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ents for Children.

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Origin and Antiquity of Billiards.

The origin of billiar ls, like the birthplace of Homer, or the problem of the Sphinx, has ever been a contested point. Some historians suppose it have been imported from the Persians during the consulship of the Roman Lucullus. Others contend that the henor of introducing the game into Europe from the East is assigned to the Emperor Caligula. The most reliable, at least the most plausible, account of the origin and antiquity of the game of billiards, is taken from certain parchment manuscripts, once the property of Sir Reginald Mortimer, who was contemporary with Peter the Hermit, and who figured in the eleventh century, somewhere about the year 1085 Sir Reginald was among the Knights Templar who returned in safety from the first crusade to the Holy Land, and afterwards joined the second crusade, led by Richard Coeur de Lion. It is known that on the return of the Templar Knights from Palestine the game, now called billiards, was introduced by them, and was at that time considered not only an amusement, but a means of preserving health, and to which the clo'stered monks of that period were permitted by their superiors to have recourse. At this time it was not considered smong the carnal amusements by the fountainheads and only sources of the Christian faith. Anterior to this, if known at all by the Romans, as is generally supposed, it must have perished, together with many other noble arts, on the overthrow of their empire. Though cradled in the monasteries, having beea introduced into Europe by the Knights Templar, the game is supposed to have shared their fate, and died out when the order was overthrown by the cupidity of European monarchs. We next hear of the game in the shillings.

reign of Louis XI. of France, who preferred this innocent pastime to the bloody tourns. ments that were then so popular with the

into France, became very much improved upon the original crude game imported from the East, and that during the reign of one of the Henrys an artisan of Paris named Henry de Vigne was commissioned by the King to design and manufacture a billiard-table, with a bed of stone, covered with cloth, having a hole and hazard pocket in the center, into which the balls were driven; this table was to be appropriated to the use of the dauphin, at that time a lunatic at the Palace of Ver-

The game was much patronized during the reign of Henry III., at which time it received its appellation of "the noble game."

linarian, and his power makes the penalty for being lax in his service severe and without appeal. For some time, says an English paper, he noticed that his barber came always a few minutes late. Finally the Emperor gave the delirquent a fine gold chronometer, and urged him to use it. Strangely enough, the barber continued to be late, and after waiting in vain for signs o improvement the Emperor said to him at last : "Have you still the chronometer I gave you?" "Yes, your majesty, here it is, replied the barber, taking it from his pocket. evidently of no use to you, and you may have this one instead." So saying, he placed the

Woodstock, N. B.

It is said that the game, when introduced

The German Emperor is a strict discip-"Give it to me," said the Emperor. "It is handsome gold chronometer on his dressingtable, and handed the amazed barber a

Was Lady Macbeth a Study of Queen Elizabeth?

To the "Dublin Review" the Rev. Vincent J. McNabb contributes a well-thought-out and most interesting argument as to whether or not Shakespear wrote "Macbeth" prompted by a desire to show a parallel to Queer Elizabeth's treatment of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, to the theater going audiences of James I.'s reign. After quoting evidence to prove that Shakespear was in the habit 'of holding the mirror up to Nature in his plays, the writer brings forward the friendship of the poet with the Earl of Southampton, an ardent friend to Mary, who was thrown into prison by Elizabeth and released by James, as an argument to prove that Shakespeare had cause for a dislike of Queen Elizabeth. And further:

"According to Malone and other competent critics, 'Macbeth' could not have been written earlier than 1606, three years after the coronation of James, the Son of Mary Queen of Scots. Evidently the play had been recognized as suitable to the circumstances of his nationality and history. Thus we find the king's visit to Oxford in 1603 marked by a play, or interlude, called 'Macbeth,' performed in the king's presence."

The writer gives six points of resemblance between the play and historical events. O these the following are the most telling:

"It is the only play of which Shakespeare lays the plot in Scotland. This could hardly fail to please a Scottish king; and we have seen that this fitness with circumstances had already been recognized by the University authorities at Oxford. The play is based on the murder of a kinsman, sovereign, and guest. Mary Stuart was kinswoman, queen (in the eyes of her adherents), and guest of Elizabeth. The outcome of the 'vaulting ambition' which overleaps itself is that the sovereignty passes from Macbeth to the son of the murdered sovereign; just as the crown of England passes on Elizabeth's death to James, the son of Mary. And we may remark that Shakespeare has made many additions to the source of the play, Holinshed's Chronicle. The whole character of Lady Macbeth is the poet's own creation."

As the writer very truly remarks, these are strong arguments in favor of the idea he brings forward, and we must also remember that points which seem obscure now would appear very differently to audiences familiar with the gossip of the day.

Spelling Reform.

The man walked up to the hotel register and signed his name, with a flourish, "E K. Phtholognyrrh." "Look here, Turner," said the clerk, who knew him very well. "Is somebody on your track? Where did you get that outlandish name?" "Chat" relates the

"My boy, you're slow," replied Turner, airiny. "That's my same old name, written in plain English and pronounced as it is written-just Turner. Look at it. Of course I do it just to make people guess. They wonder about my nationality and the pronunciation of my name. I can hear them talk about it. But as I said before, it's English spelling.

"Will you kindly explain?" asked the clerk. "'Phth,' there is the sound of 't' in pht hisis,'" began Turner; "'olo,' there is the sound of 'ur' in colonel; 'gn,' there is the 'u' in 'gnat;' 'yrrh' is the sound of 'er' in 'myrrh.' Now if that does not spell Turner what does

"Well," said the clerk, "it is lucky for me that the majority of men don't register their names phonetically.'

Counsellor Tom Nolan, the famous Yankee lawyer, was once retained by the defendant in a suit at law brought to recover payment of a gas bill, in which a witness for the plaintiff was asked: "On what evideuce do you conclude that sixteen thousand seven hundred and forty feet of gas had been burned during the month by the defendant?" "On the evidence of the gas meter," was the answer. At this the barrister impulsively exclaimed, "I wouldn't believe a gas meter under oath !"

A Scottish gentleman and a youth had spent the whole day on the golf links, and, as is often the case with particularly enthus. iastic players, had had some remarkably close and exciting games. As they left for home the old man remarked, "Hey, mon, but it's been a gran' day!" "It has," the youth assented. "Think ye ye could come again on the morrow, laddie?" "Well," the young man answered, reflectively, "I was to be married but I can put it off." be married, but I can put it off.'

A small girl who had just begun to attend school recently brought home a pump kin-seed, and told her mother that the tracher said that although the seed was whi e the pumpkin would be yellow. "And what will the color of the vines be?" asked the aother. The little girl replied that the teacher had not taught her that. "But," said her mother, "you know, dear, for we have pumpkin-vines in our garden." "Of course I do, but nickel-plated watch worth about five we ain't expected to know anything until we are taught."

The Failure.

A Failure, who had ne'er achieved

Self-victory, at last lay dead, Poor failure?" Thus his neighbors grieved; "Poor miserable wretch," they said. 'His weakness was the worst of crimes, He failed at least a thousand times."

Meanwhile the Failure gave to God His vain attempts. Remorsefully And prostrate on the skyey sod,

"I failed a thousand times," said he. 'Welcome!" rang out the heavenly chimes He strove-he strove a thousand times. ETHELWYN WETHERALD.

All Hope Lost.

"Blue! Well, I should say I am. The rich uncle, to whose property I was sole heir, "Has just what ?"

"Been converted to Mormonism."

Mr. Punch is proud to say that the only countries where the cartoon and the caricaturist are safe are Great Britain and the United States. In France they must be duelists and defend themselves. In Germany they must measure swords with their subjects. The average life of the caricaturist in Turkey is one week. In China he is humorously dismembered, the occasion there being always made a public holiday, with fireworks in the

George Seton, a London writer, has pub lished a budget of anecdotes, one of which telis of a fashionable woman who appeared before Pope Leo in a very low-necked dress. His Holiness disapproved of the costume so strongly that he sent a cardinal to remonstrate with the wearer. The messenger made this rather ambiguous explanation: "The Pope, my dear madam, is rather old-fashioned, you know, and dislikes seeing any lady in evening dress. I, on the other hand, who have spent six years of my life as a mission-ary among the cannibals, am quite used to it."

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