

## KNURR AND SPELL, OR NORTHERN SPELL.

THIS is a game that has long been very popular in the neighbourhood of the towns on the Yorkshire moors, and is more or less played throughout all the Northern English counties. Beyond their borders, however, until of very recent date, the game was unknown either by name or practice. Newspaper reports of Knurr and Spell matches have from time to time directed attention to the game, and it would seem that it has now a tendency to spread itself beyond those districts where it has so long found a home. Like Golf, it requires a



KNURR AND SPELL—THE DRIVE.

large open space; and where such spaces are to be found there is no reason why Knurr and Spell should not rival Golf in the number of its devotees. Like Golf, too, it is essentially a game of hitting—hard, skilful, and practised hitting. It embraces in itself also many of the peculiarities of the minor game of Trap, Bat, and Ball, and is, doubtless, of similar origin, although it demands much more application and attention before any degree of proficiency can be attained.

The “knurr”—or “nurr,” as it is sometimes spelled—is a small boxwood ball, perfectly round, and about an inch in diameter. The “spell” is that which answers to the trap in the simpler game, and it is important that it should

be selected with great care, for, it matters not how proficient the player may be, if the spring or springs of his spell are badly made or adjusted, his play will fail to secure him rank among his competitors. The principle of the spell is that of a spring regulated by a thumb-screw, the one end of the spring being secured to an iron back or to a wooden board, secured by iron pins in the ground (*see figure*). The spring has fixed on it, at about two inches from the loose end, a small cup for the reception of the knurr, and before playing, the loose end of the spring is secured by a weighted toothed rack working on a loose pivot. The spring should be adjusted to the requirements of the player by means of the thumb-screw. The spell is supplied from the foundry of any ordinary steel or iron founder, and its cost in England ranges from fifteen to thirty shillings. The weapon with which the knurr is struck is called a “pommel,” and is sometimes made like an ordinary billiard cue, with a small block of wood at one end, and at the other is padded and encircled with string, to form a firm grip for the hand. Other pommels are made almost exactly similar in shape to the bagatelle cue ordinarily used by ladies.

To play the knurr, the spring of the spell is released by letting down the