

BILLIARDS IN THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

THERE is no place where the delightful pastime of billiards affords so much pleasure and satisfaction as under the happy influence of home. To such an extent is this truth apparent that no residence of any pretension whatever is considered complete without its billiard room and billiard-table. Years ago the homes of only the very wealthy contained those requisites to health and enjoyment, but with our modern progress and the demands of advancing taste, these adjuncts of pleasure have found their way into the habitations of the comparatively poor and humble. Nor is this to be wondered at, because while the construction and equipment of the billiard tables have undergone great revolutions and improvements, the cost has changed in the inverse ratio. Twenty years ago a first-class billiard table suitable for a dwelling could not be purchased for less than six hundred dollars, and from even this figure the price advanced with the degree of elaborateness with which it was gotten up. To-day a more modern and scientific instrument can be purchased for about half that amount, and its cost modified or increased in proportion to its embellishments, so that practically speaking the billiard table has been "placed within the reach of all." Long evenings are especially adapted for the enjoyment of this desirable home pleasure, and we see it grow more and more popular with each coming season. From a scientific standpoint there is no game superior to that of billiards in the development of skill, precision, calculation, and dexterity, while from a hygienic aspect no indoor amusement will at all compare with it. We have the best medical authorities to endorse our views on this latter point. Sir Astley Cooper, the celebrated English physician, has said:

"We should all sleep more soundly if we made it a rule to play