeit. It is impossible to cause the cue-ball to hit, by a direct stroke, the ball with which it is in contact, and the player should not be penalised for failing to accomplish an impossibility. But, as it is possible for him to count by playing *away* from that ball—for example, by striking some other ball, or a cushion, *first*, or by taking up all the balls if his own is in con-

tact with two or more—it is a settled ruling that, in case he should pocket his ball either by accident or design, or send it over the table, or cause it to lodge upon the cushion, he must pay forfeit—*two* points, if his ball was in contact with a white, and *three* if with a red.]

2. The striker forfeits *two* when the ball that he plays with is pocketed, or lodges on the cushion, or goes over the table, after having struck or been in fixed contact with the other white, no matter whether it has touched one or both of the reds.

[An exception to this clause will be found in Rule III. Section 2.]

3. The striker forfeits *three* when the ball that he plays with is pocketed, or lodges on the cushion, or goes over the table after having come in contact with one or both of the reds, and not the white. The same applies if neither red nor white be struck.

[By “lodging on the cushion” is meant a ball that has bounded off the bed of the table and become settled on the top of the cushion. Should the cue-ball, after mounting the cushion, return to the bed of the table

and effect a carom or a hazard, the stroke is fair and must be counted.]

4. If the player cause any ball to jump off the table, and should it, by striking any of the bystanders, be flung back upon the table, it must still be treated as if it had fallen to the floor. If a red ball, it must be spotted; if a white, held in hand. Should it be the last striker's ball, he forfeits two or three, the same as if he had gone into a pocket.

RULE V. ON FOUL STROKES.

The penalty of a foul stroke is that the player cannot count any points he may have made by such stroke, and his adversary is entitled to the next play. The following, in addition to those already mentioned, are foul strokes :

1. If either player plays with his opponent's ball, the stroke is foul; and, if successful, he cannot count, provided the error is found out before a second shot is made.

2. Should two or more strokes have been made previous to the discovery, the reckoning cannot be disturbed, and the player may con-

tinue his run with the same ball, or he may have the balls changed. The same privilege is extended to the opposing player when his turn comes to play.

3. Should it be found that both players have used the wrong ball successively, he who was first to play with the wrong ball cannot put in a claim of foul against his opponent; as the latter, in using the wrong ball, was simply playing from his proper position on the table.

[It is the position of the cue-ball, and not its mere colour or designation, that governs. Aside from this, before one player can charge another with error, it must be shown that no act of his contributed to that error.]

4. Though the striker, when playing with the wrong ball, cannot count what points he may make, except in those cases mentioned above, nevertheless, whatever forfeitures he may incur while playing with the wrong ball, he is bound to pay, as if he had been playing with his own.

5. Should, however, both the white balls be off the table together, and should either player, by mistake, pick up the wrong one

and play with it, the stroke must stand, and he can count whatever he has made.

[As he plays from his proper position, it is immaterial, because no advantage is to be gained, which ball he uses. In this case, as in the others where it is permitted to play with the wrong ball, the balls should be changed at the conclusion of the run. This will prevent confusion and disputes.]

6. If the striker play at a ball before it is fully at rest, or while any other ball is rolling on the table, the stroke is foul.

7. If, after going into a pocket, a cue-ball or an object-ball should rebound and return to the bed of the table, it must be treated as a ball not pocketed.

8. If the player, when playing with the butt or side of his cue, does not withdraw the butt or side before the cue-ball touches the first object-ball, the stroke is foul.

9. A stroke made while a red ball is off the table, provided its spot is unoccupied, is foul. When its proper spot is occupied, the red must remain off the table until its spot is vacated and all the balls have ceased rolling. [See following rule.]

10. If the game being played is one in which hazards or pockets do not count, a red ball that has been pocketed or forced off the table shall be spotted on another spot, provided its own is occupied, and provided also the non-striker's ball is off the table at the time. If the light-red, it shall be placed on the dark-red spot; and if that spot is occupied, the light-red shall be placed on the pool-spot at the foot of the table. If the dark-red, it shall be placed on the light-red spot, &c. If both reds are off the table at the same time, and their spots are occupied by the two whites, one of the reds may be placed on the pool-spot. The other must remain off the table until its proper spot is vacant.

[Where hazards are played, there is no necessity for this rule. The old one, which still applies to hazard playing, was framed when the full game (*i. e.* hazards and caroms) was in vogue in America. The carom game has superseded the full game, and it has been found necessary to remodel this rule. It has often happened, under the rule relative to a pocketed red ball, that a carom could not

by any possibility be made. For example, one player, in making a carom, accidentally holes his own ball and the dark-red. The other white ball, which has also been struck, stops in such a position as to prevent the spotting of the red. The incoming player, who did not contribute in any way towards the mishap, or it may be misplay, of his opponent, and should not be made to suffer therefor, has but *one* ball at his command. How is he to make a carom? In the old or full game, he could count by pocketing the light-red; but in the carom game he can make no count whatever. As the spirit and intent of billiards is to count, it needs no argument to convince the reader that that system of play must be false which at any time makes counting an utter impossibility. It is partly with this view that the rule relative to balls in fixed contact has been amended, so that a count may be effected when, through an inequality in the cloth or balls, the cue-ball adheres to two or more others, thus precluding either a carom or a hazard.]

11. If, after making a successful stroke, the player obstructs or otherwise affects the

free course of any ball in motion, the stroke is foul, and he cannot score the points made thereby.

12. A touch is a shot. And if, while the balls are at rest, a player touches or disturbs any ball on the table other than his own, it is foul. He has, however, the privilege of playing a stroke for safety, provided his own ball has not been touched, but he can make no count on the shot.

13. In playing a shot, if the cue leaves the ball and touches it again, the stroke is foul.

14. If the striker, through stretching forward or otherwise, has not at least one foot on the floor while striking, the shot is foul, and no points can be reckoned.

15. If, when the player's ball is in hand, he does not cause it to pass outside the string before touching any of the object-balls or cushion (except in the case mentioned in the following rule), the stroke is foul, and his opponent may choose whether he will play with the balls as they are, have them replaced in their original positions, or cause the stroke to be played over; or, should the

player make a losing hazard under such circumstances, the penalty may be enforced.

16. Playing at a ball whose base or point of contact with the table is outside the string, is considered playing out of the string; and the stroke is a fair one, even though the side which the cue-ball strikes is hanging over, and therefore within the string.

17. Playing directly at a ball that is considered in the string is foul, even though the cue-ball should pass wholly beyond the string-line before coming in contact.

18. Giving a miss inside the string, when the player is in hand, is foul; but he may, for safety, cause his ball to go out of the string and return.

19. If a player alters the stroke he is about to make, at the suggestion of any party in the room—even if it be at the suggestion of his partner in a double match—the altered stroke is foul.

20. Placing marks of any kind whatever either upon the cushions or table is foul; and a player, while engaged in a game, has no right to practise a particular stroke on another table.

RULE VI. ON CASES WHERE THE BALLS ARE IN CONTACT.

[At the request of the majority of the leading players, amateur and professional, the rule observed since 1858, under which no count could be effected unless the striker first played upon some ball other than that with which his own was in contact, has been amended as below. The new rule came into effect January 1, 1867.]

1. When the cue-ball is in contact with any other ball, the striker may effect a count either by playing first upon some ball other than that with which his own is in contact, or by playing first against the cushion, or by a *masse*. In either of the two last-mentioned cases, it is immaterial which ball the returning cue-ball strikes first.

2. Should the cue-ball be in contact with all the other balls on the table—or, if with two balls only, while the remaining ball is on the table, in such a way that the striker cannot play either on the free ball or the cushion *first*—it shall be optional with him to have all the balls taken up and the reds spotted as at

the commencement of the game. It shall also be at his option to take the lead himself or compel his opponent to lead.

[This is the same as starting the game anew, except that there is no occasion to string for the lead and choice of balls. The sharper's trick of first betting that he can so place the four balls that his dupe can make no legitimate count off of them, and then surrounding the cue-ball with the other three in firm contact, is thus done away with.]

RULE VII. ON WITHDRAWING FROM, WITHOUT
FINISHING, A GAME.

1. The player may protest against his adversary's standing in front of him, or in such close proximity as to disarrange his aim.

2. Also against loud talking or any other annoyance by his opponent while he is making his play.

3. Also against being refused the use of the bridge, or any other of the instruments used in the room in playing, except where a special stipulation to the contrary was made before commencing the game.

4. Or in case his adversary shall refuse to abide by the marker's, referee's, or company's decision on a disputed point, which it was agreed between them to submit to the marker or company for arbitration. In any one or all of the foregoing cases, if the discourtesy be persisted in, the party aggrieved is at liberty to withdraw, and the game shall be considered as drawn, and any stakes which may have been depending on it must be returned.

5. Should the interruption or annoyance have been accidental, the marker, if so requested by the player who is entitled to repeat his stroke, must replace the balls as near as possible in the position they occupied before the player made the stroke in which he was interrupted.

RULE VIII. ON CASES IN WHICH THE MARKER MUST REPLACE THE BALLS, IF CALLED ON, AS NEARLY AS POSSIBLE IN THEIR FORMER POSITION.

1. In the case mentioned in the fifth paragraph of the preceding rule.

2. Where any of the balls, when at rest, are moved by accident.

3. Where any of the balls while rolling are suddenly obstructed either by accident or design on the part of any person other than the player. In this case the marker, if so requested by the players or referee, shall place the interrupted ball as nearly as possible in the situation which it would apparently have occupied had it not been stopped.

4. Where the cue-ball, resting on the edge of a pocket, drops into it before the striker has time to play.

5. Where the object-ball, in a similar position, is rolled back into the pocket by any of the ordinary vibrations of the table or atmosphere.

6. In all the cases aforementioned, where it is specified that in consequence of a foul stroke the player's opponent shall have the option either of playing at the balls as they are, or causing them to be replaced by the marker.

7. When either or both of the red balls are pocketed, or forced off the table, it is the marker's duty to spot them before another

stroke is played—except (the game being played is caroms and pockets) the spot appropriate to either be occupied by one of the playing balls, in which case the red one must be kept in hand until its position is uncovered.

8. If, after playing the ball, a player should attempt to obstruct or accelerate its progress by striking it again, blowing at it, or any other means, his opponent may either play at the balls as they stand, or call upon the referee or marker to replace them in the position they would otherwise have occupied.

9. It is the duty of each player to see that a ball is properly spotted before the next stroke is made. As in the case where a player is in hand, a claim of foul, after the cue-ball has been struck in the one instance, and the red ball disturbed in another, cannot be entertained. All claims to the effect that the red ball is not on its spot, or that the striker's ball is not inside the string when he is about to play after having been in hand, should be made *before* the stroke is played, as it can seldom be decided *after* the stroke whether there was any ground for the claim.

RULE IX. ON THE DUTY OF PLAYERS TO EACH
OTHER.

1. Each player must look after his own interest, and exercise his own discretion. His opponent cannot be compelled to answer such questions as, "Is the ball outside or inside the string?" "Are the balls in contact?" and so forth. These are questions for the player's own judgment to decide.

2. When the cue-ball is very near another ball, the player must not play directly upon that ball without having warned his adversary that they do not touch, and given him or his umpire time to be satisfied on that point.

[As, in the event of his ball being "fast," the only effect would be to prevent his playing directly upon that ball, it is the striker's privilege to play, and without giving warning, upon some other ball that is manifestly at a distance from his own.]

3. It is obligatory upon the adversary or umpire to call "time!" or give some other notice of his approach, if, while the player is preparing to make a stroke, either of them

desires to look at the balls, or submit a question to the referee.

4. Each player should attend strictly to his own game, and never interfere with his adversary's, except in the cases mentioned in Section 9 of Rule VIII., or when a foul stroke or some other violation of these rules may call for forfeiture.

ON COUNTING.

[A cannon from white to red or *vice versâ* counts 2, a cannon from the red to the pink or *vice versâ* 3, a cannon on all the balls 5; a white hazard 2, red 3, pink 3, white and red or pink 5, red and pink 6, opponent's ball, red and pink, 8. Thus at a single stroke 13 points may be made.]

THE FRENCH GAME.

FRENCH tables are without pockets, and the rules are as under, together with certain regulations for playing on English tables.

1. The players string for the lead, and the winner is entitled to have his opponent's ball spotted, or to spot his own, within the D.—N.B. On a French table the D is drawn with a radius of $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

2. Hazards do not count, neither are pushing strokes allowed; but every cannon fairly made scores one.

3. Whenever the red ball is pocketed, it must be placed on the spot.

4. Every time a player pockets his adversary's ball and makes a cannon, the ball pocketed must be placed on the spot within the baulk.

5. Should a player pocket his own ball

after a cannon, he is entitled to the score, and to play on from the D on a ball outside of the baulk. If, however, neither ball be out of baulk, the marker must spot the red and allow the striker to play at it.

6. Every time a ball is knocked off the table it must be spotted; and should both spots be occupied, it must be placed in the centre of the table.

7. If, however, the player's ball jumps off the table after a cannon, the score is counted, and the striker continues from the D.

8. When the player's ball is in hand, he must keep his body in playing within the line of the two end pockets at the bottom of the table.

9. When the player's ball is spotted in the D, either at the opening or after being pocketed or jumped off the table, it shall be considered in hand, and may be afterwards placed in, and struck from, any part of the half-circle.

10. Should the player's ball be holed, and the other white be on its spot, not having rolled there, it must be taken off, and the pocketed white put in its place.

11. If the upper spot be occupied, either by the red ball or by a white having rolled there, and the other be holed, it must go on the D spot.

12. The red ball having been holed, and its spot being occupied, it must go on the centre spot; should both the spots be occupied, it must go on the American spot.

13. Touching any ball when making a stroke shall be deemed foul; but should the player touch his or any other ball before attempting a stroke, his opponent may have the balls replaced.

14. If after his stroke a player touches a ball, his adversary may have it replaced in the position it would probably have occupied.

15. If the player's ball touches another, he cannot score, but he may play. Should he touch the third ball with his, they must be spotted, and his opponent play from the D.

HANDICAPS.

A FEW of the regulations adopted, where handicaps are of frequent occurrence, will doubtless prove useful. The players may number from two upwards, and play may last over any length of time agreed on. The handicappers should be acquainted with the skill of all the competitors, and if the heats are to be played on a table known to some of them, due allowance to the others should be made on this account. The scratch-man is termed the "top weight," and he with the greatest number of points is said to have the "limit." If, however, another name is added after the handicap has been completed, and the new player happens to be more skilful than any of the rest, it is advisable not to alter the "weights," but to place him behind the scratch, and make him "owe" as many as may be considered fair.

Thus he would have to make his dozen or twenty before reaching scratch.

The competitors who accept must be drawn in couples by some disinterested person, and if there is an odd man afterwards left in, he is allowed to "run a bye," namely, to be considered the winner of his first heat, and eligible for the second draw. When the opening round has been got through the winners are redrawn for the first ties, and so on at the end of each round until only two competitors are left to battle for what is termed the final or deciding heat. Whoever wins this has beaten every man who has come against him, and is therefore the victor, whilst his last opponent takes the second prize.

Prior to a handicap, if there be any bet booked, the terms should always be distinctly specified, so that whoever makes the wager may be fully aware whether it depends on a single heat or on the result of the final. Many unpleasant errors have occurred through misunderstandings of this sort. Disqualifications take place occasionally through false entries, and the promoters of any handicap have a perfect right to refuse the name of a player of

doubtful reputation or of whom they know nothing. In putting the competitors on even terms with each other, the best way is to weigh the skill and nerve of every single one against every other, and add or deduct points as the starts are being allotted. By so doing no individual case will be omitted, and the merits of all will be duly arrived at. Every new draw should be published in the room, and the time at which each heat will commence, so that all players will have due notice. In the event of the absence of any competitor at the specified time, his opponent must be allowed a "walk over," after waiting, say, a quarter of an hour; but if, when the draw has taken place, any two players in one heat choose mutually to agree to some other time than that set down, they may make an arrangement with the promoters and play earlier or later, or on some other evening, if circumstances permit of such a concession.

CELEBRATED MATCHES.

ROBERTS *v.* STARKE.

(From *Bell's Life*, Jan. 20, 1850.)

THIS being the first public match at billiards of any interest that has been played for many years, and Roberts having gained considerable *provincial* celebrity by his magnificent style of play, as well as by the refusal of the acknowledged best player in England (Jonathan Kentfield, of Brighton) to compete with him for 1000*l.*, it excited the greatest desire on the part of all admirers of this truly scientific game to witness the contest with Starke, who has the reputation of being one of the most skilful players, if not the most skilful, in America. The supposed disadvantage which Roberts laboured under in giving odds at the American game, which he had never been accustomed to

play, produced a feeling of uncertainty which caused his most sanguine supporters to be cautious in their investments; hence the betting did not exceed 6 or 7 to 4 on him, at which price a good deal of money was laid out in private; little or no public betting took place during the match.

The game commenced at twenty-two minutes past five, by stringing for the lead. Starke led off by playing his ball half way between the top red and the end cushion; Roberts failed in making a cannon, and Starke scored 16, making his score, with the 100 given, 116. Roberts followed and made 11, finishing with a miss in baulk. Starke played back, and cannoning scored up to 132. From this they alternately scored, until Starke stood at 150, from which he went to 194, making 44, by a series of beautiful cannons and winning hazards, which elicited much admiration and applause by the accurate and scientific manner in which he caused the balls to fall into position for future scores. After this he succeeded in making the large scores of 19, 52, 36, and 68, to the delight of his backers and to the amazement of Roberts, who, at this period of

the game, appeared cramped in his style, and fearful of giving those slashing deliveries with which he so successfully performs at the English winning and *losing* hazard game; notwithstanding which he also succeeded in making some good scores, namely, 19, 22, 44, 23, 16, and 16. These scores were principally made by holing the red ball, and maintaining a favourable position after its being replaced on its spot. This evidently was Roberts's *forte*, and was a beautiful illustration of the science of the game, by its contrast to the equally scientific style of Starke's cannons, already alluded to. At the expiration of the first hour the score stood, Starke 324, Roberts 244. Shortly after Starke went away with a score of 68, and during the second hour made the respective scores of 19, 35, 47, 18, 18, and 41, and was at one time 154 ahead of his opponent; the odds were of course changed, and offers were made to take 3 to 1 about Roberts winning, but no blow struck. Roberts also, during the second hour, made some fine scores, namely, 57, 22, 27, 33, 33, and 18, the score being, at the end of the second hour, Starke 634, Roberts 541. This continued for some time longer,

alternately fluctuating, until Roberts threw off his waistcoat and cravat, evidently bent on mischief, and soon succeeded in obtaining his favourite position opposite the baulk red, from which he scored the astonishing number of 116, passing his opponent, and finishing a great number of points ahead. After this Starke got several good scores, including a 52, but never succeeded in again equalising the game; for when it stood thus, Roberts 883 and Starke 779, Roberts again got his position on the upper red ball, and by a succession of rapid and most accurately played hazards (*making 39 of them consecutively, the last one at the rate of 100 miles an hour*), he won the match in 3 hours 8 minutes, by 221 points, exclusive of the 100 given, amidst the rapturous applause and hearty congratulations of his numerous friends and admirers. When the applause subsided a friend of Mr. Starke stated that Mr. S. was open to play any man in the world (bar Roberts), and would make a fresh match with Roberts with 200 out of 1000 points. The game commenced at twenty-five minutes past five, and ended at twenty-five minutes to nine.

ROBERTS v. STARKE.

(From *Bell's Life*, Oct. 20, 1855.)

THIS great match for 200*l.* a-side, in which Roberts, the celebrated Manchester player, had to give Starke, the American, 1500 out of 3000, terminated on Saturday morning at four o'clock, having commenced at forty-five minutes past five on Friday afternoon, in favour of Starke by 200 points. We do not think that Roberts was quite equal to his great reputation, though occasionally brilliant in the extreme, at one time scoring 158 off the balls, 132 of which were made by 44 consecutive winning hazards in the top pockets. Starke played with that imperturbable solidity that has always distinguished him, and his great steadiness brought him through. The match was played in the large room at Saville House, Leicester-square, Messrs. Burroughes & Watts having fitted up a first-rate table expressly for the occasion. The room was crowded to suffocation during the whole ten hours of the play.

ROBERTS *v.* C. HUGHES.

(From the *Field*, April 13, 1861.)

ON Wednesday evening there was a great gathering of the *sommités* of the billiard world, to witness what was expected to be as fine a display of this noble game as had taken place in the metropolis for some time past. The match had been arranged, not so much with the view of testing the respective merits of the men as to inaugurate the splendid new billiard-rooms which Roberts has just opened at Saville House, Leicester-square. No one expected for a moment that Hughes would be able to compete with the celebrated "Jack" Roberts, and the only question was whether the odds of 300 in the 1000 would not give the former a chance of making something like a stand against this redoubtable opponent. The event proved, however, that the younger player had no chance; and the superiority of Roberts soon became so apparent and overwhelming, that Hughes (much to the disappointment of his admirers) was utterly unable to do anything

like justice to the abilities which he is known to possess. This is generally found to be the case when a second- or third-rate player is pitted against such a master as Roberts. The nerve fails, confidence is gone, and with it that calmness and precision which are indispensable to good play.

It was after half-past eight when the play commenced, on a fine new table by Burroughes and Watts; Hughes losing the string, and giving a miss in baulk. Little was done in the first few strokes, and what was scored was entirely to the account of Hughes, which had the effect of drawing out a few of his admirers to offer to take odds. Roberts (who had evidently been disturbed by the difficulties with the seats) gave no immediate signs of what he could do, and his first score was at the 20th stroke, when he made 4 with the white balls, following it up with a miss. His first break was at the 42d stroke, when he scored 47 off the balls, and Hughes followed with a break of 20. From that time Hughes had no chance. At the 82d stroke Roberts took the balls in hand, and ran off 136, including 40 red hazards off spot—the stroke in which he is most

fatal. When Hughes was 467 Roberts tied him, the latter having made that number whilst his opponent had only scored 167. From that point the match was over, and Roberts concluded it by scoring 1001 when his opponent had only reached 556; so that Hughes scored 256 while Roberts was making up the complete tale. The time occupied in playing the match was four minutes short of two hours, and the celerity of scoring on the part of Roberts was a feat such as has been seldom, if ever, surpassed. The total number of strokes in the match was 576.

A match with so hollow a result presents but few points for observation, so far as the relative merits of the players are concerned. Hughes was (as we have said before) entirely put off his play by the superiority against which he felt himself unable to contend. It may be that this result was aided by the thought of a private affliction which was spoken of in the room. He is, however, a player of altogether a different calibre to Roberts, and never can be seriously matched against him. Hughes is young, and plays neatly, but (as most young players do) is too

fond of showing off flashy strokes, and evidently prefers a number of roundabout canons to those long breaks of winning and losing hazards which have such a deadly effect upon matches. Moreover, he plays generally for the single stroke, and at a strength which leaves it very much to chance whether there is anything to come after it. Roberts, on the other hand, is a master of the game, and plays as much with his head as with his cue. He was cool and steady, never throwing away the chance of developing a break for the sake of displaying his powers of producing effects in the way of screws, twists, hair, following and side strokes. That he *can* do more of these than most men, he demonstrated very satisfactorily towards the end of the game, when the result was manifestly beyond all chance, and by some wonderful screws and side strokes brought down the applause of the room. Those who had never seen him play before were very curious to witness his extraordinary performance with the spot stroke, and they were gratified. He made many runs off that break, one consisting of forty consecutive spot strokes. The judgment with which he obtains and the

skill with which he executes that break are about the finest things to be seen in billiards. With an easy break of another kind before him, he will sometimes play a difficult stroke, and lo! the red ball is in a pocket, and his own is up in the neighbourhood of the spot. Then the variety with which he plays it! Sometimes the ball is slashed in, and his own, travelling to the top cushion, comes down again to a fair position for a hazard on the other side of the table. Sometimes he screws his own ball straight back; and sometimes, when the position becomes difficult, the red ball is slowly rolled in, and his own landed in a good place to repeat the stroke in the opposite pocket. Perhaps it may be reckoned a slight defect in Roberts's play, that he depends so much upon the red winning hazard. It may be said that a perfect player would use the red and white losing hazards and the canons as fatally as Roberts does the red winning. That is true; but where are you to find such a player? Kentfield is great at the losing hazard, and would probably beat Roberts at that; but Roberts, on the other hand, is superior at the winning.

DUFTON *v.* C. HUGHES.

(From the *Sporting Life*, Jan. 23, 1861.)

ON Monday evening the match at billiards between Charles Hughes and William Dufton, 1000 up, for 50*l.* a-side, took place, according to agreement, at the Eyre Arms Tavern, St. John's-wood. Notwithstanding that in the earlier part of the day Dufton had been the favourite in the City, but very few responses were heard to the frequent offers by Hughes's party to back their "Charley" for even money, and before the commencement of the play 5 to 4, and in some instances 6 to 4, was freely laid on the "little un" (Hughes). Hughes led off with a miss into baulk, Dufton following suit, and during the first hundred he took the lead, and at the finish of the first hundred was leading by 17, Hughes having scored 83, Dufton's breaks consisting of one 6, one 9, two 10's, a 15, and one 16, the remainder being made up by single scores. Hughes had scored his number by a 6, a 9, two 10's, a 15, and 16. After this Dufton took a decided lead, scoring

200 to Hughes's 93, making 16, 27, 17, 22, as well as several smaller breaks, and continued scoring in a brilliant manner, making no less than seventeen red hazards with the spot stroke, and in the break 56 off the balls, and increased his score to 288, at which time Hughes, who had been playing remarkably steady, passed him, amidst the applause of his friends. His principal breaks up to this time comprised two 9's, 11, 25, 31, 43, 50. The weight of the great crowd in the room having somewhat depressed the floor, the table required levelling, and the play was stopped for some time to allow of the alteration. During the cessation of play 200 to 100 was laid on Hughes, who did not score so fast as before, Dufton reaching the third hundred when Hughes had only scored 291. Hughes began to improve his position, as he again passed Dufton, and at the finish of the fourth hundred was leading by 59, the score being 401 to 342, Hughes having made 11, 17, 40, and 42, besides several other smaller scores, Dufton scoring 8, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, and 21 off at various portions of the game. Hughes still kept the lead to the 500, at which point Dufton was

443, Hughes having scored 32, 25, &c., and Dufton making some very fine winning hazards. After playing for some little time longer, they retired for ten minutes to rest, the game standing, Hughes 551, Dufton 520; and the table was again levelled. On resuming the play, Hughes increased his lead up to 601, to Dufton's 544; Hughes making 32 and 13, and Dufton 14, 16, 17. The play was very level for some time, and the game at the conclusion of the next hundred was, Hughes 701 to Dufton's 653, Hughes having made 47 off in one instance, and Dufton making 5, 12, 18, 16, 23, &c. Hughes at this point of the play took a long lead, and bid fair to win by more than 100, the game being, Hughes 801, Dufton 671, Hughes in two instances having scored 42 and 46. Dufton scored 18, 12, and several minor ones.

During the play in the ninth hundred Dufton improved his position materially, as, at the finish of the ninth hundred, instead of his being 130 in the rear; he was only 74, the game being, Hughes's 901 to Dufton's 827. Hughes scored 22, 17, 19, and several smaller scores; Dufton 10, 23, 13, 30, 14, &c. Dufton played

a remarkably steady, up-hill game, and was frequently and loudly applauded; nevertheless he was decidedly overmatched, and Hughes, playing his old *steady* game, finished the game by scoring 1001 to Dufton's 910. Hughes scored 32, 17, 18, 12, &c.; Dufton 14, 25, 17, 23, &c., by some very fine play.

C. HUGHES v. DUFTON.

(From the *Sporting Life*, Feb. 2, 1861.)

THE return match took place on Wednesday at Billington's Dining-rooms. From the commencement Hughes took a decided lead, and at the finish of the first hundred the game was, Hughes 101, to 51; Hughes making 11, 20, and 21, and Dufton 34, in their various breaks. In the second hundred, Hughes increased his lead to 200, to 91; making a couple of long breaks of 56 and 29; Dufton making 13 and 14, and a host of little ones. During the third hundred, Hughes still held the lead, as he scored at

almost every stroke; and at the finish the game was called, Hughes 300 to Dufton's 151, their breaks being: Hughes, 12, 15, 22, and 39; and Dufton several fine strokes, and a break of 17. In the fourth hundred, Hughes increased his lead from 149 to 170, amongst his breaks counting 14, 23, 25; and Dufton two breaks of 23 and 27, as well as three red hazards by the *Quill* stroke. In the fifth hundred, Dufton played very cautiously, and lessened the score materially; as, on the game being called at the conclusion of the fifth hundred, the board showed, Hughes 502, to Dufton's 396; the latter having improved his position by 64. Hughes was in the middle of a break when half the game was called, and finishing the same, when they left off for refreshment, the game stood: Hughes 523, Dufton 396; during which time Hughes had scored 10, 11, 12, 14, and 30; and Dufton 15, 24 twice, and 54; the time of play being one hour fifty-two minutes. They then retired for a "snack," and offers to back Hughes at 2 to 1 went begging. On the resumption of the play, Hughes again made some brilliant shots, and off one break scored 52. Dufton

during this hundred was very industrious, scoring two 8's, two 9's, a 17, and a 28, and the game was called: Hughes 603, Dufton 469. At the conclusion of the seventh hundred Hughes was leading by 188; the game being, Hughes 701, Dufton 593. The breaks were: Hughes 6, 9, 11, 13, 18, 20, 21, &c.; and Dufton 5, 9, 13, 15 twice, 16, and 18. During the eighth hundred Hughes first made 16, then a 6, and a 5. After which—by a lucky kiss—he got the position for a spot stroke, and made a long break of 93; the principal scores of which were from the spot, making no less than 27 red hazards. At the conclusion of the eighth hundred the game stood: Hughes 802, Dufton 623. Before Hughes had finished his long break, he had increased his numbers to 850 to 623. At the conclusion of the ninth hundred the marker called: Hughes 902, Dufton 754; the longest break on both sides being 14. In the last hundred Hughes commenced a break at 895, which he continued until he had altered the score to 955, making 60 off the balls; and again making 23, he won the game; being 1000 to his opponent's 820.

The time occupied was three hours and fifty-three minutes.

BOWLES *v.* TABLEY.

(From the *Sporting Life*, March 20, 1861.)

ON Friday last the Princess's Concert-room was visited by about 300 of the lovers of this scientific game, who had assembled to witness the match of 1000 up, between J. A. Bowles, late of Manchester, and James Tabley, to decide who should claim the honour and title of being the second-best player in England (John Roberts being universally acknowledged the champion). The game commenced at 7.35, and was very slowly played for the first hundred, which was gained by Bowles, the breaks on both sides being very small. Tabley scored 91. Bowles in the second hundred scored a 40, an 11, and a 15, making the game—Bowles 201, Tabley 156, during which he scored a 14 and a 38. In the third hundred Tabley gained upon Bowles, as the game

at one time stood 207 all. Bowles again went away to 246, when Tabley, by some fine play, scored up to 248. At this point of the game Bowles scored 68, making his game 314 to Tabley's 248; besides the long break, Bowles scored 16, 19; and Tabley 22, 11, 15, and 9. At 330 Tabley again passed Bowles, scoring 45 off; nevertheless, Bowles by fine play scored the 400 first, Tabley being 353; Bowles made 21, 16, 18, and two 10's. Bowles, in the next and fifth hundred, maintained his position, scoring up to 508, by breaks of 19, 24, 9, 11, and 34; Tabley being 452, his breaks having been two 2's, a 9, 5, and 13. At this portion of the game they retired for half an hour. The time taken up in playing this number was two hours and five minutes. After recommencing the play Bowles began to improve in his game, and scored 608 to Tabley's 515. Bowles's breaks were 29, 38, 17, and 15; Tabley's being 16, 10, and 12. The seventh hundred was scored by Bowles to Tabley's 562. Bowles scored 12, 30, and 31; and Tabley a 6 and two of 18. Bowles kept the lead, as the game was, Bowles 800 to 688; Bowles making a 6, 15, 23, 28; and

Tabley 8, 12, 13, 41. Bowles still was first; the game being, Bowles 900, Tabley 792. Bowles's breaks were 10, two 8's, 9, and 30; Tabley 10, 26, 11, 15, 12, 11. As the game drew to a conclusion, the offers to bet 5 to 1 on Bowles were numerous, but it was only accepted in one instance; and he scored the game, having made the following breaks: 5, 4, 46, 3, 13, 12. Tabley, at the finish of the game, had scored 915; having scored 14, 2, 35, 10, 17, 17. At the conclusion both were loudly cheered. The second half of the game was played in precisely the same time as the previous, viz. two hours and five minutes.

ROBERTS *v.* AN AMATEUR.

(From the *Sporting Life*, May 1, 1861.)

SAVILLE HOUSE was filled with a large number of the lovers of the scientific game of billiards, amongst whom we recognised several of the upper ten thousand, as well as most of the influential book-makers of the metropolis, which

class mustered in great force. The attraction was found in the fact of the renowned Roberts (the champion) having made a match for 100*l.*, to give an amateur, well known in sporting circles, 700 points out of 1000; and from the well-known ability of the amateur, Roberts was supposed to be forced to pull out his game to prove victorious, and the result was a proof that the supposition was perfectly correct. The time to commence play was fixed for eight P.M., but long before that hour nearly every seat in the large hall was occupied. As the time drew near there were several attempts at speculation, without, however, any response, nobody being bold enough to bet against Roberts. The play commenced a few minutes past eight by the amateur giving a miss into baulk. Roberts scored a cannon, and did not leave off until he had scored 29, including 4 spot strokes. After which, Roberts, when the amateur had run a *coup*, knocked both the red and his own ball off the table, after cautioning the gentlemen at that end of the table. The game from the commencement, it was apparent to all uninterested lookers-on, would eventually be won

by Roberts, as he made the following long scores at different breaks:—viz. 96 off, including 12 spot red hazards; 58, including 4 spot hazards; and 195, including 53 spot hazards. After which he made 28, 30, 28, 24, 18, and then a fine break of 200, during which he made 65 red hazards, 64 of which were from the spot! Nearly at the conclusion of the game he made another break of 70, including 19 spot hazards, and finally won the game, 1000 to the amateur's 907. The time in which the game was played (two hours eleven minutes) will prove the character of the play shown by the winner. The amateur played much better than was expected, making several good winning hazards and canons with great precision; but from the reputation of the great Roberts it was evident that the amateur was out of his latitude, for from the time that Roberts had fairly settled down, and played carefully for his favourite spot stroke, "All against Downs it fleet was scored."

ROBERTS *v.* C. HUGHES.

(From the *Sporting Life*, December 14, 1861.)

ON Tuesday evening last an exciting match was played at Roberts's well-known rooms, Saville House, Leicester-square, Roberts giving Charles Hughes 375 points in 1000. Roberts was in fine play, Hughes being evidently timid. Roberts commenced early with a 50 break, when 70*l.* to 40*l.* was offered on him, and it was thought he would score the first 100, but Hughes pulled out with a 24, and so far disappointed the champion's admirers. In the second 100, however, Roberts, in his own peculiar way, got up to the spot, and made a fine break of 160, landing 10 and 13 spot strokes in this break. Hughes now made a 24, 23, 20, 21, &c., and Roberts brought off a 41, and closed his break with a scientific double baulk; he then had a 30, 21, 23, 21, &c., and the game stood—Hughes 600, Roberts 493. Hughes then had various breaks of 19, 22, 18, &c., and Roberts again got on to the spot stroke, and made 13 hazards,

scoring 55. This break he again made a 25, 12, &c., and the game stood—Hughes 700, Roberts 622. Hughes then had some good breaks of 38, 39, 20, &c., and Roberts scored 33, 43,* 26, &c., and the game was called 780 all; then 801 all, and then 803 all. After which it was clear that Hughes had no chance; Roberts again ran up to spot, and made a break of 114. In a few minutes he again got home to spot, and finished the game with his favourite hazard, leaving his ball in position for many more, had they been required. Roberts thus won the match by 180, Hughes getting no higher than 820. The manner in which this celebrated player *gets* the spot stroke is truly wonderful. Other players fancy they can score a lot *when* they get it,

* It was in this break that an opportunity offered for Roberts to exhibit his extraordinary powers; his ball was between the spot and the centre of the table, and a narrow losing hazard was on off the red into the left-hand middle pocket, but his opponent's ball was in baulk; he, therefore, played a strong following ball, made the losing hazard, and drove the red against the white with sufficient force to bring both balls out of baulk. Of course he was loudly applauded, and Roberts immediately stated that it was the best stroke he had played during the game.

but with this *artiste* it seems like his own, he can *get it* when he likes. Can we then wonder that a fine player like Charles Hughes should be *off his game* when matched against the champion? The match was played in two hours twenty-five minutes.

C. HUGHES *v.* DUFTON.

(From the *Morning Advertiser*, April 16, 1863.)

A MATCH was played last evening at Saville House, Leicester-square, between Charles Hughes and William Dufton, the latter receiving 200 points in 1000. The stakes were 100*l.* a-side. Hughes won the break, and 5*l.* to 4*l.* was laid on him to money. Hughes took the lead, and was soon 35 to 216; but Dufton regained his points without Hughes scoring further. They continued even up to 60. When the first 100 had been played, Dufton had increased the points given by 14. They went on playing the next 100 with varied scores, till Morris announced Hughes

189, Dufton 407; 7*l.* to 4*l.* being laid on Dufton and freely taken. They proceeded, each scoring average breaks, till, at Hughes 260, Dufton 493, 20*l.* to 10*l.* was laid on the last named. At the third hundred, Hughes reduced the points given by making some good breaks, and brought the score to—Hughes 406, Dufton 537, and Hughes was backed 5*l.* even. Just then, however, Dufton got a break, and pulled up 30 and 33, while his adversary only scored 18, so that the fourth hundred showed Hughes 424, Dufton 600; he (Dufton) went on with another break of 633, and then 655, Hughes making his lot 434. Hughes then got up a fine 47, but his antagonist scored steadily. The game was shortly called, Hughes 506, Dufton 701. Hughes then made 40, but still Dufton played on, and justified the confidence of his friends by keeping still ahead all his points and more, and got up to his sixth hundred. After a long break of 60 (the break of the evening), Morris called the score—Hughes 607, Dufton 853. From that point, although Hughes pulled up once or twice, it was of no avail, as, when the game was called—Hughes 836,

Dufton 974—the last-named player got in and made the game off the balls, winning easily by 164 points.

DUFTON *v.* C. HUGHES.

(From the *Field*, May 16, 1863.)

A MATCH was played on Thursday, for 100*l.* a-side, between C. Hughes and W. Dufton, at the Dr. Johnson Tavern, Fleet-street. At starting, 50*l.* even was laid, but Hughes immediately ran the score up to 44, during which 5 to 4 was laid on him. Dufton then had a break of 38, and each party scored carefully, Dufton regaining his advantage, and increasing the numbers till he got to 213. Hughes then went to 122, Dufton succeeding with 32 more, and then with a fine break of 56, caused the marker to announce—Dufton 301, Hughes 127; and 5 to 4 offered on Dufton. Hughes then added 53 in two breaks, and then they alternately scored very rapidly until the numbers stood

—Dufton 348, and Hughes 196. The first-named player increased his advantage to 418; during which 6 to 4 and 2 to 1 was offered freely, when Hughes played well for a break of 57; and immediately afterwards, although not in continuous breaks, made 90 more; during which Dufton scored, and the marker called—Dufton 460, Hughes 350. Dufton then got 25 off the balls, and Hughes with equal determination made 37, and at 391, 10% even was offered on him; but he missed an easy hazard, and let Dufton in, who ran up to 502. Hughes got up to 403, and then having alternately scored in several strokes on each side, Hughes got a break and made his total 474, bringing himself within 50 points. Dufton, however, made a few, until at marker's calling—Dufton 539, Hughes 501—a rest took place, apparently to Dufton's advantage, as he added considerably to his score on resuming the play. Hughes, however, played with great brilliancy, and there was no material difference in their rate of scoring, until Dufton got a break of 43, and the numbers stood—Dufton 681, Hughes 600. A complete change than took place, Hughes,

with an intermittent stroke, off which his adversary did not score, made 70, Dufton got 6, and Hughes then caught and passed his opponent, making the numbers—Hughes 718, Dufton 697. In this break 30 to 20 was laid on Hughes, and although Dufton got a few, Hughes ran up to 767, when 5 to 2 was offered on him. Dufton's confidence did not desert him, and he got a neat break of 30, and another of 20, but in the interim Hughes got about 20, and the game stood—Hughes 792, Dufton 761. Hughes had a break of 45, scoring everything he played at; Dufton having added 9 to his total, Hughes made a break of 83, and 30*l.* to 5*l.* was offered on him. The scoring continued about equal in point of numbers to the end of the game, and Hughes ultimately won by 154 points.

ROBERTS *v.* J. SMITH.

(From the *Field*, May 23, 1863.)

SOME long time since, when it transpired that a new star had arisen in the billiard

hemisphere which would eclipse the radiancy of Jonathan, who had for years maintained his supremacy, numbers were incredulous as to the capacity of the coming man. But the victories that Roberts of Manchester (erst-while of Liverpool) achieved, and the bold challenge he threw down to the world, made him the champion billiard-player upon Kentfield's declining to compete for that title. Roberts has played several matches since he has removed to London and taken up his quarters at Saville House, Leicester-square, but in all of them he has had to give great, and in some extravagant, odds. An impetus having been given to the game, it is not extraordinary that when the announcement was made that Roberts was matched with a Liverpool man of known good play, a great anxiety should be evinced to witness the contest, which was fixed to take place on Monday evening last in the large room at Saville House, the champion giving Smith 400 points out of 1000.

Smith started with a miss, and Roberts made 23, which Smith followed by getting 29, leaving, however, a chance of which Roberts availed himself, and ran up to 56, and then

71. Smith got a cannon, but played hesitatingly, and his opponent added 17 to his lot. The Liverpudlian put on 7 and missed an easy hazard, leaving both balls, however, in baulk, and the champion scored off the top cushion amid loud cheers, and multiplied his total to 122, Smith's score standing at 38 on, or 438. The countryman getting a break made 26 off it, not without one intervening stroke, when Roberts gave a miss, and he (Roberts) playing carefully set his tell-tale at 150, Smith being 464. This, at the point given, looked like winning, and the champion was "inquired after" at even money. Smith got the cue and ran 39 off the balls, and then Roberts added 19, missing a remarkably easy stroke through a gentleman letting a stick fall against him when in the act of striking. Smith made a similar break numerically, during which the odds on Smith were offered at 3 to 1, which was taken freely, the score then being called by Morris, the marker—Roberts 169, Smith 522. The champion then got to 194 with nine red hazards, of which seven were "spot" strokes, and then they alternately scored by fine and steady play, the champion, though

confident, evidently feeling that he had caught a Tartar, as Smith had relatively scored the most when the game was called—Roberts 215, Smith 553. The champion then got a fine chance and improved it; he ran up to 244, and then (Smith giving a miss) made the aggregate 294, during which 6 to 4 on Smith was booked. The Liverpool man then got 8, but let Roberts in, who got 18, and then Smith got 15, Roberts meanwhile making two cannons, the totals being—Roberts 316, Smith 574. At this point of the game a splendid treat was afforded by Roberts making 106, in which were 13 spot strokes successively, and some following winning and screw hazards that astonished and delighted the spectators—the ease and precision of the play being perfectly marvellous. Nothing daunted, however, Smith played on when he had a chance, and so effectually as to get 598, or 176 ahead, and, looking at the points given, it became a “near thing.” Roberts then got 8, Smith made 13, then the champion put on 20, and Smith added 7, making in all 618, when Roberts again added 15, and his lot was scored 465. That made it look considerably in favour of Ro-

berts ; but Smith played a beautiful break of 33, which he commenced with a splendid side-stroke cannon that called forth much cheering, and then added 16 more after two red hazards by his antagonist, who played somewhat unfortunately. Roberts got 20, however, and then they made equal points till Smith got a break of 29, resulting from a fluke, and the score stood—Roberts 502, Smith 708. The champion added 33 and Smith followed with 41, then Roberts got 13, Smith 5, and the champion 25, making himself 573 to Smith 758. After Smith had obtained 18, Roberts went on in successive breaks to 635, when the Liverpool man played and added 24. The champion got another hold, and made 48 off the balls, when the score stood—Roberts 683, Smith 812, the difference being 129 only. They both went scoring on, but Roberts was unlucky, his opponent's ball running in several times, annihilating the chance of tall scoring. At 871 Smith made a break of 32 and then 19, during which Roberts got up to 741, and looked like winning in a break of 51. Smith made 18 more, gradually and surely walking up to a successful *finale*, when his opponent

added 32 to his quantum; but Smith, with 9 and ditto, caused Morris to notify the aggregate score—Roberts 824, Smith 958. Roberts got 43, while his opponent made 7 more, and then put on 21 to Smith's 12, the game being announced—Roberts 888, Smith 977. The conclusion then drew nigh; and though Roberts got 27 more, his antagonist "did the trick" in clipping style. Our space of necessity limits our remarks, and it must suffice to say that, grandly as Roberts can play, there are limits to the odds he is able to give. Smith played some very beautiful strokes, but he would, we think, show to better advantage in an even match, as at the earlier period of the game it struck us he was rather afraid of his antagonist—as who, at billiards, would not be?

ROBERTS *v.* DUFTON.

(From the *Field*, Jan. 16, 1864.)

ON Thursday evening John Roberts (champion) and W. Dufton played a match at Rus-

sell's Subscription-room, Oriel-street, Oxford, Roberts giving 400 points out of 1000.

The match we are about to record was of considerable interest, from the fact that it was in Oxford, in the same room, and, we believe, on the same table, where Roberts made his largest and most remarkable score; and it appeared probable that he would eclipse that performance, seeing that he got nearly up to 200 in a break. The match commenced by Roberts running off with a commanding lead, and he scored 200 while Dufton made 60, in various small contributions. Dufton, however, got on, and made his aggregate 504, at which time Roberts's total was 235, when a break occurred, but Roberts only got 17 therefrom. Dufton, however, failed to score from the opening, and a magnificent display of Roberts's power followed. He made 97 in a continuous break, there being 30 consecutive red hazards from the spot. He very speedily added still further to his score, and had got to 512 when Dufton was 590. Roberts then had another long break of 83, amid great cheering, his screw-back cannons and winning red hazards perfectly delighting the spectators. The mar-

ker announced the numbers to be: Roberts 607, Dufton 608; and, as far as the result of the match was concerned, certainly all interest in it ceased. Roberts went further ahead, and made his numbers up to 650; Dufton having increased his quantum to 634. Then came, on Roberts's part, another great treat, as he made 150 off the balls, in which occurred 36 consecutive spot hazards; and the room was literally shaken with the applause that the undergraduates bestowed on the champion for his masterly and unequalled skill. He played on and on with undiminished science, and with a delicate manipulation so fascinating to the billiard amateur, more particularly screwing-back into the middle pocket from the centre of the table twice in succession, and also making some most astonishing cannons. Although Dufton added a few, he could not stay the victorious career of his opponent, for upon the game being called, Roberts 942, Dufton 731, the champion got his hand in again, and completed the game with a break of 61, amid deafening cheering.

ROBERTS *v.* MOSS.

(From the *Sporting Life*, Jan. 20, 1864.)

ON Friday evening last, a match, which has caused a deal of excitement for some time past, took place at Mr. Jeffrey's billiard-room, Brown-street, Manchester, between John Roberts (the champion) and William Moss, of Manchester, for 100*l.* a-side, 1000 up, Moss receiving 500 points in a game. Roberts was in excellent health and spirits. He has long been looked upon as the greatest player in the world, which is not to be wondered at when he has held the proud position of champion at this scientific and fascinating game for upwards of fifteen years. His opponent, William Moss, who is much the champion's junior (being about twenty-four years of age), possesses great nerve and confidence, which is a great recommendation when pitted against such an adversary as he met this evening. The betting opened at 11*l.* to 10*l.* on Roberts, and at twenty minutes past six o'clock, after stringing the balls, Moss took his break, full particulars of which will be found in the score

below. The game lasted upwards of three hours and a-half, after allowing twenty-five minutes' interval for rest. The match resulted in favour of Moss, the score standing—Moss, 1002; Roberts, 808; Moss thus winning by 192 points. Mr. Roberts, in the early part of the game, did not seem to be in first-rate play, as he did not make any of those great breaks for which he is so justly celebrated; still, he performed some of those apparent impossibilities which never failed to bring down thunders of applause. After supper, Roberts made his greatest break of the evening—138 off the balls. His chief scores by winning hazards were 42 and 48. The following is the score, the stars denoting one miss received: Moss—500, 502, 514, 515*, 525, 553, 569, 575, 576, 584, 588, 589*, 601, 607, 608*, 609*, 626, 633, 657, 662*, 665*, 666*, 673, 691, 696, 700, 701*, 703, 714, 724*, 733, 745, 764*, 769, 771, 812, 829, 844, 850, 866*, 883, 889*, 901, 909, 927, 933*, 954, 955*, 977, 987, 1002. Roberts—3*, 7, 10*, 21, 24, 79, 104, 109, 114*, 115*, 129*, 158, 168, 170, 181*, 182, 207, 210, 212, 214, 225, 253, 254*, 255*, 258*,

263, 276, 279, 280*, 316, 340, 359, 380, 398, 424, 427*, 428*, 430, 433, 438, 458, 465, 469, 471, 477, 488, 492, 507, 508*, 518, 519*, 520, 532, 670, 673, 690, 692, 693*, 703, 751, 808.

ROBERTS *v.* BOWLES.

(From the *Field*, January 20, 1864.)

THE long-talked-of contest at billiards between John Roberts (the champion) and J. A. Bowles, of Brighton, came off on Monday evening at Saville House, Leicester-square, the stakes being 50*l.* a-side, 1000 up, Roberts giving the great odds of 300 points.

Roberts won the string, and after giving a miss ran on with great rapidity in breaks of 74, 53, 30, and other quantities, till the game stood, Roberts 253, Bowles 320, when, by the aid of a fluke, the last-named got 45 off the balls. They went on with varied success, Bowles pulling up a little, until at about the half of the game the total stood, Roberts 409, Bowles 500. They kept at about this distance till

441 to 542 was called, and then the champion made 33, and soon after 44, Bowles having in the interim made his total 564, at which period Roberts was 518. Then came the break of the evening, the champion making 90 off the balls; and great was the excitement caused thereby, his red hazards, cannons, and wonderful judgment in placing the ball for the next stroke, being the admiration of all present. This brought the game 608 to 564; and Bowles tried in vain to mend his position to any extent, for Roberts was 30 ahead when Bowles passed the sixth hundred. Then a "change came o'er the spirit of the dream," and Bowles went on and on, scoring 187, while his opponent could only get 21, and making the total, Roberts 650, Bowles 784; the champion, from having been 44 ahead, dropping to 134 in the rear. A mistake of 10 in Bowles's favour occurred during this time, but, as it was not corrected, we let the matter drop; nevertheless, the result shows the vast importance of the most scrupulous accuracy. Roberts, at this juncture, drew up and got within 90; but Bowles rattled off again, a certain degree of nervousness which he manifested at

the beginning of the game having entirely vanished. Still Roberts kept on, the score being 744 to 844, and at about this difference they continued till 771 to 884 was the total, when the champion got a break of 59, and even money was offered on his winning. Intermittent scores by both sent the record up to Bowles 920, Roberts 845, who, starting with a 5, only gave the Brighton man one chance till 937 was reached. (30*l.* to 20*l.* on Roberts.) Bowles, however, got a break, and made 22, and shortly after reached 959, by which period Roberts had got to 946, and then with a break to 971. Here it seemed all over; but the red kissed the white and knocked them both into baulk, and Bowles got a few, making in all 965, and gave a miss. Roberts played for a cannon all round the table, but was again disappointed by the balls kissing, which allowed Bowles to go in, the actual score being, at the conclusion of the game, Bowles (with 300 point given) 990, Roberts 981.

HERST v. DUFTON.

(From the *Sporting Life*, February 13, 1864.)

A MATCH for 50*l.* a-side, between J. Herst, of Peterborough, and W. Dufton, was played at the Great Northern Rooms, Peterborough, on Wednesday night last, and resulted in the victory of Herst. Play was commenced soon after half-past seven o'clock, Herst opening pluckily with a break of 45. Notwithstanding this promising beginning, Dufton was made the favourite at starting, and 2 to 1 was freely offered upon him. Play proceeded steadily, with about equal success, until 300 had been reached, and then Herst gradually ran ahead, and secured a lead which he never afterwards lost. Not more than 45 were made by either player at a break, for which fact, perhaps, the size of the balls, which were larger than those usually played with, is partly accountable; but the scoring went on with fair success, and Dufton and his friends remained sanguine as to the result of the game, though fortune seemed to set in against them. Dufton played some magnificent cannons, but the breaks fell

awkwardly, and often a stroke which was only missed by the shade of a hair got him into awkward trouble. As the game went on, Herst still maintained his lead of 100, and even increased upon it. Dufton played his uphill game with admirable coolness and pluck, and, when the game stood about 550 to 670, made one or two breaks which might have turned the fortunes of the game had such been practicable. When the winning-stroke was played, Dufton was 106 points behind.

ROBERTS v. GREEN.

(From the *Sporting Life*, February 13, 1864.)

ON Tuesday night John Roberts and W. Green, of the Queen's Hotel, Liverpool, played a match at Manchester for 200*l.*, Roberts giving 375 points in 1000. Green, who is about twenty-four years of age, was a player of great pretensions, which he fully proved from his play during the game, success being almost certain at one part. When, however, Roberts warmed to his work, he showed some of his wonderful

strokes, his first great break being 108 off the balls, out of which there were thirty-four successive winning hazards. His next was 124 off the balls; and afterwards he made 125 off, with twenty-four successive winning hazards. Green's greatest break was 59. At the conclusion of the game (which lasted three hours), at thirty-five minutes past ten, Roberts proved the winner by 173 points, the final score standing—Roberts 1001, Green 828.

ROBERTS *v.* C. HUGHES.

(From the *Sporting Life*, March 9, 1864.)

ON Saturday night Roberts played C. Hughes a match of 1000 up for 50*l.*, and gave him 350 points. The game commenced just after eight o'clock. Throughout our report we shall quote Hughes's score first. Hughes gave a miss to start with, Roberts a ditto, and Hughes a second. Roberts at once showed that he had lost none of his brilliant execution by playing a splendid break of 85, which was

loudly applauded. Hughes then made the game 359 to 92. The champion executed the spot stroke seventeen, then five times, and twice all in the next break, and 105, the largest contribution of the evening, was the result, the score standing 359 to 205. (Applause.) Hughes advanced his tally to 366 to the champion's 227, the pace of the latter being awful. Hughes now manipulated a careful 39, including a splendid "jenny," and then a double hazard, all the balls being off the table. He next gave a miss in baulk. 405 to 230 was now the score. The champion missed a difficult cannon, leaving Hughes a score; but his adversary's ball being holed, he had to play for baulk again. (413 to 240.) 40 were now put on by Roberts, who had a useful fluke, which brought the game to 414 to 280. Hughes next made a splendid cushion cannon, which earned him a round of applause, advancing the tell-tale to 423 to 280. The champion's next innings began with ten spot strokes; then he did a "fancy stroke"—a marvellous screw-back cannon—and exhibited some splendid play, concluding with a double event, the break for a second time overtopping

a "century." 423 to 382 was now called by the marker, and Hughes only making 2, the champion again went in and put on 21, including a pearl of a cannon off the cushion (425 to 463), when he let Hughes in; but luck seemed against him, for again did his adversary's ball take refuge in the pocket, leaving him no alternative but a baulk, which was cleverly made. An idea may be formed of the "pace," when we state that the champion scored 400 points in less than three-quarters of an hour! Hughes next time slightly improved his position, the telegraph denoting 452 to 403. Roberts put on another 48, getting within one of his opponent. He missed positively nothing. Hughes now led by five points, 461 and 455 being their respective totals. The champion's play was enough to appal the stoutest adversary; and Hughes, generally so imperturbable, evidently felt it, notwithstanding in his next essay he played a highly meritorious 47, again heading his opponent (508 to 465). Having been the first to pass the "halfway house," he was loudly applauded. His career was stopped, as usual, by his adversary's ball finding its

way to the pocket, for which it appeared to possess a strong affinity. It was now Roberts's turn to go ahead; but he did not quite reach Hughes this time, leaving off with five spot strokes, the game being announced as 512 to 497. At this point Roberts had a real "poser," which did *not* come off; but Hughes failing to take advantage, he got another opening (512 all was now called), and once more "operated" on the red six times, relinquishing when the game was quoted 512 to 544, the break amounting to 57. Hughes missed his stroke, and Roberts made a superlative hazard, walking "through" his adversary's ball (applause), and making this time 33, the announcement being 512 to 587. Once more did Hughes "lose" the white ball, and play for the stereotyped baulk. 526 to 587 was the game. The champion now passed the sixth "century" (528 to 605). Hughes put on a dozen; the champion missed by a hair's-breadth a difficult cannon, and Hughes, improving the occasion, went on and made 20 off the balls, and the game was 560 to 605. Roberts divided his favours, making the spot six times from one side of the table and four

from the other in succession, 45 being the contribution, and the totals 570 and 669. Hughes played his next break of 36 with great care, frequent applause rewarding his efforts in this up-hill game. 603 to 669 was now the call. Roberts put on 5. A fluke might materially have served Hughes, had not the white once more "gone to earth." (610 to 677.) At this point Hughes missed an easy cannon, and let his adversary in, who again punished the balls severely. This, though not numerically the largest, was decidedly the finest-manipulated break of the evening, 90 being the total, including 19 spot strokes, and 78 being made off the red ball, which alone was in play. The score stood 610 to 764. (Applause.) Hughes got on to 623, and then "left them" for Roberts, who pulled his game on to 819 by a fine contribution of 55, passing the eighth hundred, which he completed in one hour forty-five minutes! Hughes next started with seven spots, and added 34 to his score. 657 to 819, 669 to 823 were called, when mutual missing occurred, and the champion again contributed 28, including one of the finest screw-back cannons ever seen—(great

applause)—three “five strokes” in succession, and a miraculous cannon the whole length of the table. (More applause.) Hughes made the red four times, and the fifth placed it at the mouth of the pocket for his adversary, who advanced the score to 689 to 881. When Hughes again left off, it was 707 to 881. The champion next “pulled up” at 897. Hughes was again warmly applauded for his fine play. (718 to 897.) Roberts next went on to 927, being a break of 30; Hughes made 7 only. Another break enabled the champion to reach 730 to 948, this time leaving the red for Hughes, who made 21, and giving a chance, which Roberts missed. (751 to 849.) Roberts went on 755 to 964 by the aid of a useful fluke, after which Hughes had but one stroke, making a brace, and the champion finished the game, adding the required number of points and finishing with eight spot strokes in succession, and looking as if he could have gone on *ad infinitum*. The final numbers were: Hughes 757, Roberts 1001; the champion winning by 243 points, having scored 1000 in two hours twenty-three minutes—an extraordinary performance truly.

ROBERTS v. DUFTON.

(From the *Sporting Gazette*, May 20, 1864.)

THE champion billiard-player of the world, John Roberts, played his farewell match in England, prior to his departure for Australia, at St. James's Hall, on Friday evening, the 20th inst., in the presence of nearly 800 gentlemen, who witnessed with unmixed delight the beautiful play of the great master of the cue. Everything had been done to give *éclat* to the occasion; Messrs. Cox and Yeman, of Brompton-road, fitted up a table expressly, and Roberts himself said it was one of the best he ever played upon. Mr. Donald, the enterprising and able lessee of St. James's Hall, had ample accommodation erected, new gas-fittings were supplied, and every convenience studied. We may just preface our account of the match by saying that Roberts never played better; as the report we furnish, though of necessity brief, will amply testify. At ten minutes past eight o'clock, Dufton—with 350 start—commenced the game by giving a miss; Roberts making 22, and then failing at

the top pocket with a very difficult screw the length of the table. Dufton could not make a cannon he played for with no end of side-stroke, and letting Roberts in he cannoned splendidly across the table; but, after a hazard, missed a cannon all up the table by a hair's-breadth only. His opponent, however, only benefited 4, when Roberts again held the cue, and ran the score up to 43. Dufton then got a cannon, but could not make the hazard that was left; and again "the great gun" scored, adding 33; but trying a very long run, through the red ball, failed. Though Dufton then had the play, he was unlucky and only made 2; the champion improving his opportunity by a splendid break of 45. "The long 'un" then caused 17 to be put to his credit, an example which Roberts followed to the tune of 26, and gained the baulk. Dufton then cannoned off the top cushion, amid great applause, and 14 resulted; the marking-board showing the gross totals to be: Roberts 147, Dufton 443. The last-named missed a screw hazard, which resulted in a gain of 33 to Roberts. Both scored alternately a few, but each got off unfortunately as to position; Roberts trying

to get the exact "location" for the spot stroke, but being unable to do so, although he made four or five attempts. After the score had been called—Roberts 203, Dufton 471—the champion totalled his lot to 230, and then 251. Dufton immediately scoring 7, and still further towards the desired number by 20, with fine play. Some more mutual scoring ensued; Roberts 275, Dufton 527, being announced. A great change in the condition of things then took place, Roberts adding 29 and 8, as a preliminary canter, as it were, before "the break of the evening," and never did Roberts illustrate more scientifically the beauty of the game. Starting at 302, he made 17 before getting the spot-stroke position; and having attained it, he scored 50 red hazards consecutively. We need hardly say how loudly his beautiful executive precision was applauded, for whether in screwing-back, playing on to the other side of the table off the top cushion, or with almost lightning rapidity holding the ball and making his own twirl for nearly a minute, on and on he went, till the fiftieth spot-stroke having been made, the next one hung at the cushion, and

when the tumultuous cheering had subsided, during which Roberts repeatedly bowed his thanks, the marker called the score: Roberts 469, Dufton 527; the champion having made 167 off the break. After his antagonist had played for, but failed to make, a hazard, Roberts made 32 more, and 13 to follow. Dufton obtained a couple in the interim, and when his turn came added 14 more. It availed not, however, for the champion seemed fully determined to leave his last public game in England a fitting record of his prowess, and made 75 and 23, leaving the balls so that Dufton could not score. Roberts missed one, and gave Dufton the best break he had during the evening, and off which he scored 44, amid considerable applause; the total score being, Roberts 616, Dufton 583. The champion scored still further, making 194; while Dufton put on 19, and up to the end of the game scoring much more rapidly than his opponent. Roberts won by 291 points, amid much cheering. One of Roberts's aristocratic friends then stepped forward to the table, and said, "Gentlemen, our friend John Roberts, who has this

evening given us such a treat as no one else at billiards is capable of doing, is about to seek fresh fields and pastures new for the exercise of his talent in his vocation, and I am sure that you will give him three hearty cheers that shall ring in his ears for many a day, and prove that his friends wish him, as I am sure they do, health, happiness, and prosperity in the lands to which he is going." This neat speech was much cheered, and Roberts replied, "Gentlemen, I assure you I am extremely obliged to you for your kind wishes." Three cheers were then given for the champion, and so the proceedings of the evening terminated.

DUFTON v. E. GREEN.

(From the *Sporting Life*, February 1, 1865.)

By far the most important and exciting match at billiards played in the metropolis for several years past took place on Monday evening last, in the minor hall, St. James's. The history of the match was in this wise. About

a month ago, a few sporting men were desirous of backing Mr. Edward Green, the well-known turf speculator, to play any man in England, bar Roberts and Bowles, for 1000*l.*, upon condition that the match should be private. A proposal to back Charles Hughes for 500*l.* was declined, whereupon Mr. Chaddock offered to find another opponent, provided Mr. Green's friends would lay 600*l.* to 400*l.* This was agreed to, and W. Dufton was named. Mr. Herring, on behalf of the amateur, made the match; the articles providing it should be played within a month, or a forfeit of 100*l.* be imposed, the precise time and place, as well as the choice of the table, being left to the players themselves, who, in consequence of the limited space at the Victoria Club, selected St. James's Hall as the *venue*.

So soon as it was known that the match had been made, Mr. Green became the favourite, which position he maintained until the night of meeting; and large sums were invested at Tattersall's and at the Victoria Club, the current odds being 6 to 4.

The needful having been duly posted in crisp Bank of England notes, play commenced at

twenty minutes past seven, and in a few breaks Dufton obtained so decided a lead, that in less than half an hour he became the favourite. The progress of the game during the first 500 was slow, and although the amateur fought hard, and played several breaks, more especially a very fine one of 56, with admirable judgment, Dufton forged gradually ahead, his superb losing hazards being again conspicuous. When Mr. Green was nearly a "century" behind, he began to mend his pace somewhat, the call of the marker announcing his game as 557 to Dufton's 590, when even money was laid. During the sixth hundred the play was awfully slow, and the amateur not only got, but made the most of the breaks, gradually creeping up to his opponent, until 659 to 685 was announced, when 15*l.* to 10*l.* was offered. Here Dufton got literally nothing to play for, except awkward baulks, and his patience was sorely tried. He stuck for a long time at 688, and Mr. Green got within two of him by some very careful play, when the latter offered to back himself for a "pony," and 5 to 4 was taken. They "sparred" for some time, Dufton having three, and Mr. Green two profitless

innings. At length the former "broke the ice," and went to 706, when Mr. G. "came again" to within two points of him. 25 to 20 was now offered, but no response. Dufton put on 19, but missed a long "jenny," stopping at 725, his opponent again getting disagreeably close (718). Now, however, came the turning-point of the game, Dufton advancing his score to 762 by a fine break of 37, including nine spot strokes. 50 to 40 was now laid on the professional, who "improved the occasion," going on to 822 by another good break, while Mr. Green "hung fire" at 737. Dufton manœuvred successfully for the spot stroke, and now played the break of the evening (75) in splendid style, pocketing the red with increased strength (it having swerved and "sold" him on the previous occasion) thirteen times in succession, and leaving off at 897. Great cheering followed this fine performance. 300 to 100 was now freely offered on Dufton, whose victory was never for one moment in doubt after this. Mr. Green had half-a-dozen innings for 20 points, while Dufton in four went on to 970, including one of 31, aided by a "fluke." 100/.

to 15*l.* was now laid, and shortly after 50*l.* to 5*l.*, Dufton being 207 ahead. Mr. Green struggled on very gamely, notwithstanding his "serious difficulties," improving vastly in his last four breaks. He went from 780 to 802, and then to 852, when 50 to 4 was offered, and 15 to 1 taken. Dufton got to 993, and Mr. Green put on 21 more, at which point 100 to 4, and subsequently 100 to 2 was offered; 30 to 1 was taken once, and 100 to 3 "wanted." Dufton did not score next innings, but his antagonist advanced to 893, which was his final effort, as Dufton's score was next called 1001, landing him the winner of this great game by 107 points, amidst the tumultuous cheering of all present, Dufton's backers winning a considerable sum. The game was correctly marked, and distinctly and audibly called by young Herst, and the entire arrangements made by Mr. Donald for the accommodation of the large company present were most satisfactory.

DUFTON v. SMITH.

(From the *Sportsman*, Dec. 5, 1865.)

ON Dec. 4th the first half of the match of 2000 up, for 100*l.* a-side, was played between W. Dufton of London and John Smith of Liverpool, at St. James's Hall. Dufton won the "string," and played a miss into baulk, his opponent following suit under the left-hand cushion. Several strokes each made the game, Dufton 37, Smith 19; and 100*l.* to 50*l.* was offered on Dufton, who scored up to 47, having the spot-stroke left. Smith then improved his score to 33, after which several misses were given, but the only result gained was a "pot" to Smith, who followed with a miss in baulk; after which they again "fiddled" a little, till Smith got hold of a short break, which made the game stand, Dufton 63, Smith 45, and presently the latter reached 60 against Dufton's 67. Bets were now taken at 40*l.* to 20*l.* about Smith, who, after an exchange of breaks, passed his adversary, and left the score at 83, Dufton 76. Dufton shortly played a rattling break of 16,

and, after another stroke or two, his game was called at 101, Smith 99; then at 112, Smith 99. The Liverpolitian now "got in," and a splendid following cannon was enthusiastically cheered; after which he made 19 off the balls, but broke down at the spot-stroke. Dufton did not add to his number, and Smith again played a careful break up to 142—24 off the balls. At 132 Dufton again "came," and, getting the balls near the spot, improved his game to 147, but, breaking down, Smith went away for a nice break of 27, the marker calling Smith 192, Dufton 147. Offers of 70*l.* to 40*l.* now went a-begging, and Smith played a lot of fine strokes, till, whilst the balls were still rolling, he was backed at evens for the best part of 100*l.* Before the break ended he had run up to 241—37 off the balls. Dufton again succeeded in adding 20, amidst many offers to back him for an even "pony." Another 19 to Smith, in which were included some splendid cushion cannons, left the score, Smith 260, Dufton 177. A little "nursery" round the spot was played by Dufton in really scientific style, and many a "bravo" resounded

through the room as the marker called him 223. At the next shot, a spot hazard, he broke down, leaving the game, Dufton 226, Smith 260. Several small breaks followed, but nothing particular occurred till the marker called, Smith 322, Dufton 273. Dufton here backed himself, laying two "ponies" to one, but failed to make over a dozen off the break left. After a good deal of small play, Smith again put a clever 17 to his account, and finished the break by a fine double baulk, which was loudly applauded; but still a bet at evens was very quickly picked up by an admirer of Dufton. The game shortly showed, Smith 364, Dufton 297, when the former again scored a clipping 31, in which there were four long losing hazards from baulk up into the left-hand corner pocket, the red being a foot below the middle and about four inches from the cushion. These shots elicited thunders of applause, and when the break was over, the figures stood, Smith 395, Dufton 297. Nothing extraordinary was now done on either side till the game reached, Smith 448, Dufton 341, when 25*l.* to 20*l.* was offered on Smith, who ran up his game by a well-

played 18 to 466, and then made a fine double baulk. He also passed first out of the fourth "century," and his game was called at 508, Dufton 356. An interval here occurred, and then a lot of small numbers were added, till Dufton really got hold of the balls in good earnest, and scored several rattling losing hazards into the top pocket, followed by a clever "jenny," which ran his figures up 28 points, the game being called, Smith 535, Dufton 415. Smith's next break was a "tall 'un" also of 28, and he was again and again applauded. Alternate play, during which Dufton once more showed several splendid cushion and double-cushion cannons, bringing up the score to Smith 566, Dufton 477. Before the break of 34 was concluded, he was backed for a level "pony," and during the following break (a 35), 25*l.* to 20*l.* was laid on him. Presently he so far improved his game as to make the score 530 against Smith's 571, and offers of 30*l.* to 20*l.* on him met with no takers. Smith almost immediately, when in the midst of the break of the evening (64), was again backed at evens, and at the conclusion of his really splendid run,

thunders of applause showed the appreciation of the lookers-on. The marking-board now stood, Smith 635, Dufton 553. Again Dufton had to content himself with being a looker-on, for Smith managed so well as to score a 30 break, and almost directly afterwards he again played, and another 23 off the balls went to his account, amid offers to back him at 20*l.* to 10*l.*, the game being Smith 711, Dufton 584. Dufton now had a chance, and though the balls did not break over favourably, he scored a well-played 41, offers to take 2 to 1 being numerous. Smith played, but failing to score, Dufton again struck some rattling cannons, and did not let go his cue till he had added 50, the game standing Smith 739, and Dufton 680, and the betting being 30*l.* to 20*l.* on Dufton, taken. Smith here played a fine break of 18 off the red ball only, and concluded with one of his well-made double baulks. A lot of small, resultless play followed, till Dufton scored a 26, which left the game, Smith 795, Dufton 718. After scoring another 30 or 40 points each, Dufton again made a 19, and the marker called Smith 825, Dufton 782; offers to name the winner

at 30*l.* to 20*l.* finding no takers. In the ninth hundred, and when the game had reached Smith 876, Dufton 838, the latter player once more made 19, in which were three or four "tall" cannons. Here he was backed at evens, but when his score was called, 864 against Smith's 876, 20*l.* to 10*l.* was laid on him. From this time, however, his opponent fairly ran away with the game, making a 20, a 42, and a 15, Dufton having not a single chance to score beyond a difficult loser or two. When Smith 964, Dufton 865, was called, 25*l.* to 5*l.* was booked about the game. Small breaks ran up the score to Smith 987, Dufton 877, when the latter once more got the balls and scored a 20. Smith during this time had the game all his own way, and scored to 994, 997, 999, and game, whilst Dufton made 899, 904, 905, and 919.

ROBERTS AND DUFTON *v.* HUGHES AND BENNETT.

(From the *Sportsman*, October 20, 1866.)

AT St. James's Hall, on October 18, before a numerous company, including most of our

leading turfites, this match of 1000*up, alternate strokes, for 200*l.*, came off, Roberts (the champion) and Dufton giving 200 points. The game opened with a miss in baulk, struck by the champion. Hughes followed suit under the side-cushion, and then Dufton, after laying 60*l.* to 40*l.*, led off with a cannon, succeeded by a red loser, but missed an awkward spot hazard, which was left. Bennett came next with a "tall" five stroke, and the game was called at H. and B. 206, R. and D. 6. Roberts failed to make a cannon which he went round the cushions for; but Hughes, manœuvring the balls over the middle, then into the right-hand baulk corner, made a 19 break, which he closed with a "judicious" under the cushion in baulk, amidst offers to take 30*l.* to 20*l.* Dufton did not score, and Bennett put on a couple, struck another five-shot, and then played for safety. Roberts, however, although "tight" under a cushion, made a long cannon, which not only gained for him loud applause, but left the balls in good play. After he had scored 10, offers were made to lay 50*l.* to 40*l.*, and with 20 on 30*l.* to 20*l.* was an untouched bait. Eventually the break closed for 68, in-

cluding seven successive cannons and nine spot-hazards, but in attempting the tenth he broke down. Game, H. and B. 232, R. and D. 75. Next came Hughes with a 25, in which were six "spots;" but he, like Roberts, "tumbled" when trying another. Dufton failed to add to the figures, and Bennett, after "potting" the white, made a double baulk. Several misses were now given, till Roberts opened the game by running round for a cannon, which, however, he did not "land," and Hughes followed with a 24 break, in which he scored the first "fluke" into a middle pocket. Game, H. and B. 285, R. and D. 80. Again Dufton missed being credited with a score, and again Bennett ran his ball under a cushion so safely that the marker was not troubled by the champion. Hughes, however, put on 12, in which was a six shot; and as Dufton left the balls in good play, Bennett's nice touches, including a very fine "following" cannon and an eight stroke, raised the score to H. and B. 335, and R. and D. 81, Bennett having made a 38. Roberts, by a magnificent long "loser," set the balls "a-rolling" again, and, amidst loud applause, dodged round the

table for a "run" of 43; offers, however, being made at the close to take 60% to 40%. Hughes now had a capital chance, which he availed himself of, and added 30, giving a miss at the conclusion. Dufton, by a rattling side stroke, made a cannon, a loser, and a red "double;" then Bennett tried his hand without success. Roberts with an eight made the game, H. and B. 365, R. and D. 141; but here Hughes was let in again for 19, Dufton succeeding him with 11. Bennett went for a cannon, but potted the white, and in the next stroke fluked the red, the "run" closing for 11. So play progressed, till at H. and B. 413, R. and D. 172, Hughes broke for 36, giving a miss in baulk when he saw no chance of figuring again. Dufton followed suit, as also did Bennett; but Roberts this time brought the good thing off by doing a "stab" shot from under the cushion, his break not terminating till he had scored 29. Then Hughes made 15, and Dufton 19, and as Bennett got nothing, Roberts opened with a "loser," running the break up to 17; game, H. and B. 465, R. and D. 241. Alternate strokes gave Bennett, who was playing with great judgment, an opportunity which

he took to the "tune" of 18, Roberts handling the cue next for 17, and Hughes for 27; Roberts, when the score stood H. and B. 513, R. and D. 264, offering to take 10*l.* to 5*l.* Bennett shortly got 18 and Dufton 13, finishing up with a neat double baulk. At H. and B. 548, R. and D. 292, Roberts, after dropping the red ball into a top pocket, put on the "drag" for a queer cannon, and then, amidst offers to take 25*l.* to 20*l.*, and subsequently to **back** the "old 'uns for a pony," augmented the score by a 37, a double baulk ending the break. Hughes did not score, neither did Dufton, and, Bennett missing by design, Roberts also failed, letting in Hughes for a 34, during which he was frequently applauded for his brilliant play and easy style. Shortly Roberts added 23, obtained near the spot, and then breaking down at a straight cannon from baulk, let in Hughes, who got away for a grand break of 71. At one time, when the white was in baulk, Hughes made a hard losing hazard off the red, which left it near the top cushion, but by great precision he "landed" a very fine and loudly-applauded cannon, which enabled him to score on, and

eventually play safety. Full game, H. and B. 661, R. and D. 356. Bennett was next to figure with 10, then 20, Roberts following with 14. At H. and B. 707, R. and D. 373, Roberts roused himself, and a cannon leaving the white ball close, he played eleven winners and losers off the red, and then got up to the spot. There he ran "raspberry" in nineteen times, made a sharp losing hazard, put the red in the middle, and landed at the spot again, where nine more reds brought the finest break of the game to a close for 125, the last stroke played failing to drop the ball in, though it touched both "elbows." Game, H. and B. 707, R. and D. 498. After 3 had been added by Bennett and 5 by the other pair, an adjournment was made from twenty-one minutes past ten to fourteen minutes to eleven, when Bennett resumed his break, which closed for 10. He, however, got to work again almost immediately, and ran up 25, then gave a miss. Dufton, who up to this time had played in very poor form, contributed 22, and the game progressed till Roberts with six spot hazards and other strokes increased their figures by 34, Bennett going in for 15, Hughes 16.

Game, H. and B. 824, R. and D. 600. Another very smartly played all round 30 to Bennett's credit, and a 29 and then a 21 to Hughes lifted their figures into the last "century," the "old 'uns" standing at 605. Roberts shortly ran a "coo," and, strange to say, Dufton imitated the example set at his next stroke, when playing round for a cannon. The champion in the midst of a 23 break again got up to the spot, but after scoring four hazards broke down, and Hughes having the red over the pocket ran up 24, and then made a baulk. Neither Dufton, Bennett, nor Roberts scored, and Hughes continuing to play as finely as can be imagined got away for 23 more, ending his "turn" by giving a miss.

Game, H. and B. 969, R. and D. 642. Sixteen more to Hughes, 14 to Dufton, and 2 and then 13 to Bennett, and it was all over, the young ones winning by 344 points, Roberts and Dufton getting 656 only. Time, eleven minutes to twelve. For the information of the curious we may state that Hughes made 497, Roberts 488, Bennett 281, and Dufton 136. The breaks of a score and upwards were—Hughes 71, 36, 34, 30, 29, 27, 25, 24

(twice), 23, and 21; Roberts 125, 68, 43, 37, 34, 29, 23 (twice); Bennett 38, 30, 25, 20; Dufton 22.

HERST *v.* BENNETT.

(From the *Sportsman*, December 20, 1866.)

ON Dec. 19, the match between Johnny Herst of Liverpool, and Joseph Bennett of London, for 100*l.* a-side, came off at the Philharmonic, Islington. 10*l.* to 8*l.* was several times laid on Herst previously to the start. Nothing of importance occurred until the Londoner reached 106, Herst 26. Then Bennett, amidst offers to lay 15*l.* to 10*l.* on him, went away for 23, during the making of which he had a baulk to play at, and scored a loser off the red. Shortly Herst was 27 (B. 138), and looked like making a stand, but he pocketed his opponent's ball accidentally, and only 10 went to his account. Then, at 140, Bennett had the balls at the top of the table—Herst having missed a spot-hazard—and figured away for 32, the white again unluckily run-

ning in at the close. Then they scored on till Bennett was 193, Herst 68; when the former, who had been playing a sound, careful game, landed himself in the third hundred by a fine 35 break, during which 20*l.* to 10*l.* was laid on him. He broke down by overdoing a soft screw cannon, and let in Herst for 22; game, Bennett 228, Herst 90. At 243, the Londoner, beginning with a side cannon, ran up 39 more, and the full game was shortly called at Bennett 295, Herst 121. The latter, who had the break, was here supported for a "fiver," a partisan of Bennett's betting 10*l.* to 5*l.*, and then Johnny put together 33, missing an easy cannon at the close. His opponent now got into the fourth century (304), and Herst, at 154, again ran up 48 in pretty style, his sharp losers being frequently applauded. During the break 7*l.* to 4*l.* was taken, and when Herst was 186 an "even tenner" was invested. He did not, however, get away, the balls breaking for him wretchedly, until his score stood 218, Bennett 336. Then he had a nursery of 16 within the baulk and over the "middles." Bennett finding he also would be 'as well on the move

rattled up a 22, and then again went for a little generalship, at which, in our opinion, he showed himself cleverer than his opponent, and frequently scored off what was left. At 369 (H. 258) Bennett made a dozen, and followed shortly with 24, in which he landed another lucky shot. These runs he followed with others of 28 and 36, seldom missing anything, and giving but few chances, till his game became 502 to Herst 304. Then Herst got in for 21 and 19, but was unfortunate, especially when in a break at 377 he missed the spot-stroke off which he had made five hazards, and looked like being "well in." Here Bennett made 35 more, and at 586 (Herst 410) went in for a really fine break of 51, during the making of which loud applause frequently greeted his efforts. In the seventh hundred (20*l.* to 5*l.* on Bennett laid) he put on 20 more, then 45; and, after Herst had failed to score, succeeded with a grand run of 72, made all round the table, his highest break. The game was now, Bennett 793 to Herst 452; and, as from the interval which occurred at nineteen minutes to eleven (B. 806, H. 538), nothing occurred to give the

backers of Herst much hope, we shall simply show the respective scores of the players towards the close of the game. Just before they retired for thirty-two minutes, Herst also put together 72, 51 of which were made off the red ball. He started the break at 466, and ended it at 538, a fluke being scored to him at 527.

Bennett . 874 917 977 989 989 994

Herst . . 576 594 614 646 750 761

The breaks made by Bennett in the last 170 were 43, 43, and 37. Herst at 646 got up to the spot, and after putting in the red a dozen times or so, "Score to 750, Johnny," said his principal backer, and he just did! 33 spot hazards were made, and then a red loser and cannon; then Herst broke down, amidst the prolonged applause of the company. He had got the spot stroke half-a-dozen times during the game, but up to this period never had succeeded in making a run off it worthy of record. Eventually Bennett ended the game by a "pot" at Herst 761, and therefore won by 239.

ROBERTS v. C. HUGHES.

(From the *Sportsman*, Dec. 22, 1866.)

SOME remarkable play took place in one of the heats of Dufton's handicap at the Philharmonic Hall, Islington. The competitors were John Roberts the champion, who owed 60, and Charles Hughes, who played from scratch, in a heat of 200 up, Roberts having to score 260 whilst his opponent got 200. Betting was at 7 to 4 on the champion. Hughes gave three successive misses in baulk, and Roberts two under the side. Then the latter made a "loser" off the spot, followed with another into the middle, and, leaving the balls in baulk, gave a miss. Hughes scored a red losing-hazard and a cannon, but missed the succeeding one. Betting 6 to 4 on Roberts, who had the break. He did not count, however, and Hughes made a couple, then failed, and left the balls near the spot; game, Hughes 9, Roberts owe 50. The latter started with a brace of cannons; then a red, followed by a white loser; next came a five shot, and the red was left on the spot, the white in the

middle of the table, and the striker behind the spot. He put in "raspberry," then from 23 he rubbed off those owing, and added 77, the spot-stroke being made thirty-eight times, and the whole break numbering 128. At the ninth shot there were offers of "two ponies to one on the striker;" and here Hughes backed himself, taking 3*l.* to 1*l.* After the tenth hazard anyone might have been accommodated with three ponies to one. The eleventh ball just landed, and, as the fourteenth was struck, 40*l.* to 10*l.* was offered. When the eighteenth reached its destination Dufton laid 10*l.* each that John won the game, and won it off the balls. The twenty-third shot was a teaser, as the champion was rather above the red, and had to make the stroke and get position for the next. He succeeded, however, and a murmur of applause passed through the room, in which up to now an almost unbroken silence had been maintained. At the twenty-fifth he was much below the spot, and had a difficult hazard; but it "came off," as also did thirteen others, till he broke down at the thirty-eighth, Dufton having at the thirty-sixth shared half his double-event bet with Roberts. What

can we say about such a performance? Nothing, save that there never before was such a player, and that there is not his equal in the whole wide world. We do not include England and the continental countries alone, but America, the very hotbed of billiards. To write that there was immense cheering would be absurd. Our pen indeed must fail to describe the applause which followed so great an achievement. Hughes, who had the balls left near the spot, scored, and offers were made to take 100*l.* to 5*l.* He continued to figure, and, including a remarkably pretty "jenny," did not conclude a splendid all-round break, during the making of which he was repeatedly cheered, till 54 were placed to his credit. He broke down by getting thin on the red for a "loser," and left the white and red on the right side near the middle. The champion from 77 scored a cannon and up to 84. Then he got to his favourite position behind the spot, where he proceeded to put the red into alternate pockets until the marker called game, amidst the plaudits of a now doubly-satisfied audience. The total of the break was 124, including 39 spot-hazards,

and the time occupied in scoring 261 was thirty-five minutes exactly.

BENNETT *v.* J. ROBERTS JUN.

(From the *Sportsman*, February 28, 1867.)

ON February 26, a match of 1000 up, for 200*l.*, was played at St. James's Hall, between Joseph Bennett and John Roberts, the eldest son of the champion. Betting was at 12*l.* to 10*l.* on Roberts. At 87 Roberts went out for a difficult cushion cannon, and making it, was loudly applauded, his run ending for a dozen. Score, Roberts 99, Bennett, 78. The latter now succeeded in landing a cannon, and, driving the balls before him for a short time, he got them well placed, and a fine losing-hazard break was the result, 45 being placed to his score, when his opponent's ball was potted, and Joe had to make a double baulk. At 134 (Roberts 107) Bennett again had the stroke, and was supported for an even "tenner," but the break only numbered 7, and Roberts took up the play with a cannon, followed by a

couple of "winners," the run terminating at 149—42 off the balls. From 144 Bennett scored a difficult shot, and getting the balls well placed for losers ran up 31. Roberts followed with 25, and the game was called—Bennett 175, Roberts 176. Then Joe scored a winner, and landing near the spot put on three "reds," but getting too low for another he made seven successive cannons, eventually giving a miss under a cushion, the break amounting to 35. Nothing remarkable followed till after some wary strokes Bennett, at 260, made a useful 21, and immediately after 14, a very fine five stroke which succeeded gaining tumultuous applause. Game, Bennett 303, Roberts 254. Roberts now had the balls left, and some quietly-played losers and a couple of "spots" added 28 to his figures, when the white unluckily went in, and he had to give a miss. Neither scored till Roberts put on 17 more, including a very fine "jenny," Bennett in turn being credited with 26, but failed by a shade to make a red loser, which would have left him a splendid game. At 300 (Bennett 339) Roberts improved his score by 15, and from 319 by 15 more. Then

Bennett got in and added a useful all-round 30, ending with a double baulk. Misses each were afterwards given, till Roberts played a "stab" on the red, then three spot-hazards, and wound up a run of 25 by giving a miss. Bennett, however, managed to score off it, and went away for a losing hazard break of 32. Game, Roberts 363, Bennett 423. The young one shortly after landed a sweetly-played side cannon, and rattled the balls about for 39, offers being made to support him for 10*l.* even. At 425 (Roberts 406) Bennett opened with a pretty white loser, and then made 19, following, after a few strokes, with 22, in which there were several loudly-applauded shots. Another dozen was shortly credited to Joe, and then an all-round 37, making him (time, 15 minutes past 10) more than 100 ahead at half-way. Here Roberts, who was 424, gave a miss, and Bennett, from 531, put in the red, and continued to score until he was 575—a 44 break, including a fluke at 557. Roberts now reached 426 (Bennett 581), and then 34, 16, and 40 became welcome additions, Bennett meanwhile scoring by small breaks 22 only. In the 40 break above mentioned, Roberts

fluked a white loser directly after the commencement, and eventually broke down at a thin cannon. With the game at Roberts 520, Bennett 615, the former having the break, an interval of five-and-twenty minutes occurred. Bennett, on the game being resumed, increased his figures by 17, and then cautious play ensued until Roberts made the break of the evening, 52, including fifteen spot-hazards. Game, Bennett 645, Roberts 596. Bennett now quickly put on 24 and 15, and after Roberts had added 20, Joe got further away with breaks of 22 and 43, including nine judiciously-played losers off the red, for which he was greatly applauded. Roberts had nothing left several times about this period of the game, and as Bennett put together 24 and 27, his score rapidly mounted up till it was called at 823, Roberts 644. Here Joe missed an attempted six stroke by a shade, and the balls "hobbling" about the mouths of the top and middle pockets, left Roberts a chance, which he took advantage of to the tune of 44, breaking down at his second spot hazard. Bennett then got in for 23, 15, and 13, Roberts following with 28, 27, and 13. Game,

Roberts 781, Bennett 878. The latter now made 24, and shortly after let in Roberts for 33, including five spot hazards. Bennett then turned the "corner" into the last hundred, and Roberts followed with a 30, in which were seven spot strokes. Another score and odd breaks made Bennett 956, and though Roberts took 5*l.* to 1*l.* twice, and made runs of 13 and 32, his chance appeared hopeless, for the balls were not breaking at all "kindly" for him. Eventually, at one o'clock exactly, Bennett ran out with an 18, Roberts being 929 only, consequently he lost a well-contested match by 71.

ROBERTS JUN. *v.* BENNETT.

(From the *Sportsman*, Dec. 26, 1867.)

ON December 24th, J. Roberts jun. and J. Bennett played again at St. James's Hall for 50*l.* From 45 the young champion got in with a 39, and his adversary was credited with an 18. Roberts's game presently became 100 to Bennett's 76. Here the latter

scored a 24, and subsequently contributed a 32, including a welcome fluke after he had made 7. From 110 Bennett added a 16, and then the marker's place proved almost a sine-cure until Roberts reached 158 to 159. At 161 Bennett began a careful break; and at 200, when he seemed to have lost position, a timely though unexpected red winner led to his scoring to 218, 57 off the balls. As this was followed by 18, 27, and 22, he became a slight favourite; but Roberts was so strongly fancied that when his opponent had scored 300 to 183 an even 10*l.* was invested, Roberts having the balls. Bennett made a 17 and an 18, then 13 and 15 were put to Roberts's account, but he broke down at an easy loser. Game, Bennett 355, Roberts 267. The former here went to work with a splendid cushion cannon, and in the two consecutive breaks which followed put together runs of 25 and 43, scoring a lot of fine losing hazards from baulk into the top pocket amidst great applause. Game, Bennett 423, Roberts 282. Small scoring succeeded, till at 302 Roberts got in with a tall cannon round the table, and, manœuvring the balls to his favourite place

near the spot, dribbled them about till he eventually broke down, after a carefully-played 77, 10*l.* to 8*l.* being laid on him shortly before he left off. Bennett followed with a 24, then a useful 49, and afterwards a 26, his figures being next called at 556 to Roberts 399. Just before the interval Roberts made a 30, and when they retired his full game stood at 432, Bennett 567. Twenty minutes later play was resumed, but it was some time before a score worthy of notice was added. At length Bennett went away with a 25, and got to 630, Roberts 480. A 21 to the latter, and a 24 to his opponent, carried their figures respectively to 501 against 654; and here Roberts ran up 93, the break of the evening. Game, Roberts 594, Bennett 654. Directly after a 25 brought the former still nearer his man (for whom the balls now broke most unkindly), and from 640 he went away with a 29, followed shortly after by a 47, which left his game at 716 to Bennett 702. Offers of 10*l.* to 5*l.* on Roberts passed unheeded; but his adversary, taking advantage of the situation in which the balls were left, went on scoring until he had put together one of the finest all-round breaks of

the evening, missing at last a difficult cannon after making 52, amidst universal cheering. Roberts's next innings was for 14; and, Bennett having "tumbled" at a side-stroke cannon by a shade, he afterwards put on another fine break of 40. Game, Bennett 767, Roberts 772. From this point the latter had the best of the luck, and, with a 24, got first into the next "century." Then he made a 61, including eight spot hazards, and finished with a double baulk. Bennett now improved his position with a 26, but his opponent also made the same number; and the marker called the full game at Roberts 889, Bennett 826, Roberts shortly making 33, amongst which were seven spot-strokes, and eventually winning by 97 points.

W. COOK JUN. v. J. BENNETT.

(From the *Sportsman*, Nov. 28, 1868.)

THE first money-match of the season took place on Wednesday between Wm. Cook jun. and Jos. Bennett, who played for 50*l.* a-side,

at Cook's rooms, attached to the Prince of Wales Hotel, Paddington. Play commenced at eighteen minutes past eight, Cook breaking. Three misses were given by each before Cook opened with a cannon, and ran up a 16, followed by a 15, and became 52 to Bennett's 35; when the latter, with the help of an 18, got one ahead. Cook followed in rapid succession with 17, 26, and 16; the marker shortly calling his game 116, against Bennett 76. Here Joe again put them close together by adding a well-played 33, but his efforts proved of little avail, as Cook succeeded with a cannon round the cushions, then several losing hazards, and eventually got up to the spot, where he rapidly scored eleven winners, the break eventually terminating for 78. Game — Cook 195, Bennett 109. From this point to the close of the match there was "only one in it." Cook played well, and with a good deal of luck, while Bennett did not show in anything like his old steady form. From 321 Cook added rapidly breaks of 64, including fourteen spot hazards, 26, and 76; in the last-named of which were twenty-three more "spots." Game

—Cook 487, Bennett 245. At 458 Bennett got a 32 all round, and when he reached 501 (Cook 736) an interval of thirty-five minutes occurred, and afterwards Joe put together his chief break, a nicely-played all-round 50, the spectators frequently applauding individual strokes, many of which—cushion cannons especially—were executed with marvellous accuracy. 220 points now separated the players, and the remaining portion of the game was without interest, as Cook gradually got further away, and eventually, by the aid of 27, 60 (including six “spots”), and 20, reached 958, to Bennett—who meanwhile had made a 33—643. Cook again had the balls well situated, and a sweetly-touched 42 ended the game in his favour by 357 points, Bennett’s total at the finish being 643.

ROBERTS JUN. v. COOK JUN.

(From the *Sportsman*, December 30, 1868.)

ON Dec. 29 last, at the Bentinck Club, Strand, a match took place between William

Cook jun. and John Roberts, the champion's eldest son, who played 1000 up even, for 100*l.* a-side. Cook, soon after the opening, went away with a pretty break of 41, including six spot hazards; and from 48 Roberts got in with a 25, and became 73 against his opponent's 78. The latter, however, here improved his position greatly, consecutive breaks of 21, 18, 32, 36, 27, 18, and 39, making him 346, Roberts 208. From this point the play changed altogether, Roberts inspiring his backers with fresh confidence by contributing his first substantial run—a 72—in which were a lot of finely-judged strokes. Both were now very careful, and when at 370 Cook got away with a 28 his opponent succeeded with a 41, the marker shortly calling Cook 400, Roberts 404. The latter followed up his advantage with a break of 38, and shortly followed the break of the evening. It included ten spot hazards, and terminated eventually for 120, Roberts failing at an easy red loser. Cook made a 20, and then his opponent went on again with a run of 99, this time composed chiefly of “spots,” of which he put on twenty consecutively. Game

—Roberts 731, Cook 465. Shortly Cook got to 471 (Roberts 748), and then added a break of 59, including seventeen “spots,” Roberts following with 36, and then with 50 more. Game—Roberts 838, Cook 555. At 576 Cook added a 32, followed with 92, in which were ten spot hazards, and at 703 made 37 more. Game—Roberts 892, Cook 742. Roberts here put on a fine run of 60, including 18 spot hazards; and Cook continuing to score well, breaks of 31, 92 (20 “spots”), and 24, made him 900 against 976. Roberts eventually won the best match we have ever seen by 92 points, after exactly three hours’ play.

THE INTER-UNIVERSITY MATCHES.

Single Matches.

1860. H. F. Blair (Oxford) beat J. H. Ward (Cambridge) by 79 points.

1861. G. Cox (Cambridge) beat G. E. Dering (Oxford) by 511 points. This match was 1000 up.

1862. W. E. Stokes (Oxford) beat T. Collins (Cambridge) by 200 points.

1863. P. S. Ward (Oxford) beat A. G. Payne (Cambridge) by 92 points.

1864. W. E. Stokes (Oxford) beat A. G. Payne (Cambridge) by 27 points.

1865. A. G. Payne (Cambridge) beat W. E. Stokes (Oxford) by 20 points.

1866. W. W. Rodger (Oxford) beat T. P. Wickham (Cambridge) by 48 points.

1867. W. W. Rodger (Oxford) beat T. P. Wickham (Cambridge) by 130 points.

1868. W. W. Rodger (Oxford) beat H. A. Richardson (Cambridge) by 191 points.

Double Matches.

1860. G. Cox and J. H. Ward (Cambridge) beat H. F. Blair and H. Taylor (Oxford) by 34 points. This match was 700 up.

1861. G. Cox and G. N. Griffiths (Cambridge) beat G. E. Dering and W. E. Stokes (Oxford) by 102 points.

1862. W. E. Stokes and J. Wrigley (Oxford) beat T. Collins and A. G. Payne (Cambridge) by 47 points.

1863. H. P. Horne and A. G. Payne (Cam-

bridge) beat T. Chamberlayne and P. S. Ward (Oxford) by 65 points.

1864. H. P. Horne and A. G. Payne (Cambridge) beat J. W. P. Hobbs and W. E. Stokes (Oxford) by 19 points.

1865. E. Watts-Russell and W. E. Stokes (Oxford) beat A. G. Payne and A. D. Smith (Cambridge) by 14 points.

1866. H. Crampton and T. P. Wickham (Cambridge) beat W. W. Rodger and E. Watts-Russell (Oxford) by 170 points.

1867. W. W. Rodger and E. Watts-Russell (Oxford) beat H. E. Stansfield and T. P. Wickham (Cambridge) by 104 points.

1868. W. W. Rodger and G. Lascelles (Oxford) beat H. A. Richardson and T. Braithwaite (Cambridge) by 20 points.

THE END.