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A HANDBOOK  
OF  
BILLIARDS,  
WITH THE  
THEORY OF THE SIDE-STROKE,

*The Rules of the Games,*  
AND  
A CHAPTER ON BAGATELLE.

BY  
GEORGE FREDERICK PARDON,  
AUTHOR OF THE HANDBOOKS OF  
"CHESS," "DRAUGHTS AND BACKGAMMON," "WHIST," ETC.

ASSISTED BY FIRST-RATE PLAYERS.

*NEW EDITION.*

WITH VARIOUS ILLUSTRATIVE DIAGRAMS.

LONDON:  
GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS,  
BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL.  
NEW YORK: 129, GRAND STREET.  
1865.

~~VIII. 1523~~  
SG 1225.6.2

1885, Jan. 21,  
Gift of  
The Heirs of O. O. Felton.

LONDON:  
SAVILL AND EDWARDS, PRINTERS,  
CHANDOS-STREET.

TO  
HUGH ROBERTES, Esq.

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DEAR HUGH—

As an old Friend and sometime Pupil, I have great pleasure in associating your name with my little Treatise on Billiards. I know that I can teach you nothing, for you long ago conquered your master; but, as one among many players who in a Billiard Room never forget they are gentlemen, I cannot refrain from offering you my tribute of regard and admiration.

Accept, therefore, this Dedication, in memory of old times, and scores of well-contested matches with

THE AUTHOR.





## PREFACE.

---

SOME of my friends may ask why I, a *littérateur*, and not a professional player, have written a book on Billiards. I answer, because I am fond of the game, and because a cheap elementary treatise on the subject appeared to be wanted. Kentfield's handsome and expensive work can never become popular in the true sense of the term, because it is written for the delectation of good players, and not for the instruction of amateurs. Moreover, while it is admitted as the highest authority on certain points, it is somewhat behind the practice of first-rate players in these days of fast tables and brilliant execution. Similar objections apply in tenfold force to the works of White and others. Mr. H. G. Bohn has indeed given an excellent account of the theory and practice of Billiards in his admirable *Handbook of Games*, but the volume is rather too bulky for the pocket. A Manual would, I thought, be useful; and here it is!

I am tempted to record my protest against a rather old-world prejudice. Billiards is *not* a disreputable game. On the contrary, it is one that may be played, and is constantly played, by

the highest, the noblest, and the most worthy in the land. It is only disreputable when its practice descends from a rational amusement to a mere excuse for gambling. We must all have our diversions and our pleasant idlenesses ; and so long as we subordinate them to our proper avocations, no harm can arise. Billiards, in the hands of gentlemen, need not become a pursuit ; nor is it necessary that we should emulate, or be jealous of, the astounding feats of professional players. As well might the amateur gymnast compete with a Leotard, or the horseman rival a Ducrow !

This little book has been submitted to the revision of some of the best players of the day, and from them I have received numerous testimonies to its accuracy and general adaptability to the requirements of amateurs. I have been advised to insert some of these letters in this place, but it will perhaps be better to allow my little Handbook to introduce itself. If it contain any hint, counsel, or instruction, worthy preservation, it will make its own way : if these be absent, why then, it will die—deservedly.

G. F. P.

BEAUMONT SQUARE,  
*February, 1862.*

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# HANDBOOK OF BILLIARDS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

“Let us to billiards, Charmion.”—*Shakspeare.*

**BILLIARDS** is the best of all in-door games. When properly played, it combines within itself something of the scientific character of Chess without its silence, and much of the enjoyment belonging to cards without the gambling element. There is sufficient excitement in a good match of Billiards to enable the players to dispense altogether with wagers, and enough of interest to provide rational amusement for a whole room-full of lookers-on. It is a game which admits of the most scientific calculation, while at the same time it is by no means devoid of frequent strokes of chance and good luck. This combination of science and chance forms, indeed, one of the most attractive features of the game: for while a good player may fairly reckon upon winning by virtue of his knowledge and skill, a bad one need not despair, for there are seven chances of scoring—six pockets and a canon—every time he strikes his ball. Billiards, too, may be properly placed in the category of athletic games, for an active player walks two miles round and about the table every hour he plays.

The late William Cobbett used to say that the use of no instrument brought so many muscles into play as the spade. But, for my part, I prefer the Billiard cue; for by its use a certain degree of motion is imparted to every part of the body. Billiards gives exercise to the legs and arms, while it expands the chest, and at the same time employs and diverts the mind. Every person likes to exhibit whatever skill and aptitude he possesses. The orator is never so pleased as when he engages an attentive audience; the actor is never so delighted as when he hears the applause of boxes, pit, and gallery; the artist is never so entirely in love with his art and with himself as when he sees a discriminating crowd about his picture; the musician is never so fully impressed with the divinity of harmony as when he glances upwards into the entranced faces of his hearers; the huntsman never so fully believes in the exhilarating influence of the chase, the cricketer never so entirely gives himself up to the requirements of his animating exercise, the oarsman never pulls so lustily, the acrobat never jumps so fearlessly, the pedestrian never runs so swiftly, and few of us do anything so satisfactorily, as when there are lookers-on to appreciate and to applaud. So, also, the Billiard-player never acquits himself so well as in a crowded room. If you want to see good play, you must witness it in the public room; but if you would play well yourself, you must practise steadily and unremittingly at the private table.

It is not necessary in this little book to say anything of the invention and introduction of Billiards; indeed, when I say that of its early history nothing whatever is known, I believe I say nearly all that can be said. Its origin is

probably French; and from its mention by Shakspeare, it must certainly have been familiar to the upper classes in this country in the sixteenth century. It is now popular in every civilized country in the world.

Presuming that every reader is acquainted with at least the shape of the billiard table and the nature of the cues and balls, I need only remark that the established table in this country is twelve feet long by six feet wide, *within the cushions*, with six pockets; and that the game is played by two or more persons. In France the ordinary table of the café and the estaminet is eight feet by four feet, without pockets, for the playing of the canon game; but of late the regular English table and game have become fashionable in Paris and the larger cities. Round, square, and oval tables have been constructed, but the regular oblong twelve-by-six is the best. For small rooms and private use smaller tables are made, but at any table less than ten feet by five the game, as we play it, is not very interesting. The best tables have solid slate beds, covered with fine green broad-cloth, and vulcanized India-rubber cushions. The old wooden table with list cushions belongs, like tie-wigs and Hessian boots, to a gone-by age.

In all the various games played on the billiard table the object of the players is to force the ivory balls into one or other of the six pockets, or to make canons by *striking both the object balls with the player's own ball*. Every table is provided with three spots, and a baulk line two feet six inches from the lower end. On this line is inscribed a semicircle, technically called the striking point. The first spot is placed about eleven inches from the upper end or top of the table;

this is known as "the spot." The second is nearer to the centre, being two feet six inches from the top cushion; and the third is in the centre of the table. Three smaller spots are usually placed in the semicircle—one at the centre, and one at each end. The red ball is placed on one or other of these spots at the upper end of the table, according to the game played, and the player commences by striking his ball out of the semicircle with the point of the cue, or with its butt-end at pleasure. The mace, once the fashionable instrument, is now no longer used, even by ladies. Two inches and a sixteenth diameter is the proper size for billiard balls, though two inches and an eighth, or even a quarter, is preferred by some players. Most match games are played in this country and America with two inch balls. For pyramids and pool rather smaller balls are common.

Every billiard-room is furnished with a butt, a rest or jigger, with which to make strokes beyond the reach of the hand; a half-butt and rest, and a long butt and rest, for the middle and extreme distances. There are also marking-boards for billiards and pool. The amateur's first visit to a billiard-room will, however, render him more familiar with the table and its accompaniments than any quantity of verbal description.

It is well that the amateur should make himself acquainted with

#### THE TECHNICAL TERMS USED IN BILLIARDS.

These are few; but, in order that my readers may begin at the beginning, I give those most commonly employed.



*Canon.*—This is a stroke in which the player strikes his own ball from any part of the table on to another ball, whence it bounds at an angle on to a third ball. Striking the two balls with his own completes the canon. *Carambole* is the proper word, but it is seldom used now-a-days.

*Miss.*—A miss, either accidental or intentional, is made when the player fails to strike the object ball with his own. The miss, when intentionally given, may be made with the butt, or with either end of the cue.

*Object-Ball.*—The ball played upon.

*Player's (or Striker's) Ball.*—The ball played with, or belonging, for the time being, to the player.

*Foul Stroke.*—A stroke not in accordance with the rules of the game. The various kinds of foul strokes are made—by the player touching his own or any other ball with his hand, cue, or person during the time it is rolling; when the player fails to strike his own ball fairly from its position to a distance of more than two inches; when a player touches his opponent's ball or the red ball with hand or cue; when he, in any wilful way, arrests the roll of either ball; when he wilfully knocks a ball off the table; when, being in hand, he plays at a ball in baulk, or fails to play out of baulk. Playing with the wrong ball, &c. The exceptions are when either of these things occur by pure accident, in which case the penalties—see *Rules*—are not usually enforced.

*Hazard.*—Every stroke is properly a hazard, but the strokes at billiards are distinguished as hazards and canons. The *losing hazard* is when the player's own ball is forced into either of the six pockets after contact with any other ball; the *winning hazard* is made by forcing the ball played upon into either pocket, after contact.

*Coup*.—When the player's ball runs into a pocket or is forced off the table without having first struck another ball, the stroke is a *coup*.

*Double*.—The doublet or double is made by the player striking his own ball or the object-ball in such a manner against the cushion as to make it rebound, after contact, into a pocket. The *double-double* is made in striking a ball against a cushion, whence it bounds from one side to the other and rebounds into a pocket by a double reflexion. This, like the ordinary double, may be made either with the player's ball struck against the object-ball, or with the object-ball after concussion with the player's ball. According to the manner in which the player's ball is struck, the angle is rendered more or less acute.

*Side Stroke*.—This is made by striking your own ball more or less on either side, according to the angle you wish it to take. These and the following strokes will be further explained.

*Low Stroke*.—A stroke with the point of the cue below the centre of the ball.

*High Stroke*.—A stroke above the centre of the ball.

*Twist or Screw*.—This is made by striking the ball low with a sudden pull-back of the hand, and causes the player's ball either to stop or to return to the point whence it was struck after concussion with the object-ball.

*Following Stroke*.—A high stroke, or quick push, as it were, which causes the player's ball to follow in the immediate direction taken by the object-ball; or "run through," as it is called.

*Full Stroke*.—Made by striking your own ball on to the centre of the object-ball.

*Slow Stroke*.—This is a sort of twist or screw, and is made by striking the ball rather below

the centre with a slow but firm draw-back of the hand.

*The Jenny.*—This neat and advantageous stroke is made by losing your own ball in a centre pocket, off a ball nearly close to the cushion.

*Pair of Breeches.*—A double hazard in the end pockets—one ball in each. This is made when the object-ball lies nearly in the centre of the table, and the player's ball is at about six feet distance in an almost straight line. It is made by striking your ball half-full against the object-ball. The balls then divide, and taking the natural angle fly into opposite pockets. A useful stroke to practise.

*Baulk.*—A ball in baulk is one within the line—not the semicircle merely—at the bottom of the table. Such a ball (in the ordinary games) cannot be played at by the player whose ball is in hand.

*In Hand.*—The player's ball is said to be in hand, or off the table, when it has been forced into a pocket or off the table, and has to be played from baulk.

*Game.*—The completion of the game by its being won.

*Cramp Games.*—Those in which one player gives to the other some apparently great advantages—as five pockets to one, hazards and canons against canons, two strokes to one, &c. They are usually played by a professor against a tyro, and are not uninteresting for practice.

*Bricole.*—A ball played first on the cushion, from which it reverberates at any angle according to the strength at which it was struck, the point of concussion with the cue, &c.

## CHAPTER II.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

"One man's fault is another man's lesson."

THE great majority of amateurs, and not a few professors, play billiards as many mechanics pursue their occupations, by rule of thumb. That is to say, they know that certain results follow certain ways of striking the ball, but are ignorant of the reasons why; they daily practise the game without knowing anything of its real principles, and empirically carry out rules governed by scientific theories of which they are blissfully ignorant. Many young men are content to learn the game through the experience gained by dint of frequent losses; when they might, by the exercise of a little study and practice, acquire sufficient knowledge of its general principles, to at least inspire them with that confidence which we are told is the parent of success.

Now, as a good workman should be provided with good tools, it is highly necessary to look well to the instruments with which you begin your billiard experience. Having selected a good table—the cloth smooth, short-napped, and not too new; the cushions sharply elastic, the pockets not too narrow, and the room in which it stands neither low nor small—you may begin your game. In choosing your cue, be particular that it is well weighted, with a nice roundish tip, not too large, and about long enough to stand well under your chin. The use of too long or too

short a cue at the commencement of his practice has spoiled many a promising player. The weight of the cue is a matter of some consequence. It should be heavy enough to allow of a good, hard, firm stroke being made with it, and yet light enough to enable the player to use it freely. The tip should be kept well chalked, and it should be so held in the hand that about as much of its weight is behind as before the grasp. For losing hazards and canons it should be held rather loosely between the fingers and thumb; but for winning hazards, it will generally be found best to grasp it with the whole hand, but not too tightly.

Having selected your cue, the next thing—and this is very important—is to make a good bridge. Place the left hand firmly on the table, about six or seven inches from the ball you are about to strike. Allow only the wrist and the tips of the fingers to touch the table; keep the knuckles well raised, the palm hollowed, and the thumb well up, in order to form a sufficient rest for the cue. See Fig. 1.

Much depends upon the proper formation of



FIG. 1.—THE BRIDGE.

the bridge and the free handling of the cue. The next thing to do is to strike the ball fairly in the centre. To do this, point the cue to the ball, withdraw it about four or five inches, and make the stroke *fairly from the shoulder, and not merely from the elbow*. The arm should be almost close to the body and not hooked out at an angle, as I have noticed with some young players; but it must at the same time be perfectly free. Keep the cue almost horizontal with the top of the table; fix your eye on the ball to be struck; take a rapid glance at the object-ball, and again instantaneously at your own ball, and make your stroke fairly, fully, and by one single impulse. Accustom yourself to take the sight of the ball, and make the stroke without lingering. A hesitating, see-saw motion with the cue is destructive to good play. I have found it a good plan to drop the point of the cue for an instant on the table, and then raise it to the height required for the stroke, and immediately strike the ball. This plan steadies the cue, and prevents a hesitating and faltering stroke. Deliver the cue with a direct, certain impulse; but avoid striking the ball too hard. Many of the strokes depend as much on strength as direction. As a rule, the ball must be struck, not pushed, for most strokes; but in the *following ball*, and when your ball is under the cushion, it is necessary to give it a slightly pushing motion. If you strike the ball too hard, you break through the regular angles of the table; while, if you play too slowly, you fail in accomplishing your object.

Stand firmly on your feet, in an easy, graceful attitude, with the left foot (if a right-handed player) a little advanced, and the head slightly

inclined forward; but do not stoop. An ungraceful position is the parent of bad play.

Avoid jerking the cue suddenly, as that will cause the ball to jump, and roll forward in a line contrary to that which you intended.

Having learned how to strike a ball, the amateur should practise first with one, and next with two balls; and when he can strike any particular spot on the cushion at will, he may commence the game.

But there are yet some important facts to bear in mind. The accuracy with which any and every stroke is made depends entirely on the correctness of the eye of the player, and the capability of his hand and judgment acting in unison. The least hesitation in making the stroke is fatal to its successful accomplishment. Much, too, depends on the condition of the player's health and the general state of his nerves. A nervous, undecided player is never a good one. Many a game has been lost through fear of an antagonist's superior skill, or even from a glass of wine too much, an extra cigar, or a Welsh-rarebit supper; to say nothing of carelessness, want of steadiness of purpose, or anxiety of mind. If you mean to play the game properly, go in with the firm determination of doing your best; but if you cannot keep your temper when you lose, better not play at all.

In using the *rest* or *jigger*, be careful to place your cue and the head of the *rest* sufficiently near to the ball you wish to strike. Most players raise their left hand too high in using the *rest*. To play accurately, the *rest* and the cue should be kept as nearly horizontal as possible. If you place the *rest* too near to the ball, you will probably miss your stroke, from not seeing the

ball plainly ; while, if it is too far away, you lose power. About ten or twelve inches will be found to be about the proper distance. In using the half-butt and long rest, however, a shorter distance than this will be found convenient. In the matter of cue and position, a little instruction from a good player will be found advantageous.

Not so, however, with the principles to which I now direct the attention of the amateur. Careful study of these will make him a better player in three months than he would become in as many years if he were entirely ignorant of them.

First, as to the position of the cue for making the various strokes. For the *full centre stroke*, or straight hazard, the ball must be struck well in the centre with a sharp, but easily delivered blow, fairly from the shoulder, with the tip of a well-chalked cue.

For the *twist* or *screw*, the ball must be struck more or less below the centre, with a sudden backward jerk. This has the effect of reversing the order of the ball's running. Instead of the ball travelling over and over like a hoop or a wheel, it progresses in a contrary direction, under and under ; and when that motion ceases, either by the ball coming in contact with another ball, or with the cushion, or by reason of the twist-impetus exhausting itself, the motion is reversed, and the ball either stops dead or returns to the point of its departure, in a more or less straight line, according to whether it was struck full in the centre or on either side.

The screw may also be produced by striking the ball high on the side, with the cue in an almost perpendicular direction. When the player's ball is near the object-ball, this stroke is necessary, but seldom else. By striking your



ball a little below its centre, and the object-ball directly full, the former will stop at the point of contact, or nearly so. This sort of stroke requires a slight draw-back motion of the hand in striking. It is a very useful stroke in pyramids or pool, or when you wish to obtain a particular position for the next hazard.

In order to make the ball jump—a very necessary operation occasionally—it must be struck sharply on the top with a downward-forward blow,—only take care that the ball is struck, or you may have to pay a guinea for tearing the cloth, if it be a good one.

For the following stroke the cue must be pointed high and the ball struck considerably above its centre, with a flowing motion of the arm, so as to produce a sort of pushing-forward blow. The higher you strike it the more swiftly it will travel; the lower you strike it, the more slowly it will progress. But without the jerk you cannot screw your ball, and without the flow you cannot produce the following stroke. A central stroke may also be made a following ball if you attend to the last direction.

#### DIVIDING THE BALLS.

Now, it must be understood that the centre of the striker's ball must, and does always, strike the centre of the object-ball, seeing that every point of a circle is the centre of its circumference; that is to say, its perpendicular centre—the direction taken by either ball being due to the manner in which it is struck. In other words, according as you strike the object-ball full in its centre, or more or less on one or other of its sides, horizontally—so is its direction, and that of your

own ball, determined. This is called *dividing the balls*, which I will presently explain more fully. In brief, by a *full stroke*, is meant one in which the point of impact between each ball is full, complete, and perfectly in the centre of both; by a *three-quarter ball* is meant one in which the striker's ball covers about three parts of the object-ball at the moment of contact; a *half-ball* is one on which about half of the circumference of the object-ball is covered by the opposing half of the other. In a stroke of this kind, each ball pursues a corresponding direction in opposite angles, as in making the breeches. A *quarter-ball* is one in which the points of impact are still more narrowly defined; and an *eighth*, or *fine ball* is a stroke in which the balls merely touch and glance away, at a wide angle generally.



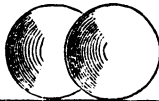
1. Full Ball.



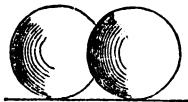
2. Half Ball.



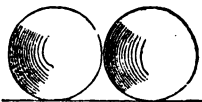
3. Three-quarter Ball.



4. Quarter Ball.



5. Eighth Ball.



6. Very fine Ball.

FIG. 2.—DIVIDING THE OBJECT-BALL.

The above shows, in each case, the amount of

space on the object-ball covered by the striker's ball. Of course in actual play a variety of circumstances will interfere with the performance of many strokes with absolute accuracy; but the nearer the stroke approximates in practice to the theoretical principle, the better and more certain will be the play.

Let us now see what objects we attain by dividing the balls.

In Fig. 2 we have the full ball, used in making straight hazards. If the object ball be struck accurately in the centre, it will fly straight to the point aimed at. In the diagram on the following page (Case 1) the action of the object-ball is seen to be precisely that of the striker's ball, which follows after it in a straight line—

The white ball, in each case, represents the striker's ball, and the shaded one the object-ball. The point of departure of the striker's ball is, in the diagram, always from the lower end of the table, as shown by the position of the cue, whence it is struck forward to the object-ball, from the point of contact with which it makes an angle more or less in the direction of the dotted line.

Case 1 is a full ball. Now, if the player's ball be struck accurately in its centre on to the centre of the object-ball, they both proceed in the same direction, and in this instance fall into the corner pocket; or the object-ball may be pocketed, and the striker's ball made to stop at the point of contact, just according to whether the hand, in the act of striking, is allowed to flow onward or is suddenly drawn back, as already explained.

Case 2 represents the action of the *half ball*. Here the angles are equal to each other, and both balls travel at about the same speed. The stroke indicated is what is called the *breeches*.

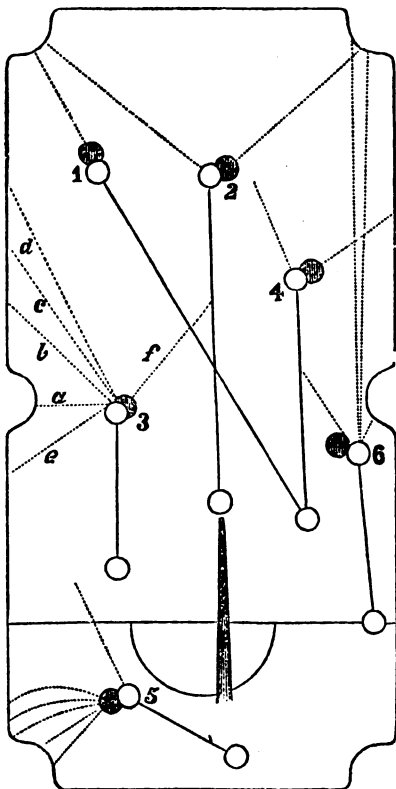


FIG. 3.—THE OBJECT-BALL DIVIDED.

Case 3 represents the *three-quarter ball*—the striker's ball covering about three parts of the object-ball. The consequences are that the former takes the direction of one of the dotted lines, and the latter proceeds at a less acute angle to the cushion or pocket. Just according to the strength at which the striker's ball is struck does it take the direction indicated. If it be struck very hard it flies off at *a*; if the blow be of more moderate strength, it is deflected from its original course to that of *b*; if still more gently, it takes the line of *c*, and more gently still, that of *d*; but if struck below its centre it returns at the angle *e*; the object-ball in each case proceeding in the direction of the line *f*.

Case 4, the *quarter ball* causes the angle taken by the object-ball to be more acute, while that assumed by the striker's ball is less so than in the last case; but the angle is wider than before.

Case 5, the *eighth* or *fine ball*. Here the reverse to that observed in the three-quarter ball takes place; and, instead of the striker's ball being deflected at an acute angle, it is the object-ball which takes the direction shown by the dotted lines. This stroke is what is called the *cut*, and is very useful. In proportion as the stroke is more fine—or rather, the degree of impact less—so the angle formed by the departure of the balls one from the other becomes more considerable, if the ball be struck smartly.

But in the *very fine ball* (6 in Fig. 2) the player usually strikes his ball gently, so as to reduce the angle as much as possible, as seen in case 6, Fig. 3.

By an examination of Figures 2 and 3, the amateur will perceive the advantages arising from striking the object-ball on its side. Of

course the same relative effects are produced whether you strike one or other side of the ball. If you strike on the right-hand side of the object-ball, your own ball takes the right-hand angle; if on the left, the left angle. In *dividing the object-ball* the player is supposed to strike his own ball in the centre or nearly so. But as the object-ball is always at a greater distance from the player than his own ball, very much depends on the accuracy with which he draws an imaginary line through the former, so as to cover it just sufficiently with the latter. Considerable uncertainty must therefore arise as to the exact division of the object-ball; and it has been found that the better plan is to *divide the player's own ball*, which is just under his eye. This division of the player's ball is of comparatively modern introduction, and is known as

#### THE SIDE-STROKE.

By the use of the side-stroke all the effects belonging to the division of the object-ball may be obtained with greater certainty. In the best styles of modern play both balls are divided. It may, however, be said, that without an accurate knowledge of the side-stroke no great excellence in Billiards can be attained. But let us see how the side-stroke is made. *The ball must be struck on the side on which it is intended to go after contact with the object-ball.* This is imperative. The side does not take proper effect till the ball comes into concussion with another ball or the cushion. When the ball is struck on either the right or the left side the scientific effect of the stroke is to remove the axis or travelling centre of the ball a little to the right or left; or, in fact, to lower the centre of gravity and to slightly

impede its progress. As the ball leaves the cue it travels on this false axis till it comes into contact with another object. When that contact takes place the natural roll of the ball is resumed, and it flies off from the point of impact by a sharper or more acute angle than it would have done had it been struck full in the centre, and the object-ball been divided. Another point to remember is, that the side-stroke must not be made by a very hard or heavy blow; the more gentle the stroke, consistent with the object intended and the distance to be travelled, the greater the certainty of execution. It will be observed, too, that the ball progresses more rapidly at the desired angle after impact with the object than before. This arises from the greater freedom with which the ball travels on its natural centre. This theory of the side-stroke may seem difficult of proof, but if the billiard player will attentively observe the action of the ball when struck on its side, he will easily perceive the meaning of the expression, "lowering the centre of gravity."

The manner of holding the cue must also be well considered in making the side-stroke. If you hold it straight to the point to be struck, you will fail in accomplishing your purpose. You must slightly incline the hand to the contrary angle you wish the ball to assume after impact, thus—



FIG. 4.—POSITION OF CUE FOR SIDE-STROKE.

and accompany the motion of your hand in making the stroke with a slight and almost imperceptible, but instantaneous, turn of the wrist. The diagonal position of the cue and this exceedingly slight turn of the wrist enable the player to enlarge, as it were, the striking surface of the ball and make his stroke with a greater degree of certainty. A very few lessons from a professor will enable the amateur to overcome all the difficulties of the side-stroke.

The next point to consider is, *the quantity of side necessary to obtain certain determinate results.*

We will suppose the following figure to represent the striker's ball. We see that it is divided into four principal divisions—two quarters above the centre and two below; two on the right and two on the left. These are again divided into eighths. Either of these spaces may be struck with the point of the cue; and every point struck gives to the ball a different direction, *after contact with another ball or the cushion.* Some theorists even further divide the ball; but more minute division is simply absurd and impracticable, because a smaller portion of the actual ball could not be accurately struck with the cue. I have purposely made the diagram about  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches in diameter, so that, in fact, it represents a section of the largest-sized billiard ball. For the convenience of reference, we will call these main divisions A B C D, and the subdivisions *a b c d e f*. Now it will be obvious that the further the stroke recedes from the centre division (Ad or dD) the greater will be the amount of deflection produced after contact. Indeed, a stroke on Df or Dc at their extreme points has the effect of twisting the ball from the straight line of progression even before contact. The



particular point of the ball struck by the cue must, as respects the actual division of the ball,

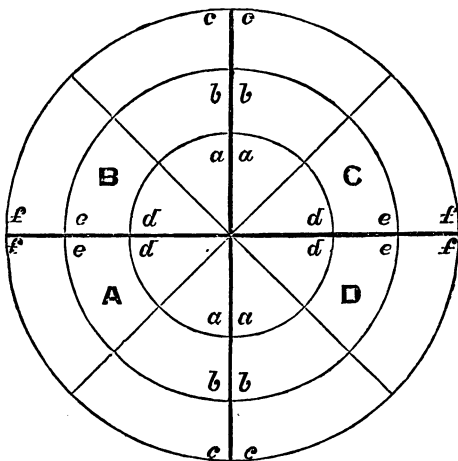


FIG 5.—THE PLAYER'S BALL DIVIDED FOR THE SIDE-STROKE.

be a matter for the consideration and judgment of each individual player. Every player will have his own idea to follow out, and his own practice to follow. All that can be done by written instruction is to lay down certain well-defined and easily-understood rules, axioms, and cautions; for it must be remembered that this manner of dividing the playing ball is to be carried in the mind, and is not evident on the ball itself; and even if the lines and letters were actually

inscribed on the ball, such marking would be useless to the player. As we may have occasion hereafter to refer to this arrangement for striking the player's ball, we will, if you please, call it the *divided ball*.

But we must never forget the fact that the side-stroke and the division of the object-ball accomplish precisely the same result—namely, to produce the necessary angles of departure for the balls after impact one with the other. As a general rule, we may say, that when you wish your own ball to fly off at a particular angle, in order to make a losing hazard or canon, it is best to employ the side-stroke; but when you wish to drive the object-ball in a particular direction, as for a winning hazard or otherwise, then it is best to dispense with the side, and divide the ball played upon.

In opposition to many players, I aver that *the side given to the player's ball is never communicated to the object-ball*. The appearance of communicated side is due to the fact of the object-ball being struck otherwise than full in the centre. This you can easily prove for yourself. Place the red ball in the centre, about a foot distant from the baulk line, and your own within the semicircle. Now put as much side as you can on your own ball, but strike the red as nearly full as possible. The result you will find to be, that, after contact, the red ball takes a straight course up the table, while your own flies off at an angle of nearly forty-five degrees towards the middle pocket.

Again, although it is true that all strokes made by dividing the object-ball may be accomplished with the side-stroke, it is equally true that many strokes are capable of being made by

the latter that are almost if not quite impossible to the former. In many strokes the extreme side put on the ball will actually cause it to assume a slightly parabolic curve in its progress from the point of departure to that of impact, when it will fly quickly off at a very acute angle. In strokes near to the cushion this quality of the side-stroke is found to be exceedingly useful, as, if the ball be properly directed, it will fall into a pocket otherwise unattainable, or accomplish a canon seemingly impracticable. But the side-stroke may be, and is, very frequently abused. Many players put it on to all manner of strokes, and take a vast deal of pains to attain a pocket that might be more easily reached by the more ordinary and easy method. The side-stroke, like a watch, should be only used when it is wanted. It is just as absurd to bring the one into continual requisition as it is to be perpetually pulling out the other. For good players it is sufficient to know how to use the side-stroke, and to use it when the game requires it, just as it is enough for the man who carries a gold chronometer to know that he has it in his pocket and only to take it out when he wants to know or to tell a friend, the time!

If you make the side-stroke with too hard a blow, you defeat the object intended, and your ball runs off in the opposite angle. This, too, is useful sometimes when you are in a cramped position—as under a cushion or in a corner; then indeed the reverse side-stroke may get you out of your difficulty. Always stand well behind your ball, so as to allow the greatest freedom to the action of the arm.

To the side may be added, either the high, the low, or the centre stroke, just as it is found

necessary to make the ball stop, travel swiftly, or go at an ordinary pace.

And this brings us naturally to the next great principle of Billiards—

#### THE ANGLES OF THE TABLE.

*The Angle of Reflexion is equal to the Angle of Incidence.*—This axiom is one of the most important in the whole theory of Billiards. Let me explain it. A ball struck in a straight line from the centre spot in the baulk semicircle to the top cushion, ought to return directly back, and pass again over the same spot; or a ball struck from the right-hand spot in the baulk over the spot at the top of the table, should rebound from the cushion in a precisely similar angle on the other side, so as to pass over the left-hand spot in the baulk; and so on with every angle of the table.

The scientific reason for this is easily explained. The “direction of a motion produced in a moveable elastic body, projected against a body fixed and at rest, is simple and determinate; and is alike under all the varieties of velocity and modes of projection.” The reaction will invariably equal the action, and be the counterpart thereof; or, in other words, “the course of the body, after contact, will be the counterpart of the motion originally imparted; hence the angle of reflexion must uniformly be equal to angle of incidence.” In the case of billiard balls, a variation in this theory must arise, in consequence of both bodies receiving concussion being equally moveable and equally elastic. “The motion resulting from the impact of these balls being compound, modified by the peculiarity in the action and the

intensity of the moving powers, and arising from the joint effect of different causes concurring at the same instant in their operation"—a variation, more or less, from the theoretical rule is the result.

But when the cushion—an elastic body at rest—is struck instead of the ball, we get a much nearer approximation to the theory, which, for the sake of amateurs, I will illustrate by a diagram; always remembering that it is an approximation we seek, and not an actual mathematical demonstration—Q.E.D. (See page 34.)

In this figure the black lines represent the angles of incidence, and the dotted lines the angles of reflexion. Thus the balls 1, 2, 3, 4 on the right-hand side are struck, each one directly in its centre, up to point A, and severally return in corresponding angles to 1, 2, 3, 4 on the left side, or *vice versa*; whereas a ball struck from B to A would return from the cushion straight to B. Again, balls struck from 1 on either side to the point *c* would make angles equal in dimension; or if struck from 2 to *d* or from 1 to *e* would reflect in equal angles, as shown by the dotted lines; and so on all over the table.

This theory supposes each ball to be struck directly in its centre; but the principle that the angle of reflexion is equal to or coincident with the angle of incidence is, like other principles, to be taken *cum grano salis*. Much depends on the nature of the stroke. The least deviation from the stroke in the centre of the ball will produce a corresponding deviation in the angle. Moreover, the strength with which the ball is struck, and the elasticity of the cushions will have a tendency to considerably vary the return angle. But as a rule, the axiom may be taken to be

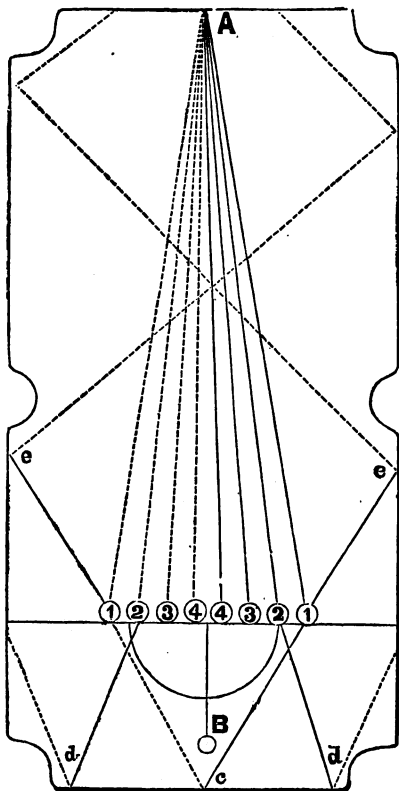


FIG. 6.—ANGLES OF INCIDENCE AND REFLEXION.

true ; and for all practical purposes the angle of reflexion *does* equal the angle of incidence.

If the circumstances under which the stroke were made were always precisely uniform, then the return angle would always be precisely equal to the angle of projection. This not being so, as every tyro at billiards is aware, the study of the angles becomes a matter of great importance to the player. The best way to acquire a thorough knowledge of the angles of the tables is to begin with a single ball, and strike it from point to point, marking the direction taken at its departure from the cue's point, and its reflexion after striking the cushion. By a good knowledge of the angles only can anything like an approximation to certainty in the making of canons and hazards be obtained. No man can become a good player till he has obtained that knowledge. Billiards may of course be amusing without scientific exactness on the part of the players ; but if a stroke, or a series of strokes, can be made with mathematical accuracy, then, as I take it, the interest of the game is wonderfully increased. To merely play at chess it is only necessary to know the moves ; to play at Billiards it is not imperative that the amateur should be able to do more than properly strike a ball or make a few simple hazards and canons ; but, as in the one case, it is necessary, in order to attain to excellence, to know the principal openings and endings of games, so, in the other, it is requisite to master not only the alphabet of the same, but to acquire something of its science.

After making himself in some measure acquainted with the direction taken by the ball when struck from various parts of the table, the amateur may begin to practise with three balls,

and try his hand at canons. The best way to do this is to place one ball at the top of the table, near to the spot, and another near either of the middle pockets; then playing from baulk he will soon succeed in making a canon from one to the other, no matter which he strikes first.

A few examples of angles may be usefully studied, because upon these depend the successful making of canons and hazards. In Figs. 7 and 8, (see pp. 37 and 39) the black lines represent the course of the ball before reverberation; the dotted lines, the course it takes in the first reflexion; and the faint lines its course after the second reflexion. In each case the player's ball is supposed to be struck in the centre with moderate force. Of course, any variation from the centre will produce a variation in the angle. If the ball be struck too hard it will jump on reaching the cushion; especially if played bricole, across the cushion. Mr. White, in his book on Billiards,—now out of print and obsolete, by the way,—recommends the student to learn the angles of the table by striking or pushing the ball with the butt, or with the flattened end of his cue. Let me caution young players against following this advice. They wish to learn the course the ball takes after being struck by the point of the cue: why, then, use the butt-end?

In Case 1 (the right-hand ball on the baulk-line) I have endeavoured to show the difference of angles produced by different strengths. If played with moderate strength, the ball projected from 1 should rebound in the left-hand corner pocket; a rather harder stroke produces the angle  $a b$ ; and if played with still greater strength and the ball be struck rather above its centre, it produces the still wider angle  $c d$ .



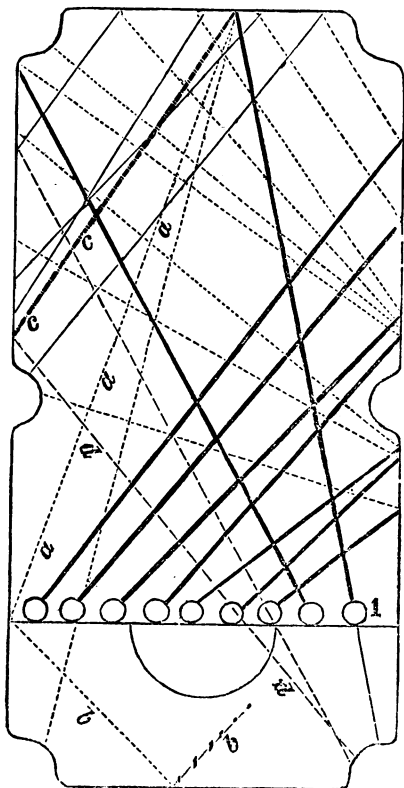


FIG. 7.—ANGLES OF THE TABLE.

All this is of course subject to modification, as the young player will soon discover.

In the next diagram (Fig. 8) I give a few of the angles across the table. Generally speaking, these will be sharper and more acute, in consequence of the inferior distance the ball has to travel. Here, again, I would advise gentle and moderate strokes, in preference to very hard ones. Hard hitting may occasionally produce unlooked-for fortune, but in the long-run science is certain to prevail over luck. A good, if not thorough, knowledge of the angles will enable the player to take advantage of many positions that would otherwise be useless to him, and help him to recover many games apparently lost, and make many brilliant strokes under unpromising circumstances.

It must, however, be noticed, that two or three of the angles shown in Fig. 8 are produced by the use of the side-stroke, and by that alone. If the reader will take the trouble to practise these angles on the table, he will soon discover the natural from the side-stroke angles.

#### THE LOW-STROKE.

Having got so far, it remains but to explain the nature of the low-stroke and screw a little more fully by means of a diagram; and then we may proceed to discuss the several games of Billiards with the rules which govern each; after which I offer a few diagrams illustrative of the winning and losing hazards, and canons that must occur in long games.

I have already spoken of the nature of the screw. It will be remembered that I described the effect of the stroke on the ball as reversing the order of its running. Now, if we take the

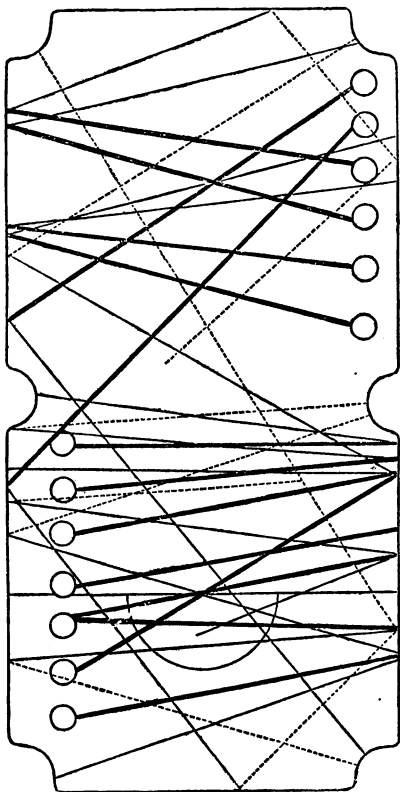


FIG. 8.—BRICOLE ANGLES.

Divided Ball (fig. 5, p. 29), and imagine a decided, but not too hard, stroke on the point A c or D c, it will be evident that the percussion must cause the ball to roll under and under instead of over and over. As an exemplification of this movement, take a boy's hoop, and, holding it below the centre of its circumference, project it suddenly forward, with, at the same instant, a sort of backward jerk. You will find then that, as soon as the hoop touches the ground, it will spin round the contrary way to that which it before assumed, and return suddenly to your hand. This theory, applied to the billiard ball, explains the whole philosophy of the low-stroke or screw. When this stroke is combined with the side-stroke, the ball may be made to return straight to the cue's-point, or at any desired angle.

This stroke is rather difficult to describe, but it is very easy to execute. There is hardly a game in which it may not be brought advantageously into practice; and in Pool and Pyramids—and, indeed, in nearly all the winning hazards—it is indispensable. According to the strength at which it is played will be the effect produced. Canons and losing hazards at right angles from the object-ball—*squaring the ball*, as it is called—cannot well be made without it; and numerous strokes will occur to the player in which it is found exceedingly useful.

In the diagram (Fig. 9, p. 42) several examples of the twist, screw, or low-stroke are given; and the amateur is advised to practise a few of them before he puts himself forward to play in a public Billiard room.

The white ball, as before, is supposed to be the player's ball, and the shaded one the object-ball. In Case 1 we have a well-known example

of the screw. The ball is struck low with the proper drawback motion, and it returns after percussion into the right-hand corner pocket.

Case 2 is somewhat different in its operation. Here we must use a little side with the screw. The ball therefore should be struck on A *b* of the divided ball, about an eighth from the centre.

Cases 3 and 4 are of very common occurrence. Here we have to canon a ball below the square of the object-ball. A gentle but decided screw, with the proper degree of side, is therefore required. Neither stroke could by any means be accomplished by the ordinary mode of striking your ball. The most you could do by hard hitting would be to make your own ball deflect from the object-ball (Case 3) in the direction of one or other of the dotted lines. But to make the canon on either of the balls indicated, a good decided low stroke is requisite. Some practice is necessary in order to make a stroke of this kind.

Case 5 is one in which the side-stroke is judiciously combined with the screw. The ball being delivered from the baulk with a slow side-screw, strikes the object-ball, curls to the cushion, and flies off in a direct angle to the left-hand corner pocket.

Case 6 is one in which, also, the screw must be combined with the side-stroke. Here it is necessary to play your own ball slightly below the centre on the extreme left hand, when, having struck the object-ball against the cushion, and removed it towards the centre of the table, the player's ball will proceed, hugging the cushion, to the canon or corner pocket. This is a highly useful stroke. It occurs—accidentally, of course, and much to the annoyance of the player—in almost every game of Pool. The side keeps

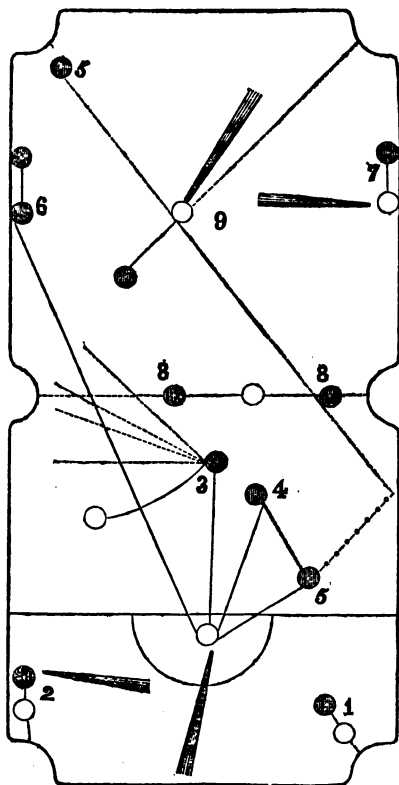


FIG. 9.—THE LOW STROKE.

it to the cushion, and the slight screw being partially lost from the distance the ball has travelled, has the effect, not of retarding the ball, but of pressing it forward with a slow, twisting motion, by which the canon or hazard is accomplished. This is often made a betting stroke with professional players. Beware of it.

Case 7 is simply Case 2 on the other cushion. After striking the object-ball, the player's ball will frequently run into the pocket.

Case 8 is a very useful stroke. Let the centre ball belong to the player. He puts a low screw on his ball, strikes the object-ball, and forces it into the opposite pocket, returning to the ball before the pocket, into which both balls fall, and thus makes a ten-stroke. This also is a betting stroke; but as almost every player can make it, the amateur will not lose more than once; and it is really worth sixpence or a shilling to see it done.—*Verbum sap.*

Case 9 is introduced to further exemplify the power of the screw. As in strokes 2 and 8, the object-ball is pocketed, and the player's ball drawn back with a decided screw. In this instance very little side is necessary. The stroke more usually played is the corresponding corner pockets; but the effect is precisely the same all over the table.

The high-stroke, the centre-stroke, and the oblique-stroke, are hardly capable of exemplification in a diagram. As already explained, the first must be struck above the centre; the second in the centre; and the third above the centre and oblique to the table, with the cue held high above the ball. The utility of this last stroke is acknowledged by all players, but it is seldom required, except it be necessary to clear an in-

tervening ball and strike one beyond. Some players also use it in making canons where the balls lie in an almost direct line; but the canon in this position may be generally made with the following stroke, especially if any great distance occurs between the two balls on which it is desirable to canon. By this stroke the ball is made to rise a little from the table, and fly forward without touching it, occasionally for several feet. It was a stroke of this kind that one Jabez Burns is said to have won a large wager from the proprietor of a cigar divan and billiard rooms not a thousand miles from Ludgate-hill. For practical purposes, it is, however, of but little use.

Here, then, we have, in as few words as I could put them, the great and leading principles of Billiards. Of course all players will have their own particular ways of accomplishing various hazards and canons; but if the amateur will condescend to study and practise the hints contained in the foregoing pages, he will certainly not have wasted his time; and if he possesses enough *nous* (a real Greek word, and not a bit of slang) to profit by the instructions offered him, there is little doubt but that he may, in the course of time, and by virtue of competition with better players than himself, stand a fair chance of some day being able to take thirty or forty points in a game of a hundred up, from such players as Bowles, Hughes, the Oxford Jonathan, Hitchin, the Davises, Kentfield, or even the great Roberts himself—and win!



## CHAPTER III.

### THE VARIOUS GAMES OF BILLIARDS.

“Where necessity pinches, boldness is prudence.”

IN the previous chapter I have endeavoured to make the young player acquainted with the general principles which govern all the games that are played on the billiard table; we now come naturally to a consideration of the details of the games themselves.

In this country those most commonly played are the winning and losing canon game, or “Billiards” *par excellence*; the American, or four-ball game; pool; and pyramids. The other games are simply modifications of these.

### THE WINNING AND LOSING CARAMBOLE GAME.

This is the regular game played in England by two or four players. The game is made by winning and losing hazards, canons, and forfeits, and is usually played fifty up. When four players make a match they play side against side, each player being allowed to instruct his partner; sixty-three points being the game. It is played with three balls, the white belonging to one side and the spot white to the other. The following are the rules observed in the best clubs and by the best players. They are those furnished by Messrs. Burroughes and Watts, of Soho-square. These gentlemen are now acknowledged to be the makers of the most approved billiard

tables, cues, &c. Their tables are to be found in the principal London and provincial clubs, and in the best public rooms throughout the country.

The remarks I have inserted within brackets are simply explanatory.

#### RULES.

1. The game commences by stringing for the lead and choice of the balls.

[It is usual for the receiver of points to lead off: but as the points are given to equalize the game, that plan is open to objection.]

2. The red ball must be placed on the lower of the two spots at the bottom of the table, and replaced there when it is holed, or forced off the table, or when the balls are broken.

[To "pocket" and to "hole" a ball are synonymous terms. By "breaking the balls," is meant the placing them as at the commencement of a game, and either striking the red or giving a miss, at option of the player.]

3. The player who breaks the balls, leads off.

4. If a player make one stroke in a game, he must finish that game; otherwise he loses it.

5. If the striker make any points by canon or hazard, he continues his game until he ceases to make points or gives a miss.

6. If, when the cue is pointed, the ball should be moved without the striker intending to strike, it may be replaced; and if not replaced before the stroke be played, the adversary may claim it as a foul stroke.

7. If a ball springs from the table, and strikes one of the players, or a by-stander, so as to prevent its falling on the floor, it must be considered as off the table.

8. If a ball runs so near the brink of a pocket as to stand there, and afterwards falls in, it must be replaced, and played at, or with, as the case may be.

[This rule applies rather to the old wooden tables with list cushions, than to the present fast tables and india-rubber cushions. A ball cannot be "challenged" as in Bagatelle ; it being very easy to see whether the ball falls into the pocket by its own impetus or by any other means. In cases of dispute on this and other points, the marker must decide ; and if he be unable, then appeal must be made to the majority of the by-standers.]

9. If a ball spin on the brink of a pocket, and, although stationary for a time, if the motion be not gone out of the ball and it falls into the pocket, the hazard is scored.

10. If a ball lodges on the top of a cushion, it is considered as off the table.

[This is almost impossible with modern tables.]

11. After the adversary's ball is off the table, and the two remaining balls are either upon the line or within the baulk, the player whose ball is in hand must play outside from the semicircle, and if he fail to strike either of the balls in returning from the cushion, he loses one point for a miss.

12. A line ball cannot be played at except by first striking a cushion by the player whose ball is in hand.

[A line ball is when the centre of the ball is exactly on the line of the baulk, in which case it is to be considered in the baulk, and cannot be played at except from a cushion out of the baulk.]

13. All misses must be given with the point of

the cue, and the ball struck only once; if otherwise given, the adversary may claim it as a foul stroke, and enforce the penalty,—make the striker play the stroke over again,—or have the ball replaced.

14. No score can be made by a foul stroke.

[It is called foul if a striker move a ball in the act of striking; or if he play with the wrong ball; or if he touch his own ball twice in playing; or if he strike a ball whilst it is running; or if he touch another ball; or if his feet are off the floor when playing. The penalty in all these cases is breaking the balls, and losing the lead. Enforcing the penalty for a foul stroke is entirely at the option of the adversary.]

15. If the adversary do not choose to enforce the penalty for a foul stroke, the striker may play on, and score all the points that he made by the foul stroke—which the marker is bound to score.

[Thus, if a foul stroke be made, and it is not perceived by the adversary, the player plays on, and the marker scores all the points he makes: no by-stander is allowed to point out a foul stroke. The merely moving the cue ball before striking, is not usually claimed as a foul stroke.]

16. If the striker hole the white ball (the white winning hazard), or if he hole his own ball from the white ball (the white losing hazard), he gains two points; if he does both, he gains four points.

17. If the striker hole the red ball, he wins three; and if by the same stroke he hole his own from the red, he wins three more.

18. When the red ball is pocketed, or off the table, and the spot on which it should stand is

occupied by the white ball, it must be placed in a corresponding situation at the other end of the table; but if that should be occupied also by the other white ball, it must be placed in the centre of the table, immediately between the two middle pockets; and wherever it is placed, there it must remain, until it be played, or the game be over.

[This is a variable rule. In some billiard rooms the ball which cannot be spotted is placed on the winning spot, and if that be full, on the centre spot; and in the event of that also being occupied, then it is placed on the spot on the baulk line, which latter situation seems most appropriate. This is one of those rules which must be decided by the custom of the room.]

19. Two points are scored for every canon; two points for every white hazard, and three points for every red hazard.

[Thus explained :—

If the striker play at the white ball first, make a canon and pocket his own ball, he gains four points: two for the canon and two for the white losing hazard. If he play at the white ball first, and pocket his own ball and the red one, he gains five points. If he play at the white ball first, make a canon, and pocket the red and white balls, he gains seven points. If he play at the white ball first, make a canon, and at the same time pocket his own and his adversary's ball, he wins six points; two for the canon, and two for each white hazard. If he play at the white ball first, and pocket all the balls without making a canon, he gains seven points. If he play at the white ball first, make a canon, and pocket all balls, he gains nine points. If he play at the red ball first, and pocket it and his own ball, he gains six points. If he play at the red ball first, make a canon, and by the same stroke pocket his own

ball, he gains five points: two for the canon, and three for the red losing hazard. If he play at the red ball first, make a canon, and pocket the red and the white ball, he gains seven points. If he play at the red ball first, make a canon, and at the same time pocket his own and the red ball, he wins eight points: two for the canon, three for the red losing, and three for the red winning hazard. If he play at the red ball first, and pocket his own and the white ball, without a canon, he gains five points. If he play at the red ball first, and pocket all the balls, without a canon, he gains eight points. If he strike the red ball first, make a canon, and by the same stroke pocket his own and both the other balls, he gains ten points: the greatest number that can be gained by one stroke.]

20. If the striker, in taking aim or in the act of striking, move his ball, so as to strike the ball he is playing at, it is a stroke, and must pass as such, unless the adversary choose to let him play the stroke over again.

21. If a striker, in the act of striking, move his ball ever so little, it is a stroke.

[Except as provided by rule 6.]

22. If the striker miss the ball he plays at, he loses one point; and if by the same stroke his own ball runs into a pocket, he loses three points; that is to say, his adversary scores so many points.

[This is called a Coup.]

23. If the striker force his own or either of the other balls over the table, after having made a canon or a hazard, he gains nothing by the stroke, and his adversary plays on without breaking the balls.

24. If the striker wilfully force his ball off the table without striking another ball, he loses three points ; but if the ball goes over by accident, he loses one point only for the miss.

[To a person conversant with the game, it is not a very difficult thing to discern whether a ball is forced over wilfully or not ; and it would be severe upon the striker to be compelled to lose three points for what may be the fault of the table. This appears to contradict rule 22. The custom of the room must decide.]

25. If the striker play with the wrong ball, and a canon or hazard be made thereby, the adversary may have the balls broken ; but if nothing be made by the stroke, he (the adversary) may take his choice of balls for the next stroke ; and with the ball he chooses he must continue to play until the game is over.

[The playing with the wrong ball must be discovered before the next stroke is played, otherwise no penalty attaches to it.]

26. No person has a right to inform the adversary that the striker has played, or is about to play, with the wrong ball.

27. No person, except the adversary, has a right to inform the striker that he is playing with the wrong ball.

[This is simply the reverse of Rule 26.]

28. If the adversary do not see the striker play with the wrong ball, or, seeing it, do not choose to enforce the penalty, the marker is bound to score all the points that may have been made by the stroke.

29. If the striker's ball be in hand, and the other two balls within the baulk, and should he either by accident or design strike one of them

without first playing out of the baulk, the adversary has the option of letting the balls remain as they are, and scoring a miss—of having the ball so struck replaced in its original position, and scoring a miss—of making the striker play the stroke over again—or of making it a foul stroke, and breaking the balls.

[At first sight this would appear a harsh rule, with a heavy penalty; but, perhaps, the adverse party may have laid his plans with skill, and he must not, therefore, have them unfairly frustrated with impunity. Besides, care *must* be taken that the adversary be not a sufferer by the unfair play or blunders of the striker.]

30. If the striker's ball be in hand, he has no right to play at a cushion within the baulk, in order to strike a ball that is out of it.

31. If the striker's ball be in hand, and he, in playing from the baulk, should move his ball in the act of striking, it is a stroke, although the ball should not go out of the baulk. But the adversary may, if he choose, compel him to play the stroke over again.

32. If the striker's ball be near the ball he plays at, and he play the stroke with the point of the cue, it is fair; but if he play with the butt-end, the marker must decide whether it be foul or fair.

[All strokes are fair with the point of the cue—so long as it be a stroke, and not a series of pushes. Whether a ball be struck with cue or butt, it is imperative that, with either instrument, the striker's ball must be fairly rolling before it comes in contact with the object-ball.]

33. If the striker's ball be on the brink of a pocket, and he, in the act of striking, misses the hit, and, in drawing back his cue, knocks it (the



ball) into the pocket, he loses three points—it being a coup.

34. If the striker, in giving a miss from the baulk, should let his ball remain in the baulk, without its having gone out, the adversary may either let it remain so, or compel him to play the stroke over again.

35. If the striker, in giving a miss, should make a foul stroke, and his adversary claim it as such, and enforce the penalty, the miss is not scored.

36. No person is allowed to take up a ball without permission of the adversary.

37. If a player or other person move a ball by accident or design, or take it up supposing the game to be over, it must be replaced to the satisfaction of the adversary.

[In some rooms the taking up of an adversary's ball loses the game, and, under certain circumstances, rightly; but the fairest thing is to make him break the balls.]

38. If either player in any way obstruct the course of the ball, it is deemed foul, and the ball must be replaced, the balls broken, or the game forfeited.

39. No person is allowed to offer advice to the players during the progress of the game.

[But if a person be appealed to by one of the players, or by the marker, he has then a right to give an opinion, whether he be interested in the game or not; and if a spectator sees the game marked wrong, he has a right to mention it, provided he do it in time for it to be rectified, but not afterwards.]

40. No person is allowed to walk about the room during the game, make a noise, or otherwise annoy the players.

[When silence is demanded, it is expected that all persons in the room will comply therewith. It is expected that all persons in the room, whether they are playing or not, will conform to the foregoing rules, in so far as they relate to them respectively.]

The "rules of the game" as usually given, comprise many of the explanations and bits of advice I have enclosed within brackets. For all practical purposes, however, the above will be found sufficient. Cases of doubt and exception, for which no provision is found in the rules, must be referred to the marker or to the majority of the players in the room.

#### THE AMERICAN GAME.

The American, or four-ball game, is played with two coloured balls and two white balls. The scores are made by winning hazards and canons. The canon from a white to a coloured ball counts two; from one to another coloured ball, three points: three points are taken for each coloured ball pocketed, and two for the white ball. At the commencement of the game one coloured ball is placed on the winning spot, and the other on the centre spot on the baulk line. The non-player places his ball on the spot, and the striker at starting either hits it or gives a miss. The baulk is considered to be all the space within the line, not the semicircle merely. The rules as to foul strokes, &c., are the same as in the regular English game. The game is usually played 62 up; but, like the other game, may be played for any number of points.

## POOL.

There are several ways of playing Pool: namely, with as many balls as there are players; or with two balls only, the players playing in turns, and playing with the alternate balls; playing at the nearest ball; playing at the last player; or the striker playing at whichever ball he chooses. But the most popular mode is that in which the striker plays at the last player. This is likewise the fairest way of playing the game. The balls are given out of a basket or bag by the marker, after he has collected from each player the stake to be contended for. The game consists entirely of winning hazards; each player having three lives, and the final winner or winners taking the pool after deduction of the expenses of the table—usually two or three pence a ball. Any number can play, the white ball being placed on the spot at the commencement. The order of play usually observed is the following, each person playing progressively:—

White spots.

Red plays upon White.

Yellow upon Red.

Blue upon Yellow.

Brown upon Blue.

Green upon Brown.

Black upon Green.

And if there be more than seven players, then spot balls are used, and

Spot White plays upon Black.

Spot Red upon Spot White.

Spot Yellow upon Spot Red,

and so on till each player has made his stroke.

Each striker endeavours to hole the ball he plays upon; and if he succeed in doing so, he receives a life from the owner of the ball, and then plays upon the nearest, and so goes on till he fail to pocket a ball, when the next player plays upon him. And so throughout. Every player who loses a life pays to the person who pocketed his ball; or if he misses the ball he plays at, he pays a life to its owner. And when the game is reduced to two players, with an equal number of lives, they divide the pool; or if the two remaining players have an unequal number of lives, they play out the game, and he who remains with a life or lives to the last, after all the others have lost, receives the whole pool.

The following are rules observed in all the principal clubs and public rooms:—

#### RULES OF POOL.

1. Each player has three lives at starting. No. 1 places his ball on the winning and losing spot; No. 2 plays from the semicircle at No. 1; No. 3 at No. 2; and so on; each person playing at the last ball; unless it should be in hand, then the player plays at the nearest ball.

2. If the striker lose a life in any way, the next player plays at the nearest ball to his own; but if his (the player's) ball be in hand, he plays at the nearest ball to the centre of the baulk line, whether in or out of baulk.

3. Should doubt arise respecting the distance of balls, it must (if the player's ball be in hand) be measured from the centre spot in the baulk; 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 the distance must be

decided by the marker, or by the majority of the company ; but should the distance be equal, then the parties must draw lots.

4. The baulk is no protection under any circumstances.

5. The player loses 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 ball off the table ; by playing with or at the wrong ball ; or by playing out of his turn.

6. Should the striker pocket the ball he plays at, and by the same stroke pocket his own, or force it over the table, he, and not the person whose ball he pocketed, loses a life.

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

8. If the striker miss the ball he ought to play at, and strike another ball, and pocket it, he, and not the person whose ball he pocketed, loses a life ; in which case, the striker's ball must be taken off the table, and both balls remain in hand until it be their turns to play.

9. If the striker, while taking aim, inquire which is the ball he ought to play at, and should be misinformed by the marker, or by any one of the players, he does not lose a life. The ball must, in this case, be replaced, and the stroke played again.

10. If information be required by the player, as to which is his ball, or when it is his turn to play, he has a right to an answer from the marker, or from the players.

[The proper plan is for the marker to call out, "Red upon white, and yellow's your player : yellow upon red, and blue's your player—in hand ;" and so on, as the case may be, at each player's turn to strike.]

11. 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 that it will prevent him hitting *any part of the object-ball*, they must be taken up until the stroke be played; and after the balls have ceased running, they must be replaced.

12. If a ball or balls are in the way of a striker's cue, so that he cannot play at his ball, he can have them taken up.

[Thus, if the player's ball be angled, he can have any ball taken up that he considers likely to interfere with the passage of his own ball across or along the table should he choose to strike the cushion first.]

13. When the striker takes a life, he continues to play on as long as he can make a hazard, or until the balls are all off the table; in which latter case he spots his ball, as at first.

14. The first player who loses his three lives is entitled to purchase, or "star" by paying into the Pool the same stake as at the commencement, for which he receives as many lives as the lowest on the board.

15. If the first player out refuse to star, the second may star; if the second refuse, the third may star; and so on, until only two persons are left in the Pool, when the privilege of starring ceases.

16. Only one star is allowed in a Pool.

[The "star" is denoted on the marking-board, which is to be always in the charge of the marker; no player or bystander being allowed in any way to interfere with it.]

17. If the striker move his or another ball while in the act of striking, the stroke is foul; and if by the same stroke he pocket a ball, or

force it off the table, the owner of that ball does not lose a life, and the ball so holed must be placed on the original spot; but if by that stroke the player pocket his own ball, or force it off the table, he loses a life.

18. If the striker's ball touch the one he has to play at, he is at liberty either to play at it, or at any other ball on the table.

19. After making a hazard, if the striker take up his ball or stop it before it has done running, he cannot claim the life; it being possible that his own ball might have gone into a pocket if he had not stopped it.

20. 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, and more than one ball remain, the persons to whom the balls belong must draw lots for the star.

21. If the striker's ball stop on the spot of a ball removed, the latter must remain in hand until the spot is unoccupied, and then be replaced.

22. If the striker miss the ball played at, no person is allowed to stop the ball while it is running, or until it has struck another ball—except the striker, who may stop the ball when he pleases.

23. If the striker should have his next player's ball removed, and stop on the spot it occupied, the next player must give a miss from the baulk, for which miss he does not lose a life.

24. If the striker has a ball removed, and any other than the next player's ball stop on the spot it occupied, the former must remain in hand till the latter be played, unless it should happen to be the turn of the latter to play, in which case it must be replaced after the stroke.

25. If the corner of the cushion should prevent the striker from playing in a direct line, he can have any ball removed for the purpose of playing at a cushion first.

[See note to Rule 12.]

26. The last two players cannot star or purchase; but they may divide, if they are each left with an equal number of lives; the striker, however, is entitled to his stroke before the division.

[In case of three players being left in a pool with a life each, and one player make a miss, the two others divide without a stroke.]

27. All disputes are to be decided by the marker; or if he be interested (either as a player or as the maker of a bet,) by a majority of the players.

28. The charge for the table to be taken out of the Pool before it is delivered to the winner.

#### PYRAMIDS.

The game of Pyramids, or Pyramid Pool, is ordinarily played by two persons, with any agreed number of balls. Usually the game is played with sixteen balls—fifteen red and one white ball, which latter is the common property of both players. The object of the game is to pocket all the balls but one; and he who is left with that one at the end of the game, wins the Pyramid. If three, four or more persons play, the strokes are taken alternately. Partners may advise each other.

Pyramids is usually played for a stake on the game, and a smaller sum for each ball or life; as three shillings and one—eighteen-pence and sixpence—the proportion between the Pool and the lives being ordinarily as three to one.



The players string for choice, and the one whose turn it is to commence plays from the baulk semicircle at the pyramid. After this the baulk is no protection. The player who makes a winning hazard, continues to play till he fails to make another hazard, makes a miss, or pockets his own (the white) ball. In either of the latter cases, the player loses a life; and if by the same stroke he pockets one or more balls, as well as his own, the latter are placed on the table, and his adversary proceeds with the game as before. The regulations as to foul strokes are the same as at Billiards.

The following are the remaining

#### RULES OF PYRAMIDS.

1. The player who pockets the greatest number of balls wins the game.

2. If the player give a miss—pocket the white ball, or forces it over the table, he loses one point; one of the coloured balls he has pocketed must then be placed on the winning spot, if unoccupied; if not, it must be placed on the centre spot; and if that is occupied, on the centre baulk spot. If all these positions be full, then the ball must be placed a foot below the point of the pyramid.

3. If the striker hole his own ball, or force it over the table, and at the same time pocket one or more of the coloured balls, or force them over the table, he gains nothing by the stroke: the coloured balls so removed must be replaced on the table, together with one of the striker's coloured balls. The penalty is the loss of a life.

4. Should the striker losing a ball not have taken one, the first he holes must be placed on the table; should he not take one during the

game, he must pay the usual stake for each ball so forfeited.

5. If the white ball touch a coloured one, the player may score all the coloured balls he pockets—he cannot give a miss.

6. Should the striker move any ball in taking aim or striking, he loses all he might otherwise have gained by the stroke.

7. If the striker force one or more of the coloured balls over the table, he scores one for each, the same as if he had pocketed them.

[In some rooms—notably at the King's Arms, Fenchurch street—this rule is not adhered to ; a ball wilfully forced over the table not being allowed to score.]

8. If the game be played with an even number of balls, the last hazard counts one ; if with an odd number, it counts two.

9. 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 with the red, alternately, as at single Pool.

10. When only two balls are on the table, and two persons playing, should the striker hole the ball he is playing with, or make a miss, the game is finished ; if there are more than two players, and they not partners, the striker places a ball on the spot.

In the *Losing Pyramid*—seldom played—losing instead of winning hazards are made, and for each hazard a ball is taken off the table.

#### SINGLE POOL.

This game is played by two players for a stake on the lives—usually three—and a pool. The

taker of the majority of lives wins the game. The rules are the same as in Pool.

#### SKITTLE POOL.

This is an amateur's game, in which any number of players may engage. It was introduced into Purcell's rooms in Cornhill in the spring of 1861. No particular science is required. Twelve skittles are placed at regular distances round the table, about six inches from the cushion. Two of the skittles are black and the rest white. The three billiard balls are used; and at the commencement of the game are placed as follows—the white balls on the spot in the baulk, and the red ball nearly close to the cushion over the spot. One of the black skittles is placed behind a white one, on the table on the right hand side, about a foot from the pocket; and the other on the baulk line, about six inches within the circle on the right hand side of the player. Each skittle bears a certain value from 1 to 10; and the player who knocks down a skittle *after striking a ball*, gains as many points towards the game as is represented by skittles overturned. As a public room game, Skittle Pool is somewhat in favour, especially with indifferent players—hard hitting and luck often winning a pool, when science and judgment fail. It is, however, a game decidedly more profitable to the table than to the players; but it is full of variety, and creates much amusement. The rules will generally be found in the rooms. I have not thought fit to insert them, as they vary considerably.

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The other games need no particular description, they being but seldom played.

**THE WHITE WINNING GAME.**

This is probably the original game of Billiards. It is played with two balls, and consists of winning hazards only, and is generally played by two persons, 12 or 15 up. The rules are the same as in Billiards.

**THE WHITE LOSING GAME.**

This game is also played with two balls, and consists entirely of losing hazards. It is played by two persons, 15 up. The rules as in Billiards.

**THE WINNING CANON GAME.**

This game is played with three balls, two white and a red, by two persons, 18 up. It consists of winning hazards and canons—all losing hazards, misses, coups, &c., being forfeits and added to the adversary's score. Rules as in Billiards.

**THE LOSING CANON GAME.**

This is the reverse of the last, all winning hazards, misses, &c., being forfeit to the adversary. Rules as in Billiards.

**SIDE AGAINST SIDE.**

This game is played as at Billiards, each player taking one side of the table; and all hazards made on his opponent's side being forfeited, and added to the score of the latter. Canons count as usual, and the rules of Billiards are observed.

**ONE POCKET TO FIVE,**

Is Billiards in which one player has a single pocket, and the other the remaining five; scored by canons and hazards, and played any number

of points up. Either player making a hazard in his opponent's pocket forfeits the stroke, which is added to the score of the latter.

#### TWO POCKETS TO FOUR,

Similar to the last, with the rules as at Billiards. Giving four pockets to two, is equal to about 16 in 50.

#### THE GO-BACK GAME.

In this game, which is usually played by a professor opposed to an amateur, each stroke made by the latter is added to his score, while for every *hazard* he makes—not every canon—his opponent goes back to love, or nothing. In all other respects, it is similar to the regular game of Billiards, and is governed by the same rules. It is played any number of points up, from 5 to 50, according to the skill of the respective players. It is commonly a wagering game, and is therefore to be avoided by the tyro.

#### THE NOMINATION GAME.

This is Billiards, in which each player names the stroke he intends to make, and forfeits to his opponent all strokes not so named; but if the player name a hazard and make it, together with another hazard or a canon, or both, he scores all he makes. It is a stupid game, because it leaves no margin for enterprise or luck; and is seldom played except when one or other of the players gets out of temper by being frequently beaten. In which case, it is needless to say, he seldom plays well.

#### THE COMMANDING GAME.

This is Billiards, in which the stronger player makes only such strokes as are chosen or com-

manded by his opponent. It is an uninteresting game in the hands of any but first-rate players.

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Several foreign games are occasionally played. The most interesting are—

#### CARLINE.

A Russian game, with three coloured balls and two white ones. It consists of all winning hazards and canons; losing hazards being forfeit to the opponent's score, as many as are counted by the stroke. At the commencement of the game, one coloured ball is placed on the winning spot, one on the centre baulk spot, and the third in the centre of the table; the last is called the carline. Each of two coloured balls holed in a corner pocket scores three; but the carline holed in a centre pocket scores six; but if holed in a corner, *loses six*. Each canon from a white to a coloured ball scores two; and from one coloured ball to another, three. Successive canons and pockets score; thus it is possible to score a large number by a single stroke—for instance, you play at the carline, and hole it in the centre, six; make a canon on to the yellow, three; and thence to the blue, three; which you pocket, three—in all fifteen. And if, in addition to these strokes, it were possible to canon on to the white and hole it, you would score nineteen. It is a lively game, but vastly inferior to the regular English Billiards in science and variety. It is usually played 63 up; but when played by four persons—two as partners against two—101 is the game. With regard to foul strokes, &c., it is governed by the rules of the English game.

## THE SPANISH GAME.

This game (*Kugel-partie*) is played by two players with three balls and five skittles, which latter are set up in the centre of the table. The game is 31 up, and is scored by hazards and canons, and points gained for knocking down the pins after striking a ball. The player scores two points for every skittle knocked down after concussion between his own and his opponent's or the red ball, with two for the white winning hazard, and three for the red winning hazards; losing hazards forfeit to the opponent all the score made by the stroke. The rules of Billiards govern the foul strokes, &c.

## THE FRENCH GAME.

The regular French game consists of canons only, but the baulk is not confined to the semi-circle. Misses and pockets do not count either way. At commencement the red is placed on the winning spot, and the non-striker's ball on the centre spot in baulk. It is usually played on a table without pockets, with two-and-a-half inch balls and a heavy cue. To the canon game, as played on an English table, winning hazards are sometimes added, when the rules are the same as in Billiards.

## THE DOUBLET GAME.

In this game no score is made unless the cushion is first struck with the ball. It consists of canons and doublets, and, like others of the cramp games, is commonly played between a superior and an inferior player, the former giving odds—as doublets and canons against hazards and canons, and so on. When played with three balls as an even game, it is, indeed, French

Billiards as now played in Paris and the large towns and cities of France. It is sometimes played with only two balls, two points being marked for each hazard.

Several other games are played on the Billiard table, but they are deficient in interest and variety, and inferior in every respect to our Billiards. For instance, there is the *Non-cushion game*, in which no score can be made if the striker's ball touch a cushion; the *Cushion game*, in which the player strikes his own ball from the frame of the cushion at a ball on the table; the *Bar-hole game*, in which one pocket is estopped or barred; the *Choice of balls*, in which each player selects either ball to play with; and Hazards, or *Penny Pot*. The latter is an amusing game for amateurs. It is played like Pool, the same balls and order of succession being observed. For every ball pocketed the player receives a stake—usually a penny or sixpence—and plays till he ceases to score. After making a winning hazard the nearest ball is played on. A life is forfeited for every miss, coup, or losing hazard, and paid to the owner of the ball played on. This game continues for an indefinite period, no player being put out of the game by reason of losing a life, or compelled to play longer than he chooses. It is a nice merry game in a country house, where there is a large party, with half-a-dozen or more agreeable young ladies. It may be played with the point or the butt-end of the cue, the mace; or the flattened end of a good walking-stick, when the number of players is great and the number of cues limited—events that may occur even in the best-regulated families.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE THEORY OF BILLIARDS EXEMPLIFIED.

“Force without forecast will not make luck last.”

EVERY young player should remember this proverb. It is of small use reading instructions and rules, if you do not practise on the table itself; and that, too, till you have conquered most of the strokes which present themselves in every game. In the following diagrams are shown some of the most ordinary hazards and canons, most of which can be accomplished without the use of the side-stroke. I might have shown you some of the difficult and amazing strokes Kent-field and others are said to have made known; but they would advance you little, seeing that what you have to do is not so much to learn unique strokes as to acquaint yourself with those which continually occur.

The first and most easily acquired strokes are winning hazards. Now, for winning hazards it is seldom necessary to use any side-stroke at all, because without you put sufficient force on your own ball it is nearly impossible to reckon, with anything like certainty, on the direction taken by the object-ball, especially at long distances. But when you strike your own ball full and divide the object-ball, then you may fairly enough calculate upon certain results; for if the ball you play upon be properly struck, it must go into the pocket aimed at. Now remember that the easiest stroke on the table is the straight winning hazard; and yet you will often hear players say

they cannot make a straight hazard. Why? Because they so accustom themselves to use the side, unnecessarily, that they cannot make a full centre stroke on their own ball.

*The reason for dividing the object-ball is to convert the angle between it and the pocket into a straight line.* Well, how do we do this? For a straight hazard we know a full stroke is necessary. A hazard presents itself with the object-ball at an angle with the pocket. What we have to do is to convert the oblique line into a straight one, by striking at that part of the object-ball which will have the effect intended. In other words, draw an imaginary line between the object-ball and the pocket, and then so strike our own ball against the other as to cause it to follow the direction of that line to the pocket. We, in fact, make every hazard a straight one. This you will see by an examination of the diagram (Fig. 10). In it there is but one really straight hazard (case 20); all the rest are more or less oblique, and require the object-ball to be divided. Try the strokes delineated in the four following figures, by means of the instructions given.

*Winning Hazards in Fig. 10.*—Strokes 1, 2, 3, and 4 need to be struck more or less from a three-quarter to an eighth or fine ball on the baulk side of the object-ball.

Strokes 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 require the object-ball to be struck on the other side with a variation in the division of the ball for each angle.

Strokes 11 to 19 show, as in the other cases, the part of the object to be struck. In all the Figures it will be understood that the same description of stroke will answer for a corresponding position of the balls all over the table. In each case you strike your own ball nearly full.

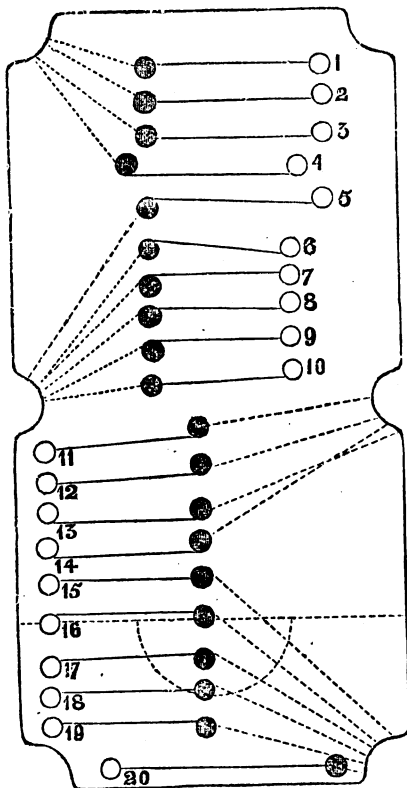


FIG. 10.—WINNING HAZARDS.

*Winning Hazards in Fig. 11.*—Cases 1 to 13 show the part of the object ball to strike when it lies at or near the winning spot. It is needless to say that in each instance the stroke can only be made by practice.

Strokes 14 to 22 show how the winning hazards in either of the middle pockets may be made by the player whose ball is in hand and the object ball lies below the pocket.

Strokes 23 to 26 show how the corner-pocket hazard may be made. Practise these till you can make them with tolerable certainty.

*Winning Hazards in Fig. 12.*—These are rather more difficult. Strokes 1 to 14 are made from the baulk into the end top pockets—the object-ball being divided, from a nearly full ball, as in 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, to an eighth in 1 and 9. Stroke 11 should be made to hug the cushion; and in all a moderate degree of strength only is required. It is said by some that the strength with which a winning hazard is made is of no importance; but this is not true: for if you strike your ball too hard you will force the object-ball into an angle different from that drawn in your mind's eye.

Strokes 15, 16, and 17, must be played gently, the first two with a half ball and the last with a quarter.

Strokes 18 to 33 show the various kinds of cuts made by striking the ball in the direction indicated by the line drawn between the white ball and the red.

Stroke A is what is called the "spot-stroke." This is accomplished by a nearly full ball of moderate strength; and in order to repeat it from one side to the other it is necessary to slightly divide your own ball by putting on a

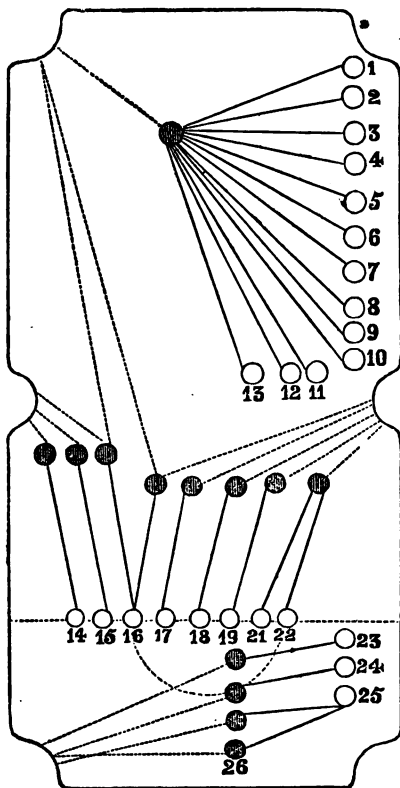


FIG. 11.—WINNING HAZARDS.

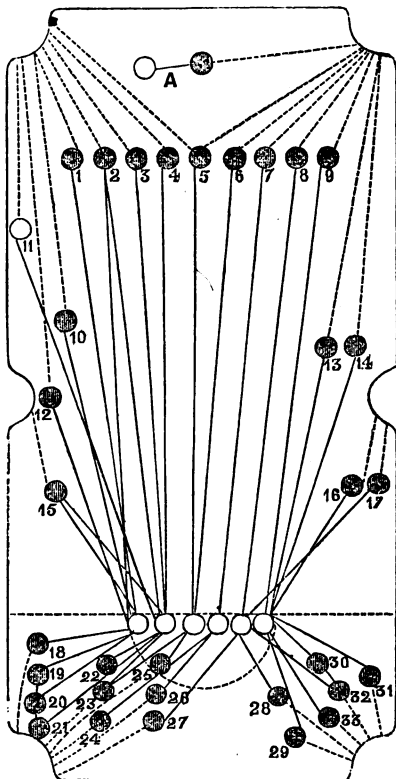


FIG. 12.—WINNING HAZARDS.

little side—say *De* in the divided ball. This will bring your ball in the right direction on the other side for the next stroke. Some players are clever enough to repeat this stroke a dozen or twenty times. It is one of the most winning hazards on the table. Sometimes it may be made by stopping your own ball a little behind the object-ball, and thus making a succession of hazards in the same pocket. Then when you get too low down the table to do this successfully, you pocket the red with a rapid stroke, which causes your ball to traverse the table, and return to about the right place for another hazard in the corner pocket. This stroke must be learned from a player. It cannot be taught in books.

*Winning Hazards in Fig. 13.*—These are all correctly indicated in the diagram.

Strokes 1, 2, and 3 are highly useful, and must be made a nearly half full. Strokes 4 to 14 require minute division of the object-ball. Stroke 15 is made by a half ball. Stroke 16, a half ball; 17, a three-quarter ball; 18, 19, and 20, rather fine balls; 21, a full ball; 22, a half ball for either end pocket; 23, a fine cut.

All these hazards occur commonly in most games, and in every game at Pool and Pyramids. They should be practised continually till the pupil can make them with some degree of accuracy. In some cases canons will also present themselves. Then put on a little side: but generally it is better to make one stroke with certainty than, by trying for too much, miss both. Remember the fable of the Dog and the Shadow.

We now come to the losing hazards. These require a different kind of treatment. Most of them can be made by dividing the object-ball;

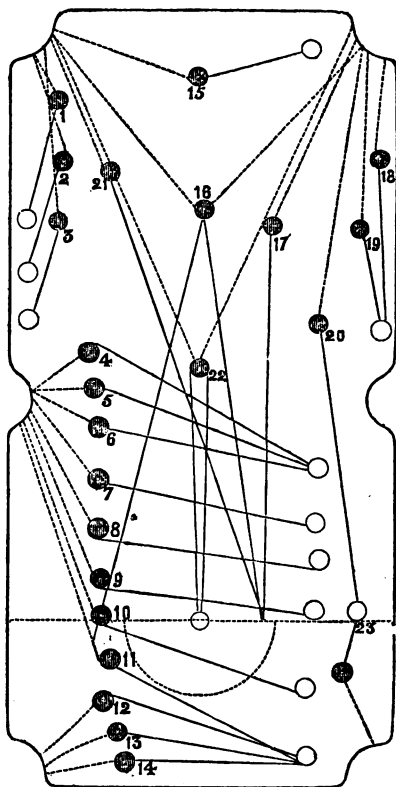


FIG. 13.—WINNING HAZARDS.



but when they are distant, then it is best to put side on to your own ball.

*Losing Hazards in Fig. 14.*—Strokes 1 to 8 are made with a screw and more or less side. Much depends on the position in which you place your ball in baulk.

Strokes 9, 10, 11, and 12 want a strong side, as shown in the figure.

Stroke 13 is made by first striking the cushion with a gentle blow, when the ball will rebound, strike the other ball, and fall into the pocket; a most useful stroke. Stroke 14 will frequently occur. Side must be put on your own, which will remove the object-ball, and cause the striker's ball to hug the cushion and fall into the pocket.

Strokes 15 to 21 are indicated with sufficient exactness to render further directions needless.

Stroke 22 shows how the losing hazard is made from baulk off the red on the spot. A strong side-twist is required, and much practice.

*Losing Hazards in Fig. 15.*—Here we see—1 to 15—the various positions from which losing hazards may be made off a ball, on or near to the spot. These might of course be multiplied indefinitely; but the reader's own intelligence will show him the reason for each stroke. They may all be made either with or without side.

Stroke 16 is a most brilliant and effective one. It is made by a gentle push, requiring great caution in order to make it fair. I have seen players who could make a score of twenty or thirty off such a hazard as this. It must be shown by a player, and cannot be properly described otherwise.

*Losing Hazards in Fig. 16.*—These are all of them shown with accuracy in the diagram. Strokes 1 to 7 show how losing hazards may be

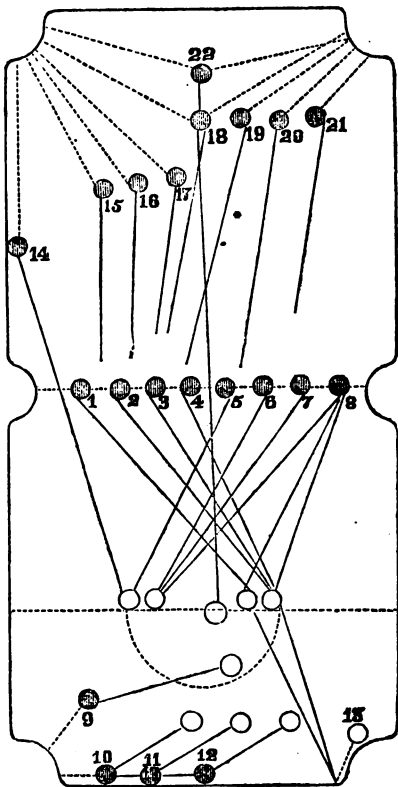


FIG. 14.—LOSING HAZARDS.

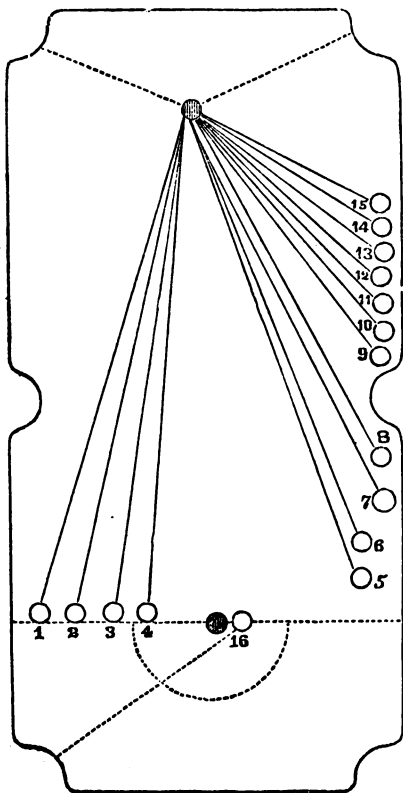


FIG. 15.—LOSING HAZARDS.

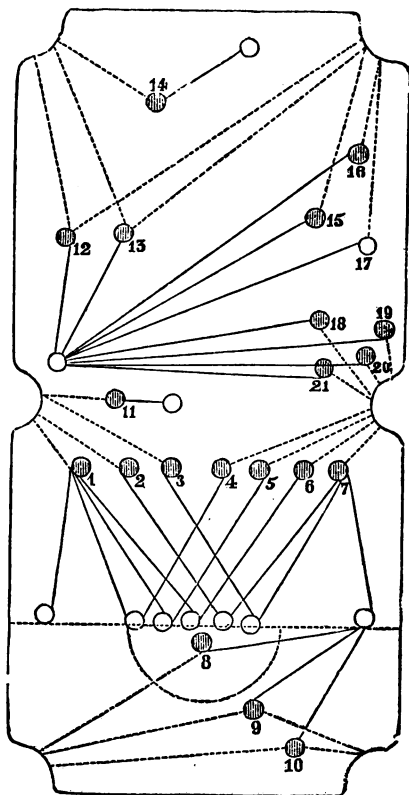


FIG. 16.—LOSING HAZARDS.

# HANDBOOK OF BILLIARDS.

made in the middle pockets from bank  
centre strokes require modification of  
ball, and the end ones fine balls; or they  
be made with the side stroke. Strokes 8, 9,  
10 require side; the last especially.

Stroke 11 is one that can only be acquired by  
practice; for it is necessary to remove the  
ball by striking it on its side, and at the  
time putting enough side on your own ball  
carry it to the pocket after contact—dividing  
both balls.

Strokes 12 to 21 are also made by dividing  
both balls; though the wide angles can be made  
without much trouble in this respect.

*Losing Hazards* is Fig. 17.—Strokes 1 to 8  
from the bank are easy, and require no  
except in case 8, which is the same as stroke 11  
in Fig. 16, with a swifter high stroke. All the  
hazards are to be made by striking your own  
ball a little above the centre.

Strokes 7 and 8 require considerable  
on with gentle caution: though these may  
may be made without side, though not as easily.

Strokes 9 and 10 show the error which  
made with a gentle ball as with the side stroke  
on, as shown in the figure.

These are sufficient illustrations of  
hazards. They are more as illustrations of  
may be done, rather than as instructions of  
actual strokes. They, or similar strokes, are  
all over the table in every case.

Therefore, of a stroke is necessary, rather than  
is also true of the position of the balls.  
Of course the player must exercise  
caution in attempting them; but if he will  
the balls in or near the centre of the table  
then try the hazards without hesitation.

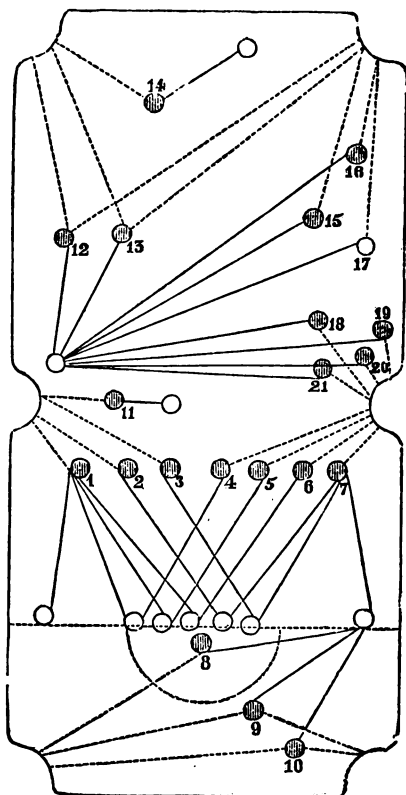


FIG. 16.—LOSING HAZARDS.

made in the middle pockets from baulk. The centre strokes require modification of the half ball, and the end ones fine balls; or they may be made with the side stroke. Strokes 8, 9, and 10 require side; the last especially.

Stroke 11 is one that can only be acquired by practice; for it is necessary to remove the object-ball by striking it on its side, and at the same time putting enough side on your own ball to carry it to the pocket after contact—dividing both balls.

Strokes 12 to 21 are also made by dividing both balls; though the wide angles can be made without much trouble in this respect.

*Losing Hazards in Fig. 17.*—Strokes 1 to 6 from the baulk are easy, and require no side, except in case 6, which is the same as stroke 11 in Fig. 16, with a swifter high stroke. All these hazards are to be made by striking your own ball a little above the centre.

Strokes 7 and 8 require considerable side put on with gentle caution; though those in cases 7 may be made without side, though not so easily.

Strokes 9 and 10 show the jenny, which is made with a gentle ball on which the side is put on, as shown in the figure.

These are sufficient illustrations of losing hazards. They are given as indications of what may be done, rather than as absolute figures of actual strokes. They, or similar strokes, occur all over the table in every game. What is true, therefore, of a stroke in one position on the table, is also true of like positions in other parts of it. Of course the player must exercise judgment and caution in attempting them; but if he will place the balls in or near to the situations shown, and then try the hazards—not for once or twice, but

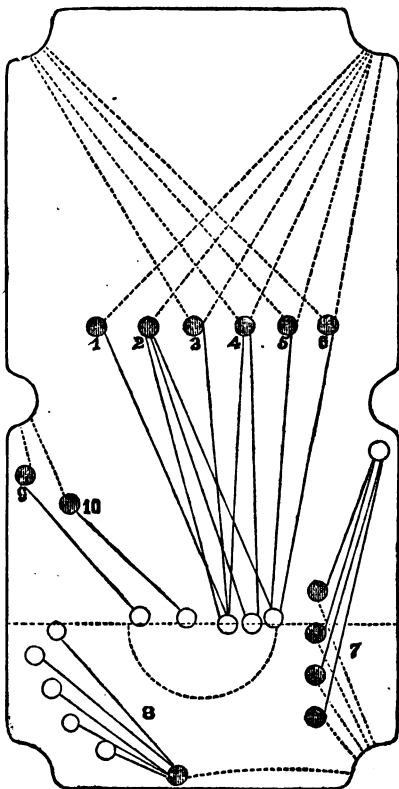


FIG. 17.—LOSING HAZARDS.



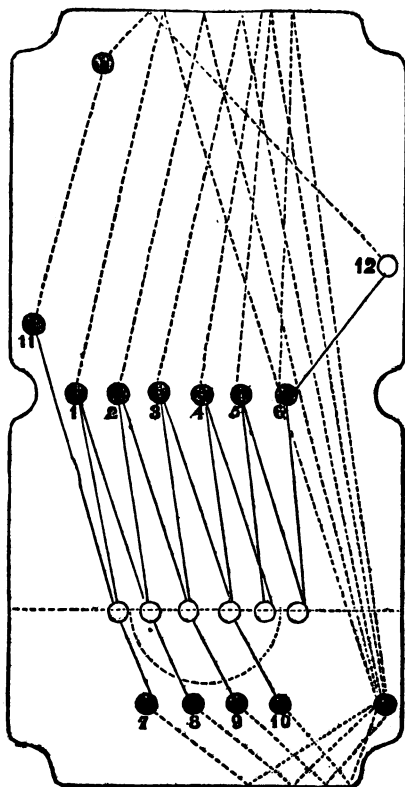


FIG. 18.—CANONS.

repeatedly—he will soon acquire sufficient confidence and dexterity of hand to allow him to make strokes of like character.

Let us come now to canons. All those shown in the figures will sufficiently explain themselves without detailed instructions. The young player will see where side is required.

In Fig. 18 are shown canons from the cushion. They are all easily made without side. In Fig. 19 we have a similar series of canons, in which the study of the angles is absolutely necessary.

In Fig. 20 we get canons made by squaring the balls—strokes 1 to 5; dividing the ball—strokes 6 to 10. A little instruction from a player will be found of immense use; and I know no better way of obtaining this than by taking a few lessons of good markers. I can safely recommend for this purpose Henry, at Goode's, on Ludgate Hill; the Oxford Jonathan, at his rooms, 252, Strand; Mr. Groom, at the King's Arms, Fenchurch-street; the markers at Hunt's, in the Strand; at the Old Tennis Court, in the Haymarket; and Roberts, the finest player, at Saville House, Leicester Square.

The canon is always wider than the hazard, the extreme range of the former being above six inches, while that of the latter cannot be more than four, seeing that no pocket in any table should allow two balls to pass side by side through the aperture. The fact is important to remember, as the merest contact between your own ball and the other two is sufficient to make the canon. Indeed, in some positions the degree of impact between the striker's and the object-balls is a matter of great consideration. The making of a succession of canons is evidence of judgment and scientific knowledge.

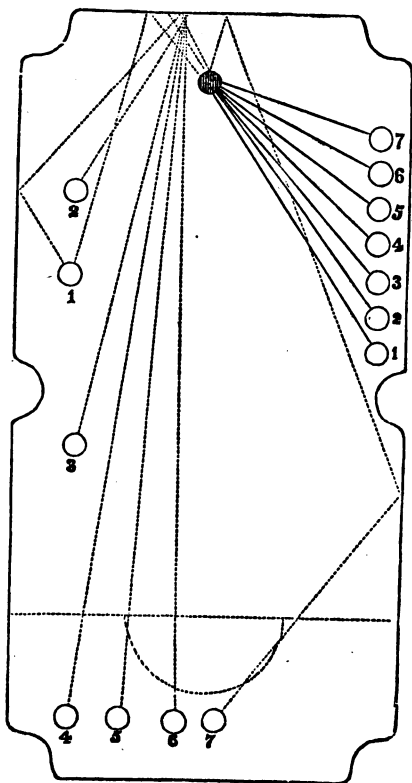


FIG. 19.—CANONS.

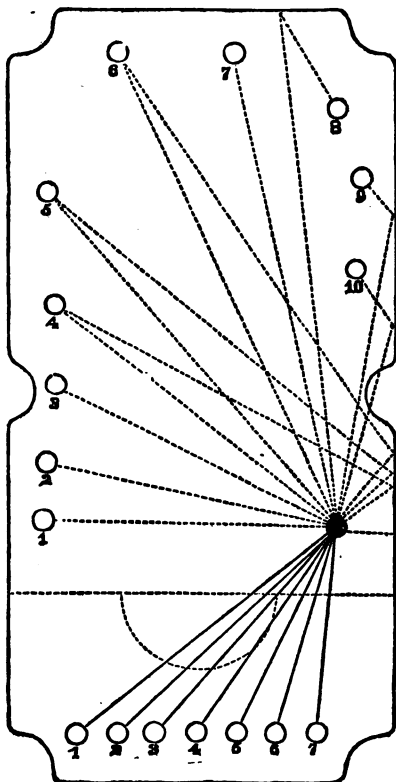


FIG. 20.—CANONS.

## CHAPTER V.

## HINTS AND CAUTIONS FOR YOUNG PLAYERS.

“Aim at a sure end ; fortune favours the bold.”

BILLIARDS is an amusement, not a business. It should therefore be played in such a manner as to yield the greatest amount of pleasure to the largest number of persons. In order to achieve this end, it is important that all who engage in it should set out with the intention of playing the game fairly and honourably ; taking no mean advantage of adversaries, allowing no exhibition of temper or petty annoyance to interfere with the proper conduct of the game ; conceding a point where concession is needful, insisting upon your right when you are persuaded justice is on your side, but gracefully giving way to the opinion of the majority. Play the game as a gentleman ought to play—without noise, or boast, or taunt, or satirical observation. Nothing is so annoying to the loser as remarks on his indifferent play ; therefore avoid everything that has a tendency to disturb the harmony of the room, or put your adversary in a false or awkward position, or be likely to wound his self-esteem.

A piece of bad manners I have often noticed, is carefully to be eschewed : never stand over the pocket into which your opponent is playing, or follow the ball in its course round the table. Make your stroke, and then wait till the ball stops, and either proceed with your game, if you have scored, or allow your adversary to strike without remark. Always endeavour to make the stroke with some decided object in view ; and if neither canon nor hazard present themselves,

then play for safety, by giving a miss or placing your ball, after contact, under the cushion at as wide an angle from the object-ball, and at as great a distance from the red, as you can. To strike the balls at random is bad play at the best. Of course, luck may attend you, but luck always succumbs to science and knowledge. Do not play carelessly: give your mind to the game. Always endeavour to play in one general style, neither varying the strength unnecessarily, nor playing high and low without the nature of the stroke requires it. More depends on strength and judgment than upon the power of making any particularly difficult stroke. You may have seen—I have, hundreds of times—how a great score may be made by losing hazards in the middle pockets from baulk, the red returning from the top cushion to about the centre of the table after every stroke. This is one of the most useful strokes on the table; for it occurs in every game. Learn the strength of the table, by playing a ball or two against the cushion before commencing the game; and you will know about how hard to play the losing hazard in the middle pocket, so as to leave a succession of hazards: so also with the spot-stroke and the hazards in the top pockets. If you watch the play of the professors of the game, you will see that they make their scores of 50 or 100 by the simplest of means—not so much by the execution of brilliant strokes as by keeping the balls well before them at easy distances, and by gentle and regular strokes rather than by hard hitting.

Never despair of winning a game: for, as the markers say, a game is never won till it is lost. A chance may discover itself which will enable you to make a good score. More games are lost

by carelessness than by actual bad play ; do not therefore try after difficult canons or hazards when your end may be gained by more easily-executed strokes. By all means, avoid the too frequent use of the side-stroke. Many players—especially young ones—put on the side quite unnecessarily, as in the making of winning hazards and in the execution of losing ones, when a full, a half, or three-quarter ball would answer the same purpose. For it must never be forgotten that the side-stroke is, at best, but uncertain in the hands of a tyro, and that nothing but constant practice will render you proficient.

It is not generally good play to canon from the white to the red, because if you miss the stroke, you most likely leave a hazard or canon for your adversary ; but the canon from the red to the white has the advantage of leaving your ball comparatively safe. In making winning hazards play with sufficient strength to bring the red ball away from the pocket, in case you fail to hole it. When the white ball is in hand and the red in baulk, it is best to give a miss in baulk in such a way as to leave you a hazard, in case your opponent make a miss in playing out of baulk from either cushion. It is well, too, after pocketing your opponent, to try and keep the baulk. As a general rule, however, it is considered hardly the gentlemanly game to pocket the white without you can also keep the baulk with the red and your own ball. Moreover, it is weak play in most cases, as by pocketing the white you leave yourself only one ball to play at. It must not be thought, nevertheless, that the pocketing of the white ball is always to be neglected ; because it frequently happens that a four-stroke will come off the white ball, when at most a

canon could be made off the red. The rule is to play the game to the best advantage to your score, and this you will find to be more generally possible with three balls on the table than with two. When the red is safe under a cushion, do not disturb it unnecessarily, but play at the white for a canon or losing hazard. In Billiards, losing are more generally advantageous than winning hazards, except in the case of the spot-stroke and some few others, which your own penetration will soon discover.

Never forget the grand axiom in Billiards, that the *angle of reflexion is equal to the angle of incidence*. In making canons and hazards endeavour to so strike your own ball as to make the angle between it and the pocket equal to that between it and the object-ball; and so also of the canons. By drawing an imaginary line in the direction you wish your own ball to assume after contact with the ball played on, you will soon accustom your hand to obey the impulse given to it by your will. I fully believe that any stroke may be made if the player firmly determines to achieve it.

Never lose a fair opportunity of adding to your score; and towards the end of the game be particularly careful not to leave your ball in an unsafe position, as you thereby endanger your chance of winning it. It is better practice to encounter a superior than an inferior player; because from the former you may learn something worth knowing, while from the style of the latter there is little to be gleaned, except perhaps a hint or two as to what to avoid; which, by the way, is something.

I have not thought it necessary to give diagrams of the ordinary and obvious canons; but you must remember that when there are three



balls on the table there is always a canon to be made—if not directly from one to the other ball, then by aid of the cushions. A canon round the table, or from the top to the bottom or side cushions, is generally a safe stroke, even if you fail. It is the very triumph of good play to know the position your ball will occupy after making your stroke. Watch the style of such players as Roberts, the Oxford Jonathan, Hitchin, Tabley, Hughes, Bowles, Stammers, Walter Westley, Captain Campbell, and players of their stamp, and you will see that the end they aim at is not more the making of hazards and canons than the leaving the balls open for the next stroke. What are called brilliant strokes, are rather *tours de forces* than advisable hazards. It is well, of course, to know how to make extreme screws and violent side-strokes, but the game is best played, in ordinary games, by ordinary hazards. Cramp strokes are not often necessary, but they are highly useful in particular situations, and should be acquired by every player. I thought of giving diagrams of some of these but I consider they will be more effectually learned from a professor than by any amount of verbal instruction.

In Pool and Pyramids the art of stopping and withdrawing your ball is most usefully displayed. Practise the stop-strokes often, if you would play well at these games. Stopping your ball when a good distance occurs between it and the object-ball is especially a good stroke, and by no means difficult of attainment. One of the most common faults with young players is hard hitting. This fault is to be avoided if you would ever arrive at the distinction of being able to hold your own in a public room with opponents of average skill. In playing from baulk also,

observe the position in which you place your own ball, and make the angle between it and the object-ball as nearly like that between the latter and the canon, or pocket, as you can. This is one of the grand secrets of billiards; and when to it you add a good knowledge of strength, and a capacity for striking freely from the shoulder, you have conquered half the difficulties of the game. Do not experimentalize with your strokes, but always have some object for which to play. Anticipate the consequences of every stroke, and play accordingly. Stand well behind your ball, and make your stroke without hesitation or fear. Never dispute the score, or wrangle with the marker, with whom, you must remember, lies the decision in every case of doubt, difficulty, or contention.

In Pool and Pyramids, play for safety, without there is a fair chance of making a hazard.

I am tempted to say something about the London Billiard Rooms and their frequenters; but perhaps it will be sufficient to remark that good play may be seen at the following, among other well-appointed establishments:—

*In the City*—King's Arms, Fenchurch-street; public and private tables of the best description; good attendance, a clever and attentive marker, and excellently lighted and ventilated rooms.—Purcell's, in Cornhill, a public table, well frequented by the *élite* of the City men; and several private rooms well appointed.—Stebbing's, Turnwheel-lane, Cannon-street; in every respect commendable.—Goode's, Ludgate-hill; an excellent public room, lighted from the roof, and attended by one of the most civil managers I know; with several commodious private rooms.

*Fleet-street and the Strand*.—In Fleet-street

are the public rooms of Mr. Williams, at the celebrated Doctor Johnson Tavern, a very good table over the large saloon occupied as the concert room: attendance good, and play worth looking at.—In the Strand there are two or three good rooms to be found, especially Windsor's, 252, Strand, now the property of the Oxford Jonathan, one of the crack players of the day, and withal a most civil and obliging fellow. Public and private rooms well arranged.—White's, 262, Strand; good public and private rooms, with capital tables.

*West-End.*—Roberts, Saville House, Leicester-square; in all respects admirable, both in the public and private rooms. To see Mr. Roberts play is alone worth a visit. At these and the other rooms I have mentioned, Bowles, Hughes, Hitchin, and other good players are to be seen occasionally.—Hunt's, 371, Strand, and the Oxford and Cambridge Rooms are also well worthy a visit.

*North London*—At the Eagle, City-road, there is some good play in a handsome large room.

*South London.*—The Old Manor House, Walworth; and

*East London.*—Wakefield's, Mile End-road; the Prince Albert, Bow; the Swan, Stratford. At all these rooms there is good play to be seen, with good attendance, and good tables and cues.

Many other rooms might be mentioned; but at these the amateur may consider himself safe not to be "picked up" for stray bets by seedy sharpers, or induced to play at unfair odds. These are the chief dangers to be apprehended by tyros. Even at the clubs they will sometimes be "had" for a loose crown if they are not careful; but in order to steer clear of

temptation they must refrain altogether from betting.

No rules can be given for wagers at billiards, as the style of each player differs from that of his opponent. Besides, I would rather discourage the system of betting on games; because independently of wagers being the fertile source of disputes, the game is sufficiently interesting of itself without bets. Avoid the man who carries a bit of chalk in his pocket; offers to have "just sixpence or so on the game;" is anxious to "show you a few pretty strokes;" is able to make a ten-stroke by placing the balls; can pocket a ball over which a hat is placed; can canon round a basket; who boasts of being able, "for a consideration," to pocket the red and knock the brass off; can jump between two balls close together without touching either; can canon from one table to another, and so on. Depend upon it, no stranger offers to bet without he has a certain advantage over the man to whom he proposes the wager. Therefore, *do not bet at all*, except perhaps a sixpence or a shilling with a friend; and even that is perhaps better avoided. Gambling, as the old French proverb has it, is the child of avarice and the father of despair.

Here I conclude. If my little book be found useful to amateurs the end and object for which it was written will be fully accomplished. I no longer play what is called a good game, for constant work in various fields of literature has shortened my sight, and I have not yet taken to spectacles. Moreover, I believe no man can play well with glasses, either before his eyes or his mouth. My idea has been to impart some amusement with a little instruction. Have I succeeded?

## BAGATELLE.

“Vive la Bagatelle!”

THERE is little to say about this game except that, in place of Billiards, in a small room it is very amusing. The balls must be played into the holes with much less strength than is used at Billiards. As to the rules of the game they are very simple, and are sufficiently well known to need no recapitulation.

Several games are played on the Bagatelle board—two or more players engaging in them. The most common is called *par excellence* Bagatelle, and is played with nine balls, which are struck with the cue into numbered holes, and the player who makes the greatest score in three “goes up” is the winner.

The French game is generally played a hundred up. The players take it in turn to strike, and count all they make till the striker fails to make a hole. Missing the red ball is a forfeit of one point to the opponent. In some rooms two coloured balls are used, each one counting double when lodged in a hole.

In either game, when a ball lies over a hole, but does not drop immediately into it, the opponent may “challenge” the ball, when if, by shaking the board or from any other cause, it drops into the hole, it must be replaced.

The *Canon game*, the *Irish game*, and *Sat. Egal*, are varieties of Bagatelle well known to most frequenters of Bagatelle rooms.

In playing at these games it is necessary to deliver the ball with a gentle but firm stroke. Hold the cue lightly between the fingers and thumb, and strike the ball in the centre. A

modification of the side-stroke may be well introduced, but the division of the object-ball is most commonly employed in order to make the necessary angles. If you play too hard a ball, you will fail to make the hole you aim at; but at the same time you must be careful to strike with sufficient power to carry the ball beyond the hole in case you miss the stroke.

The prettiest and most scientific strokes at Bagatelle are those made from the cushion to the hole. What Draughts is to Chess, Bagatelle is to Billiards—a simple introduction, though a pleasant and amusing one. For home use a good-sized Bagatelle-board is perhaps better than a small Billiard-table. I am told that some players are so well versed in the handling of the cue at this game that they can fill every hole with the nine balls in one trial. I never saw the feat accomplished but once, and then the red ball was lodged in the 8, and the yellow in the 7; these counted double, so that the whole score amounted to sixty; the largest number capable of being got being sixty-four, when one coloured ball must be in the centre (9) and the other in the 8 hole.

There is little room at Bagatelle for many of the strokes common at Billiards; but the high, the low, and the “following stroke” will all be found useful occasionally.

My space is exhausted, or I might be induced to dilate on the games played with the Bagatelle balls: all I can say before laying aside my pen is this—if you want to play well at Bagatelle or Billiards, take notice, practise, be bold but careful, and *keep your temper*.

THE END.















