A Gambler’s Penance in Seventeenth Century Spain

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**Fiel desengaño contra la ociosidad y los juegos** [Truthful Lesson Against Idleness and Games] by Francisco de Luque Faxardo is based in the dialogues of two friends, one a gambler, the other a moralist with great knowledge of gaming laws. Their exchanges are predicated in their common indictment of gambling, which is presented in the forms more commonly available in seventeenth century Spain. To attain that purpose, they employ dialogic strategies, taken from moral sermons, emphasizing the dangers of playing. Furthermore, they also bring a voyeuristic element into the narrative equation, by giving to a lay audience an occasional glimpse into some of the most curious, or interesting, aspects of criminal gambling. They also make use of witty exchanges as one more tool for the successful indoctrination of their readers. This treatise raises questions about the reform of society, while reading as a successful means to recovery provided by a former impenitent gambler.