Demon of the Niger.

The natives inhabiting the country near the source of the Niger believe that a devil lives in the rock whence the river springs. They are very superstitious and greatly fear this devil, who is supposed to kill any person who dares to look at the source. Whenever the natives are showing a stranger the spot, they cover up their faces and walk backward in the direction of the spring, pointing toward it with outstretched hand behind the back.

Truth Eternal.

All errors have only a time; after a hundred millions of objections, subtleties, sophisms, the smallest truth remains precisely what it was before. —Ancient Maxim.

Formation of Friendship.

We cannot tell the precise moment when friendship is formed. As in filling a vessel drop by drop, there is at least a drop which makes it run over; so in a series of kindnesses there is at last one which makes the heart run over.—From Boswell's Life of Johnson.

HOW SPOONER QUIT SMOKING

Son of Former Senator From Wisconsin Makes Agreement With Father When Leaving Home.

Ex-Senator John C. Spooner of Wisconsin, who is now a prominent lawyer in New York, is fond of telling how he came to quit smoking. The story has a moral in it which other parents might take to heart and apply in dealing with the faults of their children.

"For thirty years I was an incessant smoker," said the senator, "and had a cigar in my mouth nearly all the time. Cigars soothed my nerves when I worked hard. At least that was my belief. I knew the habit was filling me with nicotine, but it did not seem to affect my health much.

"My son Charles had been graduated from a law school and was preparing to go west and put out his shingle in a new country. He and I sat together one night before the time of his departure, and as we conversed I thought that before he left it would be a good idea to have the boy promise not to drink.

"'Do you drink, Charlie?' I said to him, and he responded, 'Once in a while. Why?' 'I would like you to promise me,' I said, 'that you will not touch intoxicating liquors. You are going far away to begin your career in a rough country, and I would feel better if you will not drink. We probably won't see much of each other again for a good many years, and it would give me consolation to know that wherever you are you are in no danger of being ruined by drink.'

"Coolly looking me over, Charlie said: 'Father, you smoke too much. You are filled with nicotine. I am going away and we will probably not see each other for some time. This smoking is ruining your health. I would like to feel while I am away that your health is not being ruined by this dangerous nicotine habit. I'll tell you what I will do. You quit smoking and I will quit drinking.'

"'My son,' said I, 'you have touched me in a very weak spot. I take great delight in smoking a good cigar, but if you are game so am I. We will both quit our bad habits.'"

The senator says he and his son shook hands on the compact and that both of them have kept their pledges.

GAME WITH BASEBALL IDEAS

New Amusement Device Arranged on Billiard Table Just Placed on Market—How Played.

A new amusement device, which adapts some baseball ideas to a specially arranged billiard table has just been placed on the market, says the Popular Mechanics. On top of the table, in the relative positions ordinarily occupied by baseball players on a regular diamond, there are miniature figures of players over a series of pockets. The face and sides of these pockets are cushioned and are so designed that the balls enter the pockets quickly and quietly. On either side of the table and in the rear, there are pockets indicating "singles," "triplets," "home runs," and "fouls." The batter's box is near the front of the table where an average-size billard ball is placed and then caromed off a triangular rubber home plate which is mounted on a spindle. This plate revolves when hit by the ball, giving the player a constantly changing shot which makes the game very scientific.

New Baseball Game.

ADVICE EASY TO GIVE.

Don't worry.

"Seek peace and pursue it."

Be cheerful. "A light heart lives long."

Never despair. "Lost hope is a fatal disease."

"Work like a man, but don't be worked to death."

Don't hurry. "Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow."

Sleep and rest abundantly. Sleep is nature's benediction.

Avoid passion and excitement. A moment's passion may be fatal.

Associate with healthy people. Health is contagious as well as disease.

Don't overeat. Don't starve. "Let your moderation be known to all men."

The Retort Filial.

"Don't call me a kid, pa."

"Well, aren't you a kid?"

"But, pa, a kid is a goat's little boy."

ALBANIA—Firebrand of the BALKANS

IN THE ALBANIAN MOUNTAINS

HARDLY any other portion of the universe has been the subject of more war talk than the Balkan peninsula, and few sections of the continent of Europe are less well known in the western world. The Balkan war cloud is familiar enough, having appeared and re-appeared at intervals for years past, yet few people know why there should be trouble in the Balkans. Today we are face to face with real conflict, the very existence of Turkey is at stake, and even Europe may be engulfed in war. In the very center of the conflict are the Albanians. But who and what are the Albanians? Well, Albania is a province of Turkey situated to the north of Greece, on the eastern shore of the Adriatic sea.

It is probably the least-known region in the Balkan peninsula, and compared with the other countries in that part of Europe, it has been but little explored by travelers, with the result that its wild and fearless inhabitants, who number some 1,600,000, retain, to a large extent, the primitive habits and customs of a bygone age.

The country is extremely mountainous, especially in the north and south. There are no railway lines though several have been projected, and the development of commerce is retarded accordingly. Carriage roads exist in a few instances, but generally travelers have still to pass one place to another by means of bridle-paths.

The inhabitants, who are one of the most ancient races in Europe, are divided into two divisions, northern and southern, known as Ghegs and Tosks. Both have ever been brilliant fighters, defending their mountain fastnesses in the past with remarkable success against all invaders.

Retain Original Customs.

Retaining their original customs and language, the Albanians present a marked difference from other races in the Balkan peninsula. Sir Edwin Pears in "Turkey and Its People" gives an interesting description of the Ghegs and the Tosks. He remarks that the Ghegs are noted for their square heads, refined features, and usually light colored hair; whilst the Tosks have a heavier cast of features, with darker hair. Among both, however, are beautiful heads, which recall those of classic Greece. The characteristic dress of the Ghegs is a waistcoat, jacket and breeches, each close-fitting, of a white material, usually resembling tweed cloth, braided with black. That of the Tosks is the long white petticoat, known as the dastanella, which the Greeks who employ big numbers of Albanians as soldiers, have taken for the uniform of the king's guards.

In northern Albania the clan system still exists, and the Ghegs very rarely pay taxes. The scattered Turkish officers possess little authority, and the one obligation the inhabitants owe to the Ottoman empire is that of providing soldiers in time of war. In each clan the elders form a council and preside over gatherings of the tribesmen, which exercise the supreme legislative power. Loyalty to the chief of his clan, and to his work, is the Albanian's greatest virtue. An inborn courtesy is common to the race. The best fighter is the best man, and every Albanian feels himself independent, except when bound by the ancient customs of his race. In northern Albania he recognizes no law except that based on such ancient customs. The Turk until recently has hardly attempted to impose any other law. Whether in the field or the marketplace, he is nearly always armed, and is ready to fight on the smallest pretext. The boy attains manhood when he can show he possesses arms which he has captured from an enemy. All fire the rifle as a sign of joy, and Christian congregations are summoned to divine service by a definite number of shots.

The primitive method of revenge by means of the vendetta, or bloodfeud, still obtains in the country, and the slaying of one member of a family or clan leads to a series of crimes or to warfare. The claims of hospitality, however, are very strict, and injury to a guest has to be revenged. In the case of marriages, a stipulated price is paid for the bride. Marriage by capture remains the rule today. Women are respected, but wives have to work their hardest in the fields. There is very little education in the country, although there are schools in some of the towns.

It is this primitive race whose quarrel with the Turk is not very clearly understood in the west, which is worrying the concert of Europe. In the first place, as has been shown, the most successful of sultans and conquering generals in the heydey of Ottoman power never succeeded in subduing the Albanians. These gallant mountaineers acknowledged the sovereignty of the sultan only so far as it protected them from the encroachments of other nations who would have civilized them.

Turks' Nefarious Rule.

The present trouble with the Albanians began when the new constitutional regime came into being in Turkey four years ago. The Young Turks insisted on regarding themselves as the dominant authority in Turkey. This would have been all right if they had had numerical preponderance and the moral and intellectual ability to dominate the other races.

All races in the Turkish dominions have suffered during the nefarious rule of the Young Turks' secret committee of mediocre men, but none more than the Albanians. In a few weeks their centuries-old privileges and immunities were abolished, their country was invaded by hordes of inexperienced officials of a race which they held to be their inferiors, their language was tabooed in the schools and forbidden in the printing press unless written in Turkish characters, their young men were drafted into the Turkish army and sent off to Asia Minor and the deadly Yemen to be shot, a system of taxation was introduced which threatened to drain them as dry as their Macedonian neighbors, and worse than all, they were notified to surrender their firearms.

The result was rebellion. But the Albanians could do nothing against the trained troops equipped with machine guns which the Turks turned against them. The rebels fled to the mountains and soon their little peaceful villages were the scenes of frightful massacres too horrible to recount. Arms having failed, the Albanians decided to try constitutional methods at the general election which took place last spring. But by violence and illegal use of the army the Young Turks' secret committee, it is said, prevented free elections not only in Albania but throughout the empire, with the result that a parliament of Turks, subservient to the committee of union and progress, was elected.

Again the Albanians rebelled, and this time with greater success. The army ordered against them refused to march, in fact made common cause, many of them, with the rebels. This time, instead of having to defend themselves in their mountains, the Albanians have been able to invade Macedonia, since when the "packed" Turkish parliament has been turned out and a new cabinet of Young Turks formed. The Albanians have been promised redress of their grievances by the new government. But so far they have refused to go home. They want to see the promises of the Turks carried out. If they are not they will march to Constantinople.

Ideals the Guiding Star.

Ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands. But, like the seafaring man on deserts of water, you choose them as your guides, and following them reach your destiny.—Carl Schurz.

Gift That Is Divine.

If instead of a gem, or even a flower, we could cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels must give.—George MacDonald.

Birds Worthy of Gratitude.

It has been estimated that the birds in the United States save $200,000,000 worth of crops each year. The tree sparrows in Iowa eat 4,666 pounds of weed seed daily. One full-fledged robin will eat 16 feet of caterpillar daily, or about 4,569 individuals a month.

And So Many Do It.

A campaign year is a time of happiness for the man who likes to get at the extreme outer edge of the crowd and yell "Louder!"—Denver Republican.

He Knew Teacher.

"A small boy dropped into a store on the North Side on his way to school to get some candy," says the Holton Signal. "While he was looking over the assortment displayed in the case the salesman called his attention to some fresh lemon drops. 'Naw,' the boy said, 'Gimme some jelly beans. I want something the teacher can't hear me eat. Teacher can hear a feller eat lemon drops clear across the room."—Kansas City Star.

Calming Her.

Mrs. Fidget—"What's that noise I hear down in the library?" Mr. Fidget—"Must be the history repeating itself. Go to sleep."—Puck.