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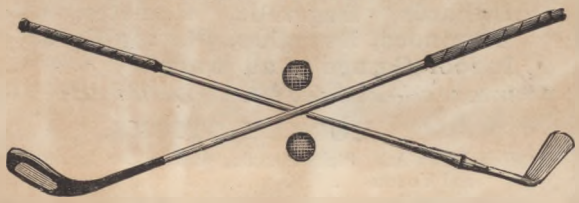

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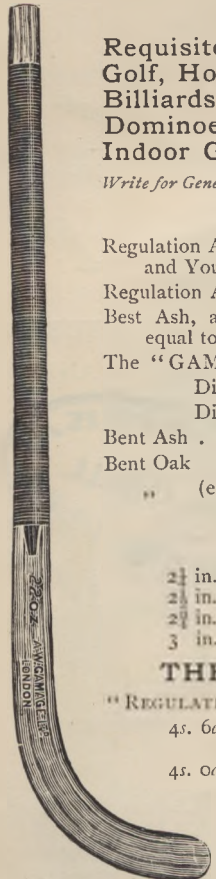

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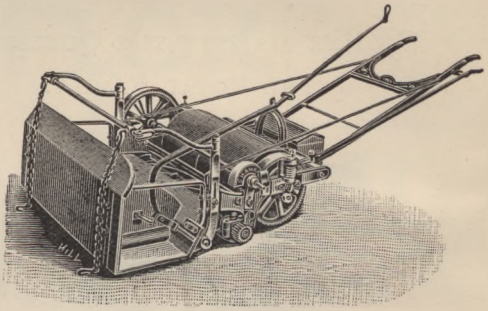

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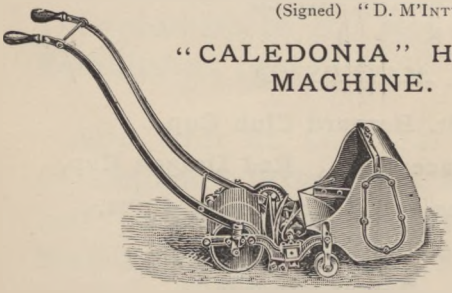

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GOLF IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

SOME HINTS TO BEGINNERS

BY

H. S. C. EVERARD

WITH TWENTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

GEORGE BELL AND SONS

1898

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PREFACE.

THE author desires to express his indebtedness to Mr. James Cunningham, of Broughty Ferry, who has been good enough to revise the proof sheets of this book, and has offered sundry valuable suggestions. In particular, that portion of Chapter V. which deals with the theory of driving, as illustrated by the diagram facing page 54, is entirely due to his experiments, the results of which he has placed at the writer's disposal. It may be mentioned that the theory there set forth meets with the approval of Professor P. G. Tait, who has also suggested such alterations as seemed to him advisable.

As to the rest of the book, doubtless it bears the impress of conversations held at various times with amateurs of high standing, as well as with professionals (one of whom has also expressed his unqualified approval of

the contents), but it is also largely the result of the author's own experience.

To Professor A. S. Butler, St. Andrews University, and his assistant, Mr. W. G. Robson, acknowledgments are also due; the photographs were almost all taken by the latter, who, himself a keen golfer, has spared neither time nor trouble in illustrating sundry points connected with his favourite pursuit.

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GOLF IN THEORY AND PRACTICE.

CHAPTER I.

HORS D'ŒUVRES.

Golf and the Ancients.

HISTORICAL research has hitherto established no more than a respectable measure of antiquity for Golf; no papyrus has been unearthed in the Fayyûm, no discoveries made at Mycenæ or elsewhere which might serve to indicate the existence of any pastime amongst Egyptians, Phœnicians, or Greeks even remotely analogous to the game of the present day. The more the pity, at least for those of us who love to dream away our time over folklore and old-world romance. Had Odysseus used some incomparable driver as he used the bow of Eurytus, or as he put the stone against the Phæacians, the Blackwells and Rollands

of our degenerate time must have hidden their diminished heads.

The Greeks generally were athletic, not wanting in strong men, some of whose performances have been recorded by Lucian, Ælian, and others, as Astydamas, Milo, Titormus (whose strength was enormous one wants to add); how they would have revelled in a sweet-lying ball, or "garred the saund flee in a bunker!" Or, again, take Socrates:

"Tell me, Charmides, for as I conceive you are well acquainted with the mysteries of the Palæstra, who are those gymnasts yonder by the Ilissus, for I think that I make them out to be the Sophists Chærephon and Euthydemus?" "Of a truth, Socrates, you are very right." "What then shall be said of these men in respect of their claim to be held excellent, for even now I overheard one of them say to Critias that he could go round in seventy-eight, and, lo you there, he has just smitten his ball upon the top. If Thrasymachus were here he would tell me it is an art to keep the ball low; but, by the Dog, it

seems to me that the stroke was not good, but otherwise." "Unquestionably so, oh best of men; and we may now begin to inquire into the nature of this art, and the powers of those who profess it." "Art therefore, I may gather, saves a man, and not the absence of art?" "Certainly:" and so we might follow the teacher round the Links, convinced that in putting people off their game his success would be unrivalled.

Games of ball the Greeks had in plenty; one in especial, called ἁρπαστον, must have been nearly identical with lawn tennis, which can thus show a far longer pedigree than golf. Athenæus tells us it involved much hard work, and adds that Demoxenus once saw a youth of Cos, aged seventeen, who played it with such elegance and grace that spectators nearly lost their wits!

Pliny mentions one Pythus as having invented *pila lusoria*, translated by Philemon Holland as "the first player at tennise"; but nothing much seems to be known either about the game itself, or its inventor, whom classical

dictionaries leave severely alone. An attempt, a rather lame one, however, has been made to prove that golf was known to the Romans, or at least that a game called *Paganica* resembled it.

Strutt on Golf.

Joseph Strutt, an Essex artist who flourished during the last half of the eighteenth century, being fond of archæology, collected and embodied in his *Sports and Pastimes* such information on these subjects as was accessible to him. Syllogistically stated, his argument is :—For *Paganica*, balls were used made of leather, and stuffed with feathers. For "goff" the same; therefore "goff" and *Paganica* are identical. Strutt was no practical player, and indeed you could hardly expect it of an antiquary. There is no evidence, so far as the present writer is aware, that he ever even saw the game, though indeed he might have had opportunity at Blackheath; he therefore falls into more mistakes, writing of clubs, that the handles are usually "made of ash, about four feet and a half in length, the curvature is affixed to the bottom, faced with

horn and backed with lead." Several clubs can now be seen made about the time when Strutt wrote, and none of them are remarkable for a length of shaft only to be described by Dominie Sampson's favourite epithet; they are, in fact, in that particular, much as clubs of the present day.

Into philological abysses in search of the etymon of "golf" it were bootless to plunge; that science may prove for us anything, or nothing. Perhaps Professor Max Müller and Mr. Andrew Lang may be induced to transfer their little skirmishes from the field of the solar myth to the Links, arguing about the word each from his respective point of view; meanwhile we others will look on, not "being afraid with any amazement."

Historical Golf.

Not till we arrive at the fifteenth century do we stand on firm ground with respect to the history of the game, which by that time had become popular, so much so that acts were needed for its better regulation, if not suppression, as ranking among "uther unprofitabill sportis." There had been, and were

later, various pastimes, *cambuca*, *crossare*, *jeu de mail*, and so on, wherein what Du Cange calls a "*baculus incurvatus*" was used, and these so far resembled golf; but, as Monsieur Mariassy observes, the essential difference is when you have the *holes*. All other stages are intermediary; but when you have abandoned your cross-country marks, steeples, hayricks, and the like, as in "La Chole," and instead thereof dig a hole or two in the ground, then golf begins, and the rest is easy.

Golf of to-day.

So much for the past. For the present, the writer feels serious misgivings as to the propriety of inflicting another book on golfers already satiated with the literature of the subject. "A great book is a great evil," said Callimachus the Grammarian, from which perhaps the corollary may follow that the evil of a book is measurable by its magnitude, in which case no great harm will ensue. But golfers are now a power in the land, and more are learning every day. To use Mr. Balfour's phrase, "The Scotification of England proceeds apace"; the Anglification of Scotland

progresses also. Learn golf during boyhood is the best advice of all; but they also have to be considered who are no longer at that merry time of youth which bothers not itself with printed page of instruction—when it can be avoided. With the adult, things are different. First principles may be explained to him, and he will reason upon them, harmonizing his play therewith; and, to some extent, a book may actually convey some useful hints —though it remains and ever will remain true, most especially at golf, that an ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory. "All trades," says Mr. Froude, "all arts, from the cobbling of a shoe to the painting of a picture, must be learnt before they can be practised." An attempt therefore has been made to point out to the beginner some fundamental principles, a knowledge of which is essential to proficiency; to these have been added such hints as have suggested themselves, being the outcome of some years of experience and considerable thought upon the subject. Too many may be seen on every links hopelessly

floundering along in resolute defiance of every golfing law, simply because in all probability they have neglected the course prescribed by Mr. Froude.

Late learners.

But, on the other hand, nothing is more remarkable than the extraordinary aptitude shown by some who have taken up the game as adults, say after thirty or thereabouts. Parallel instances twenty or thirty years ago were of extreme rarity; unless a man had been a golfer from boyhood, his position was usually in a class which would now be represented by a handicap of from about fourteen strokes upwards, and so far upwards as to be altogether beyond our ken. We have changed all that, nor is it at all uncommon to see men in the first week of their apprenticeship driving an occasional ball calculated to move even the seasoned player to envy; if such an one continue his practice, in a couple of years or so he may be able to press hard upon the scratch player himself. One such instance within the writer's knowledge may be adduced by way of encouragement, that of a player of

but two years' standing, who, in the first week of his first visit to St. Andrews, holed that classic links in eighty-one. On several occasions, in subsequent play, he ran the Amateur Champion of the year to a very close finish, and though perhaps he never actually beat him, he halved or lost only by a hole or two at the last green.

Driving power.

The one thing absolutely necessary before a man can possibly approach the higher mysteries is the power to drive a certain distance; to go well across country, to borrow a metaphor from another branch of sport. Put into a more concrete form, if on a calm day from 150 to 160 yards be driven on the average of occasions, the learner has a good foundation on which to build. When he can supplement this by holing in two five times out of six when on the green, and similarly in three from his approaches, he will be in a fair way of attaining the happy position of scratch. It is well to recognize the fact that nature has imposed limitations on our power of driving; the longer it is the better, if it be

straight; but we can no more add to it by adopting any modification of style, if that be once correctly moulded, than by thought we can add one cubit to our stature. To strive after effect is a delusion and a snare; to stand up and hit the ball in the manner most easy and natural to him must be the object of the learner; if he can pass the distance above mentioned so much the better for him, but it is not to be done by any fancied imitation of other players; be yourself, and not (slightly to change Dryden's line) "everyone by starts and no one long."

Blisters. Physical discomfort of any sort is an effectual bar to good golf; blistered hands may sound a small matter, nevertheless at the time they occasion very real inconvenience. With a little forethought, however, even the softest hands may be made nearly blister-proof if for two or three days before beginning golf some whiskey be rubbed well into the palms two or three times a day. Even after a blister is formed this remedy will entirely take away the feeling of heat and irritation—

if anything more be required, iodine is an admirable application ; the whiskey must be rubbed in first, or it will remove the iodine. Probably any spirit would be efficacious for toughening purposes, or an astringent, such as a solution of alum. Sometimes callosities are formed at the base of the fingers, and give some trouble ; they can easily be kept in check by pumice-stone ; thus, after a month's play, or less, the hands will assume the consistency and toughness of a pair of old shooting-boots, which is their ideal condition for golf.

ILLUSTRATION A.

Numbering from right to left these clubs are:

1. Allan Robertson's driver with which he did his famous score of 79, at St. Andrews, September 15th, 1858.
2. Short spoon, *circa* 1825.
3. Short spoon, 1780.
4. Short spoon, made by Simon Cosser, 1780-90.
5. Driving putter, 1800.
6. Long spoon, McEwan, 1790-5.
7. Long spoon.
8. Long spoon, Simon Cosser, 1764-5.
9. Driver of Allan Robertson's.
10. Driver, with which medal score of 100 was first broken by Mr. Robert Oliphant, who scored 97 in 1834.
11. A Philp play-club.

The unattached head was the first made at Sorrento, 1895.

ILLUSTRATION B.

Numbering from right to left these clubs are:

1. Driving iron presented by R. Forgan, 1865.
2. Heavy iron belonging to Sir Hugh Lyon Playfair.
3. Old iron made 1795.

4 and 5. Irons without leather grip, presented to R. and A. Club, by Duke of Athole.

6 and 7. Experimental clubs made by amateurs.

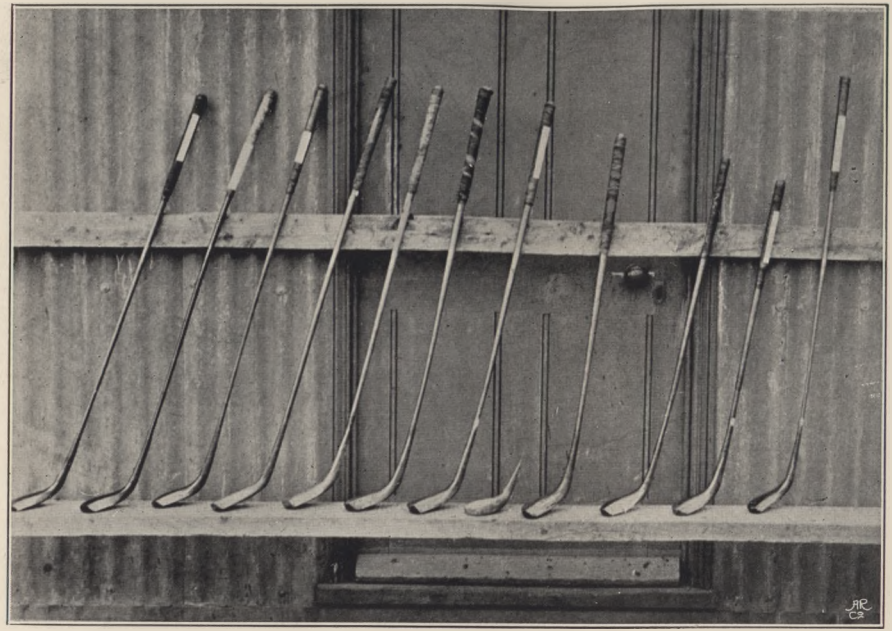
8. Very old iron.
9. "Track cleque," 1760.
10. Iron belonging to Allan Robertson.

11 and 12. Old sand irons.

The ball to the right is one used in a great match for £400, between Allan Robertson and Tom Morris, and Willie and James Dunn.

The ball to the left was used by Allan Robertson in his score of 79.

The T-shaped articles and leather shield were used in making the old feather balls.



A. OLD WOODEN CLUBS.

B. OLD IRON CLUBS.

CHAPTER II.

WOODEN CLUBS.

Evolution of the Club.

NO Dryasdust has discovered for us the name of the individual who fashioned the primal golf club. Probably it was a product of evolution, its immediate ancestor being the *cambuca*, the crooked club or staff used for Bandy Ball, a game much in vogue in the reign of Edward III. (1327-1377). In less than a century from the last date, the golfer was in full swing. James II., III. and IV. of Scotland, in succession rated him as a mere cumberer of the ground, because he was losing his skill at archery, and thus becoming unfit for military service ; but, Acts of Parliament notwithstanding, he seems to have flourished. Thus we arrive at the time of James Melville, about 1570, and vaguely wonder what sort of "glub for goff" *he* used, for he "handled" it at

Montrose and at St. Andrews. Some years later there lived a Dutch artist, Arnold van de Neer, 1620, who is supposed to have painted a picture, now in the possession of Colonel R. T. Boothby, which represents a winter scene on the ice; in the foreground is a man with skates and clubs, evidently for hire, a golfer is addressing his ball, being about to strike off, his opponent standing watching him, precisely after the manner of the modern player. What chiefly attracts attention is the great resemblance borne by the seventeenth-century clubs, both wooden and iron, to those of the present day, the main difference observable being that the iron blades are represented as of a squarer make. In 1628 Montrose was playing at Leith and St. Andrews, probably with clubs much the same as those in use in Prince Charlie's days, with shafts of the finest ash.

A writer in the *Scotsman* quoting from a manuscript notebook, evidently that of a Scottish gentleman, gives the following extracts: "2 bonker clubis, a iyrone club, and

twa play clubis of my awin."—"For mending bonker club, 1*s.* 6*d.*"—"for a golfe club, besydes ane payit be my lord for me and Jo. Stephenson (?) and for a club shaft—Jo. Forrest—10 shillings." The entries in the book, which came into the writer's possession early in 1896, cover the period between 1627 and 1633.

By the courtesy of Mr. George E. Smythe, the present writer is able to publish an account sent to David Smythe, Esq., of Methven Castle, an ancestor of the present owner, Col. D. M. Smythe:

Nov. 2, 1742.

1 doz. golf clubs	at	12*d.*
8 doz. golf balls	at	4*s.*
		£2 4

The bill was sent from Edinburgh, though the club-maker's name is unfortunately omitted: it is to be noted that the money is sterling, not Scots.

Relics at St. Andrews.

In the reliquary in the Royal and Ancient at St. Andrews are several old clubs, the

most venerable bearing the date 1760; it is called a "track cleque," and is evidently the progenitor of our modern iron niblick, which it resembles in every way save that the shaft is longer, and the nose is cut off, leaving two angular corners. A long spoon by Simon Cosser, 1765, and another by McEwen, 1790, serve to show that the general type of club differed not very materially from those in use in Arnold van de Neer's time, one hundred and fifty years before; nor again from those of our own time, one hundred and thirty years afterwards. Specimens of different clubs of later date are also extant; therefore it is not unfair to assume, that for about three hundred years, and probably for a much longer time, the representative type has undergone but little alteration. The chief difference seems to be in the weight and artistic finish of the iron clubs, which now, in their various forms of mashy, iron and cleek, have a neat thoroughbred sort of appearance; whereas those of bygone ages appear, from their enormous weight, to be better adapted to the sport of

hammer throwing than to the usual circumstances necessitating their use.

From what has been said it perhaps may be gathered that the clubs of our rude forefathers partook in some degree of the serviceable qualities not infrequently associated with their owners: they were of the rough-and-ready description, useful doubtless, but not ornamental; sturdy dray-horses rather than thoroughbred racers. It remained for a simple cartwright, a genius in his way, partially to revolutionize their construction. This man was Hugh Philp, *floruit* 1818-1856, whose business was taken over by Mr. Robert Forgan. Philp is also celebrated as the hero of a halved match, wherein his opponent won all the nine holes in the first half round. Endowed with an æsthetic temperament, Philp had an eye for graceful curves; hence he contrived that his clubs should be invested with artistic merit, which, while not detracting from general usefulness, insured approval as things of beauty, abiding joys, even to the present day. True, his driving clubs would

not now be of much practical use to the powerful players representing first-class modern golf. Rolland, the Kirkaldys, Mr. Tait, would snap them like a carrot in addressing the ball; but a Philp putter! that indeed is like wisdom, man knoweth not the price thereof, the gold and the crystal cannot equal it. A few years ago the writer bought for one shilling some half-dozen old clubs that had been stored away as useless lumber; one of them turned out to be an undoubted Philp which subsequently changed hands at £2, and at this moment of writing, another, a play-club, has just been sold for £5. An Old Master, whether of fiddles, pictures, books, or golf clubs, will ever command a price.

The old club, up to the time when the late Mr. Henry Lamb invented the bulger, was unduly (as it now seems) elongated in the head, the tendency of late years has been towards curtailment and compression, an undoubted improvement; for, within limits, the shorter the head the better adapted is it to nicking in behind a bad-lying ball; also a longer drive

may be obtained, and there is less margin for error, for the ball *must* be hit on or somewhere near the centre of percussion, under pain of "missing the globe" altogether.

Clubs are of almost infinite variety; but the names given here will afford ample choice.

Drivers: which may be (1) of the old-fashioned kind, with perpendicular face. (2) Bulgers.

Long Spoons.

Mid Spoons.

Short Spoons.

Brasseys, (1) either of the old sort, fitting concavely to the ball; or (2) Bulgers, fitting convexly to the ball.

Putters.

So much for wood. Iron clubs are:

Cleeks: for driving or putting.

Irons: for driving or lofting.

Mashies: for driving or lofting.

Iron niblicks.

Putting irons.

It is not advisable for a beginner to cumber

himself with many clubs ; rather let him copy the average schoolboy, or caddie, whose stock-in-trade often consists of nothing but a driver and a cleek ; it is surprising what can be done by one who is thoroughly master even of these two alone. David Ayton has gone round St. Andrews in eighty with them, and Jamie Allan once holed Westward Ho! in eighty-four with nothing but an iron niblick. By degrees, as the young player gains the mastery over his clubs, he may extend his selections, but a driver, a cleek, and an iron, moderately lofted, should form the original nucleus of his possessions.

Divers shapes of drivers.

One rather curious feature usually strikes the observer, and that is the great similarity of results following upon the use of clubs essentially different in weight and length. Short men drive with long clubs, with heavy clubs, or with light clubs ; tall men equally seem to affect every variety, and the net product is much the same. As to choice, therefore, there seems nothing left but to say "*solvitur ambulando.*" If, for instance, a

cricketer finds that the style best suited to him is a half swing, it is open to him to say to his club-maker, "Now make me a driver as like a cricket bat as you can reconcile it with your conscience to turn out." This was the stamp of club used by the late Mr. R. Clark, in his day a first-class player and medallist, who, notwithstanding an extremely short swing, yet drove a very fair ball, thanks to strong wrists and an incalculable amount of lead in his club heads. But this would not suit a man of lither build and lissom wrist, who would prefer to swing over the shoulder; for him an eight-ounce head on a more springy shaft, three feet five to three feet six and a half in length, would be preferable. Again, as to "lie," by which is understood the angle made by the head with the shaft; if obtuse, the club is "flat," if approximating more to a right angle, "upright." Long clubs are of necessity flat; these suit a short man who stands a long way from his ball. The shorter the club the more upright must it be, till the extremity of the scale is reached by the putter.

An upright club is suited to a tall man standing close to his ball; he will probably drive more steadily, and quite as far as if he used a long club with flat lie.

Of late years the tendency has been towards heads of almost extreme depth of face; the effect of this, roughly speaking, is to drive a ball of flatter trajectory. Hence the man whose drives are "skied" will find in this extra depth a counteracting influence, and therefore an advantage. But a deep face, though it matters not so much in the case of tee shots, comes to be a distinct disadvantage when you are playing through the green, except indeed in the case of the habitual "skier." This is especially true when the links are hard, where the ball lies as it would on a pavement, not supported by a sufficiency of grass. In the latter case all shots are far more easily played, for a club will pass more readily under the ball if it lies "soft." Captain Stewart of Fasnacloich, the most brilliant amateur of his day, never used to trouble himself about teeing his ball; he

simply threw it down, or let it drop in the neighbourhood of the tee, and wherever it happened to settle, from that place he played it. Would any good player do so nowadays? Hardly, one may suppose, for the clubs, unless made to order, are all too deep in the face, and it would be a risky thing to try. A modern club will frequently have a face depth of $1\frac{5}{16}$ inch, perhaps more. Allan Robertson's driver, with which he played when he did his seventy-nine, measures fifteen-sixteenths of an inch; that was about the thickness of average heads in his day.

The brassey

Long spoons have fallen into desuetude, their work is done by the brassey; but middle and short spoons still have their votaries, and are very useful to those who are shaky with iron clubs: they are also entirely to be recommended as doing little or no damage to the green. The ancestor of the brassey was probably the "wooden nibbler." As bad lies increased, made by careless or incompetent wielders of the iron, so short heads became necessary to fit more neatly into the holes thus

caused. But there were greens (as Musselburgh) where roads were frequent hazards, in which the lie indeed might be good, but the club was damaged by contact with macadam; for preservation, therefore, a plate of tin was screwed on, and this subsequently gave place to brass, which also was thought to cut through rank herbage in a satisfactory manner. Thus it became a permanency, and most certainly it has this in its favour, that it acts as a wonderful preservative to the head. The face of a brassey seems to outlast that of the driver in a surprising degree, and this despite the fact that it has to sustain double the quantity of hard usage.

What practical difference then is there between the brassey and the driver? It must be conceded, not so very much; with the latter a slightly longer shot can be driven, and probably the ball runs more after the loft—a great advantage in wind. Still, some men seem able to dispense with the driver altogether, as, for instance, Mr. John Ball, jun., Mr. Alex. Stuart, and Mr. Hilton, who think

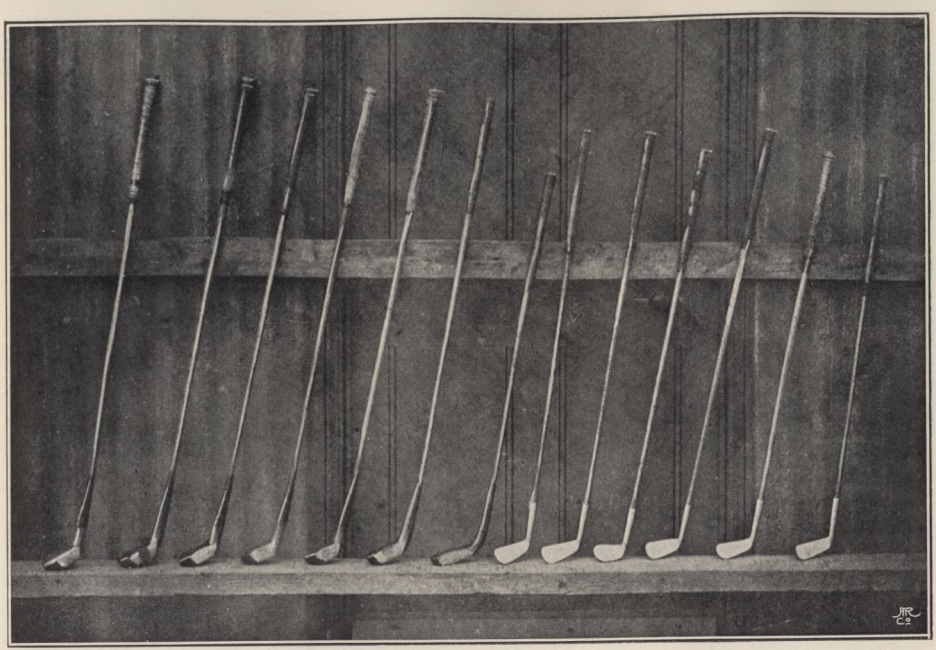
greater accuracy can be attained with the brassey, though not such a long ball. If, therefore, the learner finds he can drive as far as these eminent persons with a brassey, let him learn therewith to be content, for the fewer clubs he has the better; but if he requires every yard of distance of which he is capable, let the driver be recommended to his notice.

Heads and shafts.

In the earlier stages of his initiation a stiff, serviceable sort of club is to be recommended, but the more proficient the learner becomes the more particular will he be as to weapons. Experience shows that for wooden clubs hickory shafts and beech-wood heads are best; a soft head drives better than a hard one, but does not last nearly so long. When worn out a new face can be put in, either of wood, pegged or screwed in, or of leather, or of compressed paper. The last, in the writer's opinion, by far the best; for the wood is apt to give way, and a leather face in wet weather is objectionable, for it does not properly grip the ball, though in a great measure

this may be obviated by the use of chalk. In choosing a club it is important to note that the grain of the head should run at right angles to the face, rather than parallel to it.

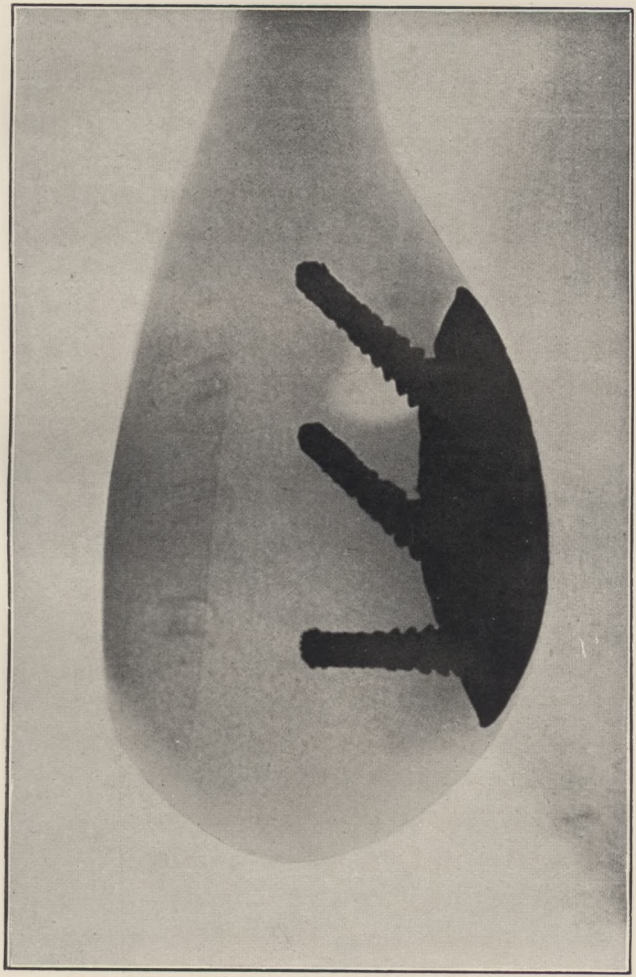
If a head seems good, but the club generally feels dead and lifeless in the hands, this may easily be remedied by reducing the shaft, especially under the leather; by this last device alone a perfect transformation may be effected. This operation, however, should be carried out under the personal superintendence of the owner, for considerable care is necessary, or the club will be spoilt; a very little reduction, say one-sixteenth of an inch all round, will make the entire difference. Sometimes a club will unaccountably fail to drive, although to all appearance the same as usual. A reference to the Röntgen photograph will make plain the possible reason; one or more of the leaden screws or "pins" may be cracked or broken, when, of course, the resisting power will be seriously impaired. Nine times out of ten a club-maker will tell you that there is nothing amiss; but if you have



A MODERN PROFESSIONAL'S SET.

reason to suspect you are right, insist on having the lead taken out, and new lead run in; if a "pin" really was loose, the improvement in your driving will be immediate and marked. This is the most insidious disease to which club nature is liable, one moreover to be diagnosed with exceeding difficulty, and sought for, like Esau's birthright, carefully with tears. Next to beech for heads, comes apple, and perhaps hornbeam, which is very hard, but sometimes drives well; if a good piece be obtained it will last an enormous length of time, and resists better than most the disintegrating influence of wet. A preservative against wet is a coating of dissolved gutta-percha; a few parings of balls may be put into a small, stoppered phial and covered with bisulphide of carbon; but the learner should flee from the haunts of men, for the smell is as the quintessence of a thousand sewers, and to remain in the company of fellow mortals with an unstoppered bottle is to court the malison of one's closest friend. The solution must be of the right consist-

ency, not too thick, or it will flake off on the the first really wet day. Chloroform is also a solvent of gutta-percha, but is much dearer than bisulphide of carbon; both are exceedingly volatile, and the solution cannot be kept for any length of time. Some use dissolved sealing wax in a similar way. Tender solicitude for his clubs will mark out the real enthusiast; after a good wetting he will thoroughly dry and oil the shafts: repeated applications will form what caddies call "a skin," which tends to their better preservation, and is said to improve their driving qualities.



RÖNTGEN PHOTOGRAPH SHOWING HEAD AND THE THREE "PINS."

CHAPTER III.

IRON CLUBS.

FEW things are more remarkable than the general development of cleek and iron driving within the last ten years, culminating in the example furnished us by Mr. Edward Blackwell, who with his Forrester cleek has often been seen to drive shots that would have been supposed impossible. The writer elsewhere has ventured to characterize the present as the age of iron, which has succeeded that of wood to such an extent that men have been known to carry say eight or nine clubs, with but a single wooden club, a driver, amongst them.

The man of metal drives as far with his cleek as with his brassey, hence all the old gradations of spoons, long, middle, and short, have been elbowed aside, and bid fair to be-

come, ere long, as extinct as the baffy. Allan Robertson was the first to experimentalize with cleek and iron for approaching purposes, and most successfully; young Tommy Morris followed, a favourite club of his being the iron niblick if the lie were bad; the more players there were, the more numerous bad lies became; hence, from the niblick was evolved the mashy, a cross between niblick and iron, straight of face, and short of head, the better to jerk a ball out of a hole; in fact, its invention was a necessity, for successfully to approach with short spoon or baffy a clean lie was indispensable.

The cleek.

Old cleeks all erred in that their blades were far too thin; therefore they lacked power, and with repeated hitting were apt to bend. The same with irons; and both had this additional fault in common, that the socket was carried a great deal too far up the shaft; therefore weight was distributed at a mechanical disadvantage, a flaw in design which Mr. Carruthers, of Edinburgh, was the first to correct. He greatly shortened the

socket, carrying the shaft entirely through it; with the result that the ball flies sweetly away from his patent cleeks, and needless to say, to a very much greater distance than was formerly possible. For these clubs it is necessary that the shafts be thoroughly seasoned, and of the very best; for the strain in a jerking shot is severe, and if the wood be second rate a smash is apt to ensue. As to the blade of a cleek or other iron clubs, the principle may be enunciated, that for general usefulness, the thickness and the weight of metal should be graduated, diminishing from the sole upwards, for if the opposite principle were to be carried out, and the weight massed high up on the blade, in proportion as it is so massed, low skimming balls would be driven, excellent, indeed, against wind, but fatal where a hazard at any reasonable distance has to be carried. In the one case the power is applied below the centre of the ball, resulting in a good "carry;" in the other it is applied above it, and produces "run." From heel to toe, also, the thickness should gradually increase; this

is an idea due to the inventive genius of Captain W. H. Burn (himself a splendid cleek driver), and undoubtedly it works out well in practice. Experiments made by Professor Tait seem to show that increased driving power may be gained by scoring the face of the blade with parallel lines; but as yet general experience has not been brought to bear on the subject.

Choice of irons.

An iron club once bought is intractable, as compared with one of wood; this the amateur may, and frequently does, tinker up, file, and spoil for himself, till he has it, as he thinks, to his mind; but few of us have sufficient boldness to beard Vulcan in his forge, and, under the nose of that artificer, manipulate with the necessary skill the glowing mass upon the anvil. It is too heavy, say, too light, too upright, or too flat, maladies, all of them, remediable with infinitely greater ease when wood only has to be operated upon; hence follows the importance of thoroughly suiting oneself with iron furniture at the outset.

The golfer will have to determine for him-

self between mashy and iron; both, of course, are good, but for general all-round serviceableness, perhaps the former is preferable. A really good driving mashy, with spring in the shaft and a straight face, will be almost a match for a cleek as regards distance; for approaching purposes a lofting mashy in deft hands is invaluable, but, of course, as much may be said for an iron. Find out what your several clubs will do in your hands, and graduate them accordingly. For W. G. Grace in his prime a yorker did not exist; similarly the golfer may so graduate his iron clubs as to avoid that difficult *crux*, "a three-quarter approach," which is usually thought to produce more "foozles" than any other species of stroke extant. Avoid chopping and changing about from mashy to cleek, and back again to ordinary or extraordinary iron; clubs few, but familiar, should be the rule. "It is not safe to bet with the man who carries no spoons," says Sir Walter Simpson; and specially with each unit of our approaching gear we should be on terms transcending

The mashy.

familiarity, of close and affectionate friendship; with apologies to the shades of Beaumont and Fletcher,

> "Our irons our angels are or good or ill
> Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."

Irons are of every degree of loft, or "pitch," as it is also called, from the straight-faced driving-iron to those of the other extreme for short approaches. The man of one iron, on Sir W. Simpson's theory, should be labelled dangerous, for probably he will know right well how to use it. No more finished artist ever existed than Mr. Horace Hutchinson in his earlier days at Westward Ho! and one iron used to serve his purpose; but again, it is fair to say that Jamie Allan at that time seemed to have a different iron for every conceivable variety of shot; but genius such as his always takes its own line, and the amateur's example is the safer to follow. The one-iron man will choose an implement such as common sense suggests, one which, while neither a driving nor lofting-iron, partakes in some degree of the nature and qualities of

both. A very great deal may be done with almost any iron by him who shall master the "approach with cut," and as for driving, that is simply a matter of hitting. It is necessary to see that the sole is thick and well weighted, as before remarked.

Highly lofted irons.

From an extremely lofted iron, in the words of Sir Nigel Loring in *The White Company*, "much honour and advancement may be won." All *may* go well with you and it, as all ultimately did go well with that paladin of romance just quoted, but even as our nerves are ever kept in extremest tension as each of his adventures in turn unfolds itself, so "just before the battle," when the hole is to be approached, will the neophyte probably tremble as to the result if he be the owner of a club of this description. Sooth to say, they are but "kittle cattle" at the best, one of their peculiarities being that the harder you hit, the less distance will the ball go; it simply rises all the higher in the air, and has all the more underspin—it follows, therefore, that they are of no use, save at very short

range, thirty or forty yards, perhaps, from the hole. It is extremely easy to play a villainously bad shot with them ; either by cutting into the ground, and moving the ball about a yard, or by topping it with the heavy sole, in which case more run will be imparted to the ball, at the wrong juncture, than could have been coaxed out of any other club in your set ; therefore, if the shot happens to be important, assuredly "shall indignation vex you, even as a thing that is raw." Of course an iron of this sort has its uses : it is positively invaluable for stymies, which are then robbed of more than half their terrors, or, for instance, if there arise exceptional circumstances, say an approach has to be made over a bunker, down a high wind, when the green is like ice, here again is its opportunity, for a ball will run less, if properly played than off any other club. From what has been said, therefore, it will be apparent, that if a club of this sort is to be carried at all, the more it is used, the more practice you have with it, the better.

Mr. Frank A. Fairlie had an extraordinary run of successes about 1892-3, which he attributed mainly to an invention of his own, in the matter of irons and cleeks. Every now and then the best of golfers is liable to hit a ball on the socket of the iron or cleek, the "hose," as it is technically called; when this happens, the player is apt to find himself in evil case, for the ball flies off at a tangent, in a direction which at cricket would be that of cover-point. Why not, therefore, argued Mr. Fairlie improve the hose off the face of the iron? He did so; producing a club which can be warranted not to make any mistake of the description just specified; true, it may shock the finer feelings of the old-world golfer by reason of a certain grotesqueness of appearance, but if he honestly thought he could improve his game a third or so by its use, it is not unlikely his scruples might be overcome. The only result of hitting a ball very far back on the face of Mr. Fairlie's clubs, is, that though distance, of course, is lost, direction is not sacrificed, an all-

important advantage, scarcely to be over-estimated.

Material of shafts.

Hickory has been mentioned as the best wood for shafts of drivers and brasseys, ash also is good if very well seasoned, though it becomes too supple in wet weather; but for all iron clubs orange wood is perhaps the best, being less affected by the severe jerks necessitated by the nature of the shots which continually have to be played. Of late, however, it has become somewhat more difficult to procure; failing this, hickory is to be recommended.

Little need be said as to the remaining iron clubs. The main point to which attention should be directed in a putting cleek is its weight and balance. As a rule, they are generally too heavy, and thus disadvantageous at a time when you are most likely to require their aid—namely, in putting on a keen green. The man of judgment will learn to putt indifferently well either with wood or iron.

Putters.

On a heavy, sodden green, he will take his wooden putter; on a keen green his light

putting cleek, which seems in some occult way to exercise a retarding influence on the ball. It is very much easier to hole putts if you are at liberty to hit them hard, without the fear of dire consequences should you miss the hole; with a cleek this becomes possible where with a putter it would be impracticable. Some men putt entirely with a cleek, as Mr. Tait and Mr. Laidlay; others again can never handle it satisfactorily, as the brilliant young Tommy Morris, the far-outstanding figure o his generation. It is a matter of individual preference, and no hard-and-fast dogma can be laid down. Putting-irons are in favour with some, though as a rule they are conspicuous by their absence from the sets of most first-class players. The niblick suggests reflections the reverse of inspiriting, but none the less is a trusty ally whom you cannot disregard. You do not want to drive far with it, but merely to extricate yourself from an unpleasant position, which may be a bunker with a hard bottom, with a precipitous bank confronting you; therefore your friend in need

The niblick.

must have a stout shaft, perfectly stiff, a substantial weight of head, and a good deal of "loft." Even in the most unpromising situations much may be done by a scientific use of this club; it is often possible to "place" a ball with it, if in a bunker near the hole. This is a most telling stroke, apt to be demoralizing in its effect on the adversary, who sees his prospects of winning a hole thus unexpectedly discounted by a brilliant recovery on your part. A great deal of allowance must be made for a "draw," which it is next to impossible to avoid, by reason of the peculiar formation of the head.

Patent clubs of all descriptions have been invented by the dozen of late years, but nobody seems to have produced a driver which will undeniably distance the rest of its tribe for length of shot. Compressed jute fibre has been tried, and with success, by Robert Simpson of Carnoustie; its great merit is that of indestructability, for it is impervious to wet.

CHAPTER IV.

BALLS.

IT is universally admitted that the present standard of play is very much higher than that of say thirty or forty years ago, but how much of this advance is due to the greater skill of the modern player, and how much to improvements in balls and clubs, is a question not easy to decide. The greatest revolution in the history of the game was the substitution of gutta-percha for the old leather balls stuffed with feathers. This took place in the early fifties, and ere that decade closed Allan Robertson made his name famous for all time by holing the St. Andrews Links in seventy-nine with one of the new-fangled balls—which, upon their introduction, he had done his uttermost to discredit. Circumstances, however, proved too strong for him ; and it soon became

Introduction of gutta-percha.

apparent that on the score of expense alone, to say nothing of superiority of material, the old balls were doomed. There came a time, however, when the gutta-percha balls were undoubtedly very bad; but, with the spread of golf and competition among manufacturers, this state of things began speedily to alter, and at this present time it is not too much to say, that whatever brand of ball a golfer buys he can hardly go wrong—so universally good is the article now in the market.

The usual way of testing a golf ball is by letting it fall on a level flagstone, and if the rebound be brisk and elastic, reaching a height, say, of about three to four feet, the ball is generally a good one; if, in addition, it is found to float when put into water, besides its practical advantages on a course where water hazards abound, that is an additional plea in its favour. The "nicking" of balls is a matter of considerable importance. In the days of their infancy they were quite smooth, but it soon became evident that at the end of a day's play, after much maltreatment, when their

surfaces were scored and gashed with innumerable cuts, they flew much better than before. This led reflecting persons to the conclusion, that if at the outset they were "nicked" with the reverse end of a hammer-head the flight would be improved. This was done with most satisfactory result, and "hand-hammering" developed into a fine art—brought to perfection by young Tommy Morris and Bob Kirk. In these days, however, the machine-mould has almost entirely superseded the old plan. But it is still important to see that the nicks are not, on the one hand, too shallow, or the ball, though well struck, will not hold its own, but will "duck;" nor, on the other, must they err in the opposite direction, or the nicks will become clogged with mud if the green be at all heavy.

Red or black gutta.

As between balls of black gutta or red the player will exercise his own discretion; in the writer's opinion, the former are preferable, they appear to fly a trifle further, and to leave the club with a "sweeter" feeling than the others, which seem to be somewhat more dead and

soft, sharing in some degree the qualities of the "Eclipse." Moreover, the red ball appears unable to retain the paint for any length of time, hence it becomes dingy and disreputable-looking long before its proper course is run. True, there are players here and there who do not regard this in the light of a drawback, but, on the contrary, prefer an almost invisible ball, and indeed, like the ungodly, thereout suck they no small advantage. It works out in the manner indicated by the following true tale. "Well, old chap, how did you get on?" "Oh, he beat me! he *would* play with such a black, beastly ball, I never could see where it was; and at the Road, when I thought he was safe in the bunker, and played accordingly, there he was nearly dead at the hole side." A barbarian of this description plays with such a ball from choice, "he only does it to annoy, because he knows it teases;" but the majority think with the man who, when asked what he would do if he suddenly became a millionaire, replied, "put down a new ball at every hole." There are few, indeed, who do not make

trial of one, what time the match is nearing the end, at least if it be in a critical state; the plan often succeeds, and there is virtue even in a superstition: besides, it may be that one really does see a new ball better than one which has grown old and war-worn in our service, and any device which engenders confidence is good.

Eclipse balls.

The "Eclipse" ball, at one time had a considerable vogue, but has now gone out of fashion, at least amongst all the leading players; it is not made of gutta-percha, but of some composition of which the secret has not been divulged. It leaves the club noiselessly, and on a green at all heavy, cannot be driven so far, for the "carry" is several yards shorter than that of a gutta; still, if the green be keen and level, it will make up in running power the distance lost in the air. In putting it requires a much harder stroke, in driving through the green it does not rise quickly enough to clear bluffs and faces, hence an iron becomes necessary, and distance is sacrificed; moreover, in approaching it is almost im-

possible to insure a dead fall—or to "cut" it so that it will "loft and lie."

A veritable apple of discord the "Eclipse" proved itself when first introduced; it tended towards the breaking up of foursomes into singles; for if of two partners each preferred a different sort of ball, obviously that player must be at a grave disadvantage who was compelled to subordinate his natural preference. Undoubtedly with the "gutta" more brilliancy is attainable, more can be done with it; but that is not to say that the "putty" cannot boast advantages—very considerable advantages—of its own. Chief among these is its indestructibility; nothing short of a steam hammer would make any impression on it; it is always perfectly round, and, assuming that the paint remained, it would probably be in as good condition at the end of unnumbered years of play as when it emerged spick and span from the shop. Again, no ball in the world can compare with it under conditions say of a heavy gale athwart the course, more particularly if the putting happens to be

glassy and keen. On such a day as this even a straight driver will often see his gutta caught up by the wind demon and blown miles away into the lateral hazards, even as Tantalus must watch his apples, pomegranates, and pears unceasingly scattered, and whirled off to the shadowy clouds. Not thus the "Eclipse," which pursues its way with sullen determination, unaffected, save to a very trifling extent, by any vagaries of heel or toe; and when arrived on the green it will be sure to prove its superiority there also, provided the striker can make up his mind to hit it sufficiently hard. All things considered, therefore, the "Eclipse" will commend itself on the score of economy; it is eminently suitable for the baptismal use of such as have not arrived at riper years, as schoolboys: it would be good on hard greens, especially where flinty gravelly hazards abound, and for hot climates probably unrivalled.

Sizes of balls.

As to the sizes of balls, that again is chiefly a matter of individual preference; they are usually marked 26, 26½, 27, 27½, 28, but

whether these numbers are merely arbitrary, or have some cabalistic meaning attached to them, is a question which has repeatedly agitated the mind of the inquiring golfer. The usual explanation is that they denote the weight in drachms avoirdupois ; but if a 27 ball be weighed, it will be found almost exactly to turn the scale at 1½ oz., not 27 drachms but 24. Allan Robertson appears to have been conscious of this discrepancy, which he sought to explain by saying that golf balls came under Apothecaries' weight ; though in what way he regarded the gutta as a drug does not transpire, unless, indeed, it were a drug in the market, as, in his view, it really was. But as weighed by the man of pills and potions, the result is 10 drachms 40 grains, which leaves us more than ever in the dark. Coal and wool measure seem not less inappropriate, but a ray of light appears if we select Troy weight, by which balance a 27 turns the scale at 1 oz. 7 dwt. : and as 20 dwt. = 1 oz., we may perhaps regard the golf ball as a gem, to be estimated in pennyweights Troy, a con-

clusion which the enthusiast will doubtless gladly accept.

But whatever the explanation, their sizes do absolutely differ, though slightly; unquestionably the biggest balls are the best for putting, being less liable to deflection, many prefer them also for driving against the wind; but of late years the favourite size seems to be 27, or alternatively 27½. Any extra distance gained by using a lighter ball, down wind for instance, is discounted when the putting green is reached, where, being unstable, it will not excel.

Painting balls.

It is better, in the writer's opinion, to buy your balls ready painted; but some amateurs may prefer to do their painting for themselves. These should remember that it is of cardinal and prime importance that the first coat should be most thoroughly dry, before the second is applied, otherwise the paint will flake off, and the ball be useless. It is an excellent plan, in fact, having bought your balls, to let them stand in their first coat until wanted; from three to six months is a good

time to allow for seasoning; not more than the last-named period, otherwise the gutta-percha will begin to deteriorate. But, in case of pressing necessity, a minimum of three clear days, preferably a week, should elapse before the second coat is given; four in all, or sometimes three, according to the quality of paint, may suffice.

Old balls sometimes are so little damaged that it is hardly worth while to remake them; remove the old paint by immersing them for a time in a solution of caustic potash; and when the paint is thoroughly dissolved, brush clean with an old nail brush, or something similar. Care is required in dealing with caustic potash, or the solution will remove the skin from the hands. Balls once remade are by many preferred to new balls. Young Tommy Morris always used them for choice in an important match, and it will be obvious that on economical considerations they are entirely to be recommended, but it is inadvisable to remake a ball more than twice.

CHAPTER V.

DRIVING.

GOLF consists of driving, iron play, and putting; "an art, a science, and an inspiration," to quote the happy aphorism of Mr. James Cunningham. Now, undoubtedly, the two last items contribute more to material success, or dismal failure, as the case may be, than the first; for if a player manage to scramble along a fair distance, and keep clear of difficulties, invariably holing in three from his approach, and in two when on the green, he will unquestionably prove a very dangerous antagonist. Nineteen matches out of twenty are lost and won at short range from the hole. But ask that proportion of golfers what in their estimation is the most enjoyable part of the game, and they will tell you nothing can compare with long sweet

The poetry of the game.

driving from the tee and through the green, it is the very poetry of the game. Is this much-vaunted art therefore so difficult of acquirement? We answer pretty confidently, no; provided always that the learner be not absolutely paralytic of limb, and, most important of all, that in his early days of initiation he enlist the services of a thoroughly competent instructor. We cannot all, it is true, become Rollands and Blackwells, for their unquestioned superiority is probably due to exceptional physical advantages, but even they are sometimes approached by mortals of more common clay, and much virtue resides in the exact centre of your club. Nothing is more surprising at golf than the unaccountable manner in which a ball properly struck, with no great effort, often ranges itself alongside of one of these apparently unapproachable swipes of the sort that elicit grunts of astonishment from the admiring crowd. How then, are we to learn to drive? Let us first of all consider how the motive power is obtained. As a fair working hypothesis we

Motive power theory.

may say that there are three parts of the body, each of which contributes its share of the power required to make the head of the club move in its orbit, and these act in circles which are concentric or nearly so.

(1) The loins and back.
(2) The arms.
(3) The wrists.

Now let the learner take a club, and he will find by experiment first, that, if he keeps the arms and wrists stiff, by use of the loins alone he will be able to make the club-head travel over an arc of about 90 degrees, a quarter of a circle ; secondly, that, the wrists being stiff, the arms alone, without assistance from the loins, will carry the club head over a semi-circle ; and thirdly, that without the full use of the wrists, and of loin rotation he cannot complete the circle. In the accompanying diagram, let E represent the position of the player, that is the centre of these respective circles, then I F J will represent the arc of the

circle described by the club-head, by means of loin rotation alone, K G L the semicircle made by the arms, and D C B A the full swing before hitting the ball, D M A representing the course of the club-head in following on after the stroke. Now it would appear from the foregoing remarks that, roughly speaking, in the downward swing the club-head travels from A to B chiefly under obedience to wrist impulse, from B to C to that of the wrists and arms, and from C to D to that of wrists, arms and the body, swung round by loins and hips. Each one of these dynamical processes, apart from the other two, is of considerable value as a motive agent; let anyone stand with the feet twelve inches or so apart, and rotating the body from the hips upwards, bring the right shoulder again to the front with all the speed of which he is capable, and he will experience a very gratifying sensation of power. The power of the wrist, again, is well exemplified in the speed with which we flick off a thistle head with a walking cane; while that of the arms helps to contribute, at golf, the

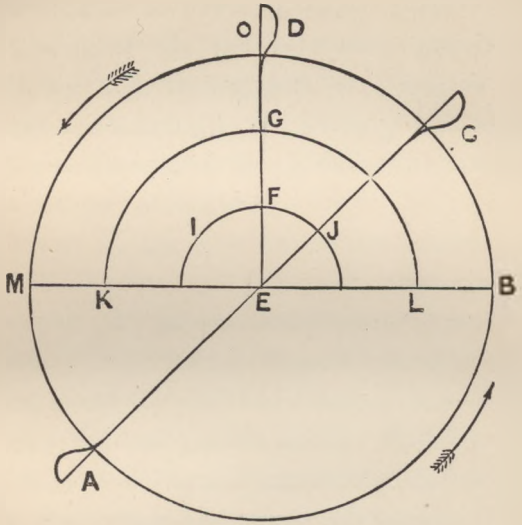


DIAGRAM OF THE ACTION IN DRIVING.

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necessary weight and pith. These several subdivisions of power doubtless shade away, blending at the last into one harmonious whole; and driving will be good, or the reverse, according to the accuracy with which they synchronize at the psychological moment, to wit, that of impact.

How far the long drivers are indebted to physical advantages is a question not easy to answer. To the onlooker it would appear, for instance, that Archie Simpson effects his purpose mainly by swift loin rotation, accompanying a full and perfect swing; Rolland, Mr. Tait, and William Auchterlonie impress one by their grasp and power of forearm; Mr. Edward Blackwell by his strength of wrist and perfection of style; Andrew Kirkaldy, again, could not drive as he does were it not for his physical strength. But one thing they all have in common, good wrists. The muscles on those of the "General," Lloyd of Pau, stand out, the writer has been told, like cords; and the old Hoylake player certainly holds his own in the long game with any-

The wrist.

body.[1] The wrists have a large share of work to perform. They begin first of all to act upon the club as we have seen when the upward swing has died out, and they also impart the final pressure at the last moment, between C and D in the diagram, a sort of indefinable shove as it were, which is of such inestimable service.

Practice. Thus much by way of theory. The next and not unimportant step will be to reduce it as far as may be to practice.

Now the ancient sages, peace to their ashes, and with deference be it spoken, do not commend themselves as having proceeded upon sufficiently scientific principles in their instructions. "Full of wise saws and modern instances," like "the Justice," they left too much to the imitative faculty, which in some is imperfectly developed. "Can ye no swing your club like Mr. Bruiser?" they would say; and the right answer would often be, "No, I can't, unless you show me how."

[1] Since the above was written he has won a long driving competition at Pau, in a field comprising almost all the best professionals.

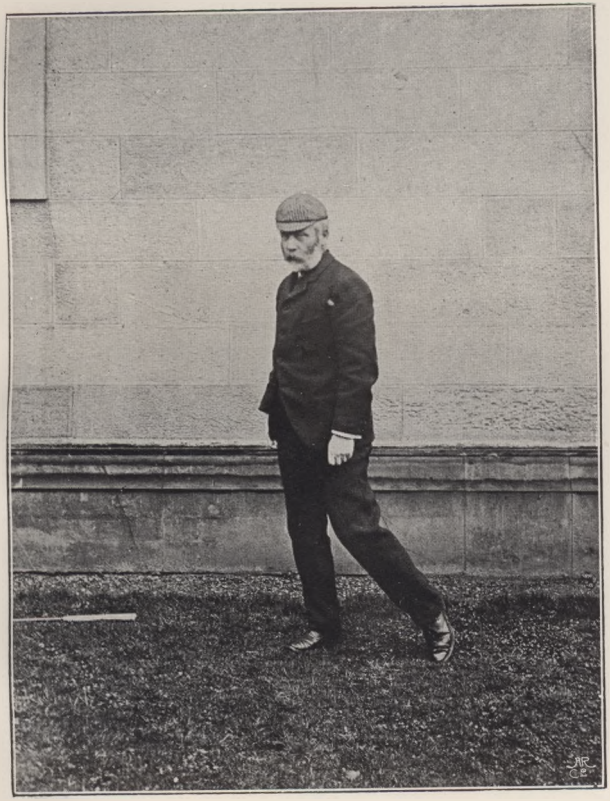
"The apple-faced sage with his nostrum for all,
Dinna hurry the swing, keep your ee on the ball,"

he, and other worthies *ejusdem generis*, reigned supreme. Excellent advice they gave, of course, but applicable rather to the fairly advanced player than to the absolute tyro, and essentially lacking in explanation of fundamental principles. When Her Majesty catches a raw recruit, the first thing she teaches him is the use of his legs. He is not supposed capable of taking his part in battalion drill until he has mastered, *inter alia*, some minor evolutions which primarily concern himself alone—the goose-step, for instance, and the different methods of turning. Thus ought it to be at golf, which should be taught *ab initio*, each part of the swing by itself separately, finally, the harmonious whole. If this were done, adults (we leave boys out of the question) would have better swings in a fortnight or three weeks than if they were, so to speak, turned out to grass for two or three years to pick up for themselves styles, which in the end would be but caricatures. Preliminary drill

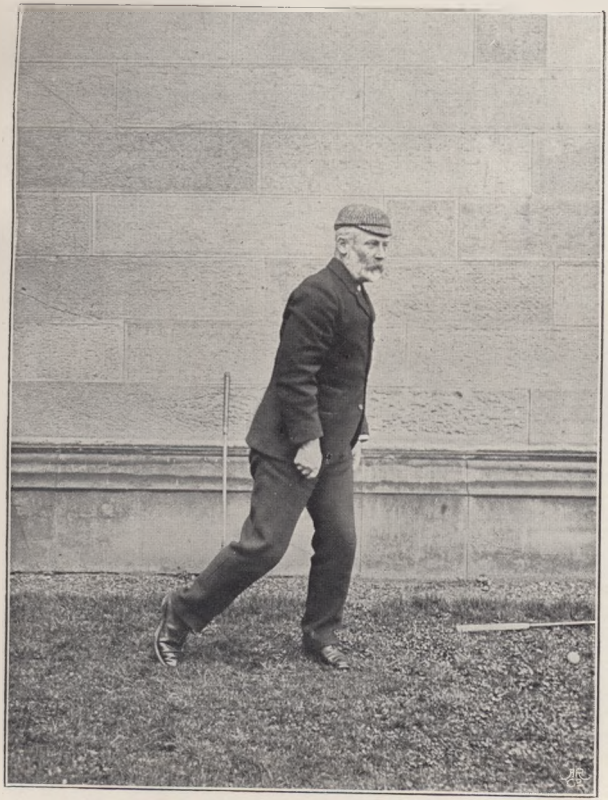
Preliminary drill.

may be learnt perfectly well in a room, and without any club at all, or with a walking-stick, or perhaps best of all with a toy club without lead. Our recruit, as at soldiering, first of all or at an early stage, must learn to manage his feet. Beginners are prone to three besetting sins, one of which, and the worst, is that of lifting the left foot straight up *without turning on it.* This, of course, prevents loin rotation, which, as we have seen, is one of the prime requisites. Therefore, as a first practice, we should say, separate the feet some fourteen to sixteen inches, and rotate the body from the hips upwards, turning the feet and bringing the right shoulder again to the front with all available speed. One result of this will be found to be, that the right foot turns to the left when the shoulders come to the front, to such an extent that the right knee knuckles over into the hollow of the other leg. Rolland in driving has this to perfection, and, after his stroke, frequently sinks almost on his right knee, the right heel being lifted pretty sharply from the ground. Be-

WRONG METHOD WITH LEFT FOOT.



ROTATION OF SHOULDERS—FIRST HALF OF MOVEMENT.



ROTATION OF SHOULDERS—SECOND HALF OF MOVEMENT.

ginners are apt to overlook this important fact, that the body *must* turn on the *right* foot during and after the downward swing, this point being to the full as important, or more so, than the reverse turn with the left, for if the right foot remains planted and stationary the whole force of the stroke is lost in an instant, and the result is a feeble slice, for the club cannot finish in the right place.

Importance of a fixed pivot.

Another point now has to be most strongly insisted upon, for failure to observe it will lay the foundation of a most fatal and common fault; another of the besetting sins, in short, of which we just now spoke. This fault is known as "rocking," or "swaying," and once again the power of the stroke is lost on the instant. Moreover, it is a particularly seductive form of error, one, too, from which very many excellent golfers are by no means free, for one has the sort of feeling that by all justice the force of the blow *ought* to be increased by its means, whereas, as we have ventured to indicate, the precise contrary is the fact. Let the learner therefore imagine

his spine to be a vertical spindle, round which his shoulders revolve as round a pivot, without any lateral shifting of this spindle. The all but universal tendency of the natural man is towards a yawing away on the right foot, a shifting of the proper centre—E, on the diagram, to the right, in the direction LB. This is absolutely fatal, both to steadiness, to direction, and to length—in a word, to good driving. Buy a bright red tie, something that will readily catch your eye, align it on the ball when you begin to play, and never let that tie wander laterally away to the right; in short, while observing the aphorism "keep your eye on the ball," supplement it with the assonance "keep your *tie* on the ball." Of course, it must move a little, but minimize the lateral motion as much as possible: so shall you keep the pivot fixed, and insure even rotation about a vertical axis. Noteworthy examples of correctness are William Auchterlonie, Mr. H. G. Hutchinson, and Mr. John Ball, jun.

Motion of the Club-head.

The next step will be with a stick, or toy-club. Put the right hand behind the back, or

ROCKING OR SWAYING—THE WRONG STYLE.

in the pocket, grasp the toy-club with the left, knuckles nearly upwards, and put the club round your neck as far as the left arm will let it go ; but, during this process, attention must be paid to the proper management of the wrist, for here is another rock upon which, according to Tom Morris, a surprising number of beginners founder ; the third, and on reconsideration, notwithstanding what has been said of number one, the worst of the three besetting sins. Some demon of perversity appears to tempt the tyro to raise his club with the knuckles of the left hand downwards throughout the upward stroke, this method effectually paralyzes the limb ; the wrist joint becomes locked, and by no conceivable scheme of action could the ball be driven much further than an athletic gentleman could kick his hat. Watch the club-head of a good golfer during his upward stroke ; it revolves, so to speak, round the axis of the shaft : addressing the ball, the club face points in the direction of proposed flight of the ball ; when the club is halfway to the shoulder, its

face will be pointing to the sky, and by the time the end of the swing is reached, the head will have performed a whole revolution, and will be observed to be hanging downwards from the shaft, like a pear from a branch, with the face forward; *mutatis mutandis* the same follows on the downward stroke. But, if we try to swing keeping the knuckles of the left hand pointing downwards, by the time the club is half way to the shoulder, its face and the knuckles will be found pointing, not as they ought to point, to the sky, but to the ground; persevere a little further and the wrist joint becomes locked and will not allow the club to proceed. No more logical proof, apart from the physical discomfort of the thing, could be wished for in demonstrating the utter impossibility of this style of play, inasmuch as during its whole upward and downward journey, at every point thereof, the club face is never in the position in which it ought to be —relatively to the ball.

Hands and arms.

But to return to our drill. As this is a stage which is really important, some attention

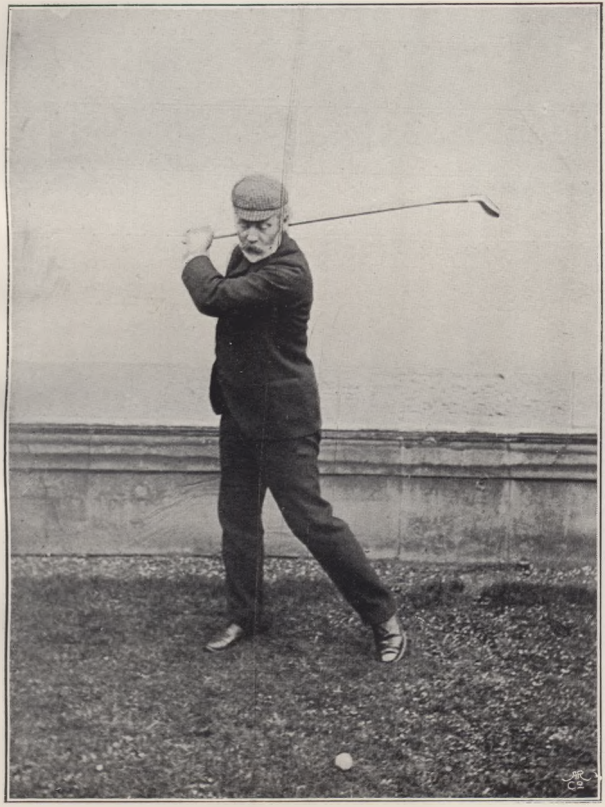
should be devoted to the acquisition of the proper wrist and arm movement, and, if possible, it will be well to take advice from some experienced player. On beginning to raise the club, therefore, the left wrist will simultaneously turn gradually over, so that the little finger knuckle works outwards; halfway up, knuckles and club face will be horizontal, and pointing upwards; continuing the wrist movement, by the time the upward swing is complete, the knuckles will point, roughly speaking, towards the direction in which the player is facing. In the wrong style, the contrast is readily seen, for then they are at right angles to their proper position. It might be supposed that in thus turning over the nose of the club in the upward swing, the player was preparing for himself a certain slice, but it will be found, that if the left hand be kept tight (and only by so swinging can it be kept tight), the action of the wrist will bring the head of the club back to the position it occupied in addressing the ball before the swing. When the right style is

acquired, and with the left hand it is remarkably easy, it is a good plan to address an imaginary, or, indeed, a real ball, placed on some well defined straight line, say on a carpet. When the learner has reason to believe that his one-handed swing is correct, by observing how the club head goes up, relatively to the direction of the straight line, he will be the better able to acquire the next two exercises; of which the first is merely a repetition of the one above described, but with the right hand instead of the left. Regarding the right arm exercise as a means to an end, namely, the the acquisition of a good swing with both hands, a tendency to allow the club to ramble away to the full extent of that arm must be sternly repressed ; on the other hand it must not be pinched in too close to the side, but allowed sufficient scope of movement to clear the point of the right shoulder, and take its position at the back of the neck.

The grip.

Having arrived at a correct method with each hand separately, the next step will be to combine the two, swinging the club with both

LEFT HAND EXERCISE—HALF WAY THROUGH THE SWING.



LEFT HAND EXERCISE— THE SWING COMPLETE.

RIGHT HAND EXERCISE—THE SWING COMPLETE.

hands, and inducing them to act in unison. Power is immediately lost if the hands are separated, thus they should be as close to one another as possible, otherwise the wrists work in antagonism. The recognition of this point is deemed so important that two of our leading players, in the language of poker, "go one better" than the rest. J. H. Taylor and Mr. J. E. Laidlay so grasp the club that the third and fourth fingers of the right hand overlap the first and second fingers of the left, thus bringing the wrists into still closer juxtaposition. The grip of the club is to be carefully considered ; that of the left hand hardly varies to any extent, and all are agreed that it should be grasped very firmly, knuckles nearly, not quite, upwards.

Position of the knuckles.

The left arm plays a very important part in driving, contributing, as it does, much of the hitting power ; therefore its muscles should be braced up, and the whole kept taut as the shaft of the club, of which practically it forms a part, with one hinge, viz., the wrist. Anybody familiar with rackets knows the sort of stroke

that is required for a hard backhanded return; this, but with the left hand, somewhat resembles the necessary stroke at golf. Experiment, then will at once prove the fact, that if we grasp the club with the knuckles underneath, we are bereft of the power to make that particular stroke and the club travels in a flabby half-hearted sort of way, whereas if we hold the knuckles over, the elbow is turned more outwards, and the difference in our command of the club is at once felt. Of course this must not be overdone, the *juste milieu* must be preserved, or we fall into another class of error, that of turning the nose of the club too much inwards, and bringing the face to the ball at an angle with the proposed line of flight; when "foundering," digging into the ground, and other horrors too numerous to mention, will follow in the train.

The right hand.

As to the grip of the right hand, modern players divide themselves, roughly speaking, into two schools. It is not open to us to say that there is but one stereotyped grip and that all others are wrong; though at one

A GOOD SWING.

time this was one of the thirty-nine articles to which the faithful in bounden duty must subscribe. But modern golf has marched with the times and is slightly different; thus we see the Vardons with thumbs down the shaft; Taylor with his odd right-hand grip, Mr. John Ball, jun., distinctly heterodox, according to old theory; Mr. Laidlay outraging most of the proprieties. With these exemplars in view, there is nothing for it but to fall in with the maxim that "facs are stubborn chiels and winna ding," and cheerfully admit that the management of the right hand may advantageously be left to individual caprice. At opposite poles, therefore, we will place, say Willie Park, jun., and Mr. John Ball: the one with the hand much over, the other the exact reverse. One advantage of the underneath method appears to be that some extra force is obtained; Mr. Tait, for instance, who adopts a modification of this plan, seems largely indebted to his right wrist for his longest shots: on the other hand, it is a style which is rather conducive to "a draw;" and those

adopting it usually require to be in good practice before they can rely upon their long game for steadiness. Again, the question whether the club is to be sunk in the palm or held in the fingers of the right hand is decided differently by different players of recognized standing and repute. But one thing is certain, that, when the club strikes the ball, the shaft in all cases must have arrived in such position that it is resting in the fork at the base of the thumb; those who adopt the finger grip allow it to drop into that position during the upward swing; also at the moment of impact the grip of that hand must be firm. A pertinent question is, should the grip be tight at the moment of address? Here again as many authorities could be quoted on the one side as the other: suffice it to name one or two. Few will deny the right of Bob Ferguson to respectful hearing; that triple winner of the Championship informed the present writer that he held his right hand as tight as his left: Hugh Kirkaldy adopts the same prin-

ciple. Young Tommy Morris, on the other hand, had quite a loose grip, and one used to notice his forefinger wandering away by itself, that the grasp might be looser still; and to the question, how do you hold your right hand? *the* driver *par excellence* of the present century, Mr. E. B. H. Blackwell replied, "Oh, in the old-fashioned way; quite loose." But it would appear in the nature of things that the tight gripper *must* relax, perhaps unconsciously, in the upward swing: otherwise it is not easy to see how that swing can be fully executed, for there would be restricted freedom, and a loss of that dashing "*abandon*" so characteristic of professional play. As in other things, "*ne quid nimis*" is probably the safe guide, and we shall hardly go astray if we advocate the apostolic precept of moderation.

Stance.

The matter of stance is important, but it is a favourite theory of Mr. Cunningham's and other eminent players that it is so only in respect to the *left* foot; arrange *that* in proper position and it matters little, within reasonable limits, what happens to the right.

This is very likely true; nevertheless, looking at statistics, it will be found that by far the greater majority of first-class players, professional and amateur, have stood and stand with the right foot in rear of the left, or at any rate, square with it. Still there is no getting away from the fact that some of the very finest drivers have advanced the right foot: Jamie Allan, Mr. John Ball, jun., Jack Simpson, last and not least, J. H. Taylor. Good wine needs no bush; and it skills not to sing the praises of this quatrain, whose methods differ, and markedly, from those of the great majority. But they have been and are eminent, it is safe to say, in spite of, not because of this individual peculiarity, for thus must it be characterized, in view of ages of experience, and far more numerous examples to the contrary. "Standing open," as it is called, is thus not with a clear conscience to be recommended to the tyro; it is true that he will most likely have a comfortable sort of feeling that he knows where he is going, it seems easy to drive pretty straight in that

style; but nevertheless on the whole it is more conducive to the fatal fault of slicing: this arises from the fact that the club must be taken up more vertically, and it is less easy to finish out the stroke properly.

Finish of the stroke.

For what happens to the club *after* the ball is hit, is nearly of as much importance as its antecedent movements; there is an indescribable knack of throwing the arms, so to speak, headlong after the ball, to their full stretch; a knack seen to perfection in Mr. Laidlay and in William Auchterlonie; though of course all good drivers have it more or less. This finishes out the stroke in a proper and workmanlike manner, and insures the club head travelling for as long a time as possible in the line of flight of the ball. By "standing open," on the other hand, the head is apt to travel in a line forming an acute angle with the proper direction, which it crosses, imparts spin to the ball, and loses at least twenty yards of distance. Yet it is well not to be rigidly fettered as to our right foot; occasions arise when it is useful to be

able slightly to cut a ball, as in playing from behind a steep face, where it is necessary to induce the ball to rise quickly. This stroke has been brought to perfection by Mr. H. H. Hilton, who uses it with telling effect.

Left foot.

But we have wandered somewhat away from our really important point, namely, the position of the left foot in driving. Theoretically speaking, the club head, when addressing the ball, the shaft, the hands, and the left eye, should all be in a straight line ; or, as Mr. Hutchinson puts it, in the same vertical plane, and this plane should be at right angles to the proposed line of flight. This doubtless is good theory ; but in practical golf few bother their heads about right angles ; they cannot

"Distinguish and divide
A hair 'twixt south and south-west side,"

any more than they

"Resolve by sines and tangents straight,"

what exactly is a right angle to their tee shot. They take position instinctively, and have an abiding idea that when they *feel* right, the

stroke somehow will take care of itself. This is true golf; still, if we are to have theory to help us, let us guess at our right angle as well as we may, and then place the left foot not on the actual line, but slightly inside it, say from two to three inches; a line drawn from the inside of the left heel to the club face and ball will thus make slightly less than a right angle to the line of flight. We say the heel advisedly, for that is the main "*point de départ*;" many things may happen to the toes; they may be turned out, or turned in, or kept straight, and good results follow all three methods; but only so if the heel be in proper position at the commencement. But supposing we still further decrease this angle, say, for instance, we place the heel not two to three inches, but ten to twelve inches inside the right angle line; or say we make of it an angle of forty-five degrees, we shall then be told by our caddie, if we have one worth his salt, that "we're stannin' owre muckle in front o' the ba'," or whatever happens to be its equivalent in the English tongue. Surprising strokes of dif-

ferent descriptions follow in the train of this position; either we have to play very much off the right foot in order to hit the ball at all, in which case there is great difficulty in allowing the arms free play, in inducing them to follow the ball, we draw them in therefore, and lo! a long ball perhaps, but a terrific "hook;" or again, the hands not being in proper position relatively to the line of flight, they come down, so to say, as a sort of advance guard, the head following after, and away goes the ball to the wilderness which there is on the right-hand side of our well-regulated links. And now we take the other extreme, suppose we plant our heel on a line, making an angle greater than a right angle to the line of flight, an obtuse angle, in fact. In this case the head of the club will have passed its lowest point, and will be beginning its upward course, the result, therefore, will be that we shall miss the ball with the full face and hit it with the horn, which is good for neither horn nor ball, and produces an uncomfortable sensation besides. Hence

follow in dismal procession topped shots (wholly or half), or graduated in all their unpleasant variety. Perhaps nothing gives rise to such a feeling of idiotic impotence, or rather of misapplied power, than a succession of "tops;" one can sympathize with the historic gentleman, provoked with himself beyond measure, in whose breast the fire burnt, so that at the end he spake with his tongue, and right forcibly, to the effect that he wished his ball *had* no top. Having then settled the position of our left heel satisfactorily, the right foot may be (i) advanced, (ii) planted square in line, or (iii) retired; all three positions being compatible with good driving, and looking, as may be seen in the photographs, workmanlike: examples might be given of eminent players who have adopted them all in turn and with good results.

Distance between the feet.

What distance should there be between the feet during our address? If they are too close, as they would be at twelve inches apart, there is a loss of command; reducing the matter to inches, we should say, that from eighteen to

twenty-four is the limit, beyond the latter distance, for ordinary humanity, "a straddle" begins, which commends itself neither for grace nor effectiveness, for with the feet too wide apart, the swing is apt to contract, also it is easy to fall into the bad habit of "swaying," for the weight of the body seeks out the right foot in the upward swing, and if that foot be too far removed, it almost follows of necessity that the all-important "pivot" is displaced, or if not, some sort of contortions are necessary, which will lead sooner or later to other faults. But let each stand with his feet at such distance apart as may come natural to him; there is a deal of difference between eighteen inches and twenty-four, quite enough for anyone, not a giant, to accommodate himself withal.

Distance from the ball.

Regarding the distance from the ball at which it is best to stand, a practised player readily gauges it by his eye, but the novice will stand in need of such hints as it is possible to give. Now it is obvious that we cannot dogmatize about "nicely balanced less or

RIGHT FOOT ADVANCED—STANDING OPEN.

BOTH FEET IN LINE—STANDING SQUARE.

RIGHT FOOT BEHIND.

more," or measure with a foot rule and say, "thus far shalt thou stand, no farther," for the reason that nature has not fashioned mankind after one pattern. The short man, using long flat clubs, of necessity stands farther away from his ball than he of tall stature, whose clubs, belike, are shorter and upright of lie. Linear distance, therefore, is to be ignored, for it is relative to the individual; but we may determine the matter by means of the club itself, in the manner practised by Mr. David Leitch, a very distinguished amateur at St. Andrews. Grasp the driver with the *right* hand, *not* the left, at such distance from the end of the shaft that there remains room for the left hand to fall into its proper position; then address the ball with the middle of the club and take your distance, which should be such as to avoid overreaching on the one hand, and on the other, that sense of restricted ease and freedom which results from your being too near; the right arm should be found at an easy distance from the body, and the end of the shaft, if depressed, would

touch a point about three inches above the right knee, if the player stood erect, square to the ball, with his feet in a line.

Falling over and falling away.

Having now indicated the species of drill which will prove beneficial to the learner, it remains but to supplement the course with a few general remarks. At some stage of his career it is probable he may fall into one of two faults, or even both. These are "falling over" the ball, and "falling away" from it. Needless to say, in either event, the result is more or less disastrous, for the mechanical working of the machine having gone wrong, all previous adjustments will have proved of no avail. At the moment of impact, everything ought to be in the same position, relatively to the ball, as when we wooed it in our address; but if we overbalance and topple over just previous to, and at the moment of, striking, it is obvious that this condition can not be complied with; equally harmful is its opposite, falling away backwards. Therefore, let the back assume its proper inclination, not bolt upright, but bending at a comfortable

MEASURING DISTANCE.

angle towards the ball; and, while careful to preserve the primary maxim of the fixed pivot, let that angle be rigidly maintained until the ball is struck—the muscles all under due control. "Keep the eye on the ball" is a time-honoured apothegm of almost offensive familiarity, yet it should be supplemented by the advice, most important advice, to watch intently that part of the ball which it is your object to hit. As long as balls are made with tops, the tendency will be towards hitting the top, if you fix your gaze upon it, therefore, look at the ball below the centre, or even at the ground just immediately behind the ball, and make sure of "getting well down to it." Mr. Basil Brooke, a fair player, though not first-class, used to adopt a most original method of counteracting a succession of "tops" from the tee; "tee higher," you suggest? Not a bit of it; he was no panderer to vice; he took no sand at all, and besides, "teed his ball in a hole," to use his own delicious Hibernicism, "because then," as he explained, "I *must* get down to them;" the

rationale of the thing being, in all probability, that thus he was compelled to watch with more intent regard the proper spot to strike, and the plan answered very well.

Never let the head and eyes follow the club as it goes back. Beginners, in their anxiety for a good swing, are somewhat apt to fall into this mistake. Quite enough of the club's manœuvres can be seen with the "tail of the eye," and that is no bad plan, provided always it can be done readily, and without the least detrimental effect on our fixed sight of the ball.

One of the vital secrets of good driving being the utilization of the weight of the body to the best advantage, the proper disposition of that weight at the moment of address becomes a question of importance. Certainly it should *not* be wholly on the right leg. Most good drivers bear principally on the left, some have the weight about equally divided; but, as a good general rule, let the weight rest mainly on the left. If this be done the left heel will perforce keep pretty close to the

ground, and that is a desirable point to keep in view. Also that heel should leave the ground as a natural consequence following upon and induced by the upward swing of the club, being torn from the ground as it were by the movement, not initiating any vagaries on its own account antecedently to the swing, with the mistaken view of making the circle longer.

In the foregoing chapter the remarks have been made principally with reference to driving from the tee, and good-lying balls in general; but the essential principles hold good in every style of driving, subject to some slight modifications here and there when we have to deal with bad-lying balls through the green.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SECOND SHOT.

THERE are legions of players who find no difficulty in driving a fine ball from the tee, but when they have to take the luck as it comes, bad lies and good, there is often a different tale to tell. As a rule this is a part of the game where the professional excels the ordinary amateur, and a deadly antagonist is he who can drive two long straight shots in succession regardless of lie. For on every well-regulated links the holes should be at such distances that two ordinary full drives, say 180 yards or so each, should reach the green; or, if a long hole, then three drives. Thus the man who hits his two or three to the full value of his club will obviously be in better case than he who has half missed one of his shots, for the former will be putting at

Lengths of holes.

the hole while the other has to play an iron approach. At St. Andrews, benignant Nature, after consultation with Tom Morris, *has* so arranged her plateaus for putting-greens that, roughly speaking, these distances are preserved. Thus we see in that course one of the truest tests of golf, and the good driver who hits all his shots shall have his reward. On some links that is not so, where holes are arranged at that worst of distances a drive and an iron shot. There the missed tee shot, if it happens to lie clear, is not penalized, and a recovery can be made with the second, which in the nature of things ought to be impossible, so far at least as mere distance is concerned. Links of this description, therefore, are apt to engender in the young player a sort of idea that he is better than in reality is the case. Perchance he counts his score (the very worst thing he can do), and discovers that he has "gone round" in ninety. Elated with his performance, he then tries his hand on some standard green; but, lo you, there for the life of him he cannot be other than a three-figure man, try as he

will, for the intermediate shots will have told their inevitable tale. Probably the very best man "through the green," as it is called, is Rolland. The rather ingenious suggestion was made to the present writer that a satisfactory handicap might be arranged between Rolland and an ordinary average player by allowing the latter to put Rolland's ball into any abominably bad lie, within the radius of a club length, that he might happen to find. There are possibilities about this, the more if the proviso were added that in addition the weaker one might be allowed to tee his own ball; still one is inclined to think the possibilities would be in favour of Rolland.

Bad lies are of many kinds, "custom cannot stale their infinite variety," but they may be classified; and most positions, short of rabbit scrapes and impossibilities, may be more or less effectually dealt with. The sort of lie that is perhaps most trying to a novice is that known as a "hanging ball;" and yet for the expert sometimes that is of the very best, that

which by choice he would select, as, for instance, if he were going against the wind. Now and then a ball will lie on such a steep slope that only an iron can be used with safety; but in less aggravated circumstances the brassey, or any club with a spooned face, may be taken—nay, even the driver, if the ball be not hanging over much. The great secret to remember is this, *that no exceptional effort on the player's part is necessary to induce the ball to rise.* When a ball lies on the flat, the club travels over that horizontal surface in the same plane; or, again, if the ball lies on the face of a bank towards you, the bank being at right angles to your line of direction, the club cannot travel in a horizontal plane, but in one corresponding to the inclination of the bank to the horizon. By parity of reasoning, therefore, when you are confronted with a hanging ball, swing easily and play away down the hill, letting the head follow the slope, and allowing the club to do its own work, as it will, without any extra persuasion on your part. Any

Hanging lies.

endeavour to interfere with its natural action, by turning the wrists upwards, or any other device whatsoever, will be resented, and the stroke a failure. Properly carried out it is one of the prettiest shots in the game, more particularly against the wind; the ball flies away with flat trajectory, cheating the breeze, and, like Fama in Virgil, seems to gather impetus as it goes. Judgment, however, is necessary when there is a bluff or other obstruction within a few yards. If there is no time for the ball to rise, then an iron or cleek must be chosen, for even with an iron we should gain more distance than by taking a wooden club and "dunting" the ball into the hillside therewith.

Balls may also be on slopes lying not in the direction in which you are going, but at right angles to it, and in such position that (1) you have to stand below the level of the ball, or (2) above it. Much discrimination is needed in dealing with both these varieties; it is easy enough to drive them far, but very far from easy to drive them straight. When

Stance below the ball.

the ball (1) is above you there is an inveterate tendency to pull it to the left; therefore, if hazards that way lie, it is important to bear this tendency in mind. As a matter of practice most good players, recognizing the situation, consider it needless to kick against the pricks, but discount the difficulty by boldly allowing for the "draw" that is nearly sure to follow, and stand accordingly. Why this particular ball should be so deceitful above all things we do not precisely know, unless it be that the natural lie of the club is so interfered with, that the toe being the first part of it to touch the ground asserts its temporary supremacy with the aforestated results. As a partial antidote the right hand may be kept looser than usual, and we may adopt a more open stance. In case 2 the tendency is to fall on the top of the ball, for the man is in a state of equilibrium which at the best is unstable. Perched on an eminence half way up a hill, his toes pointing away down the slope, nothing is easier than to topple over with the effort of bringing the club down. In this

Stance above the ball.

instance the heel of the club has been the first to touch the ground, therefore we frequently see the ball well sliced careering away to the right, as the heel comes down first. But in the endeavour to counteract this error it is easy to fall into its opposite, and "hook." Recollect then that your aim must be not so much for distance as direction; swing easily and hit with rather less force than usual. But, after all, there is no royal road to success in coping with these difficulties, least of all through the printed page. Half a dozen balls and plenty of practice will do more than the seven sages could have taught, had golf been in vogue in Miletus and the other places where they respectively dwelt.

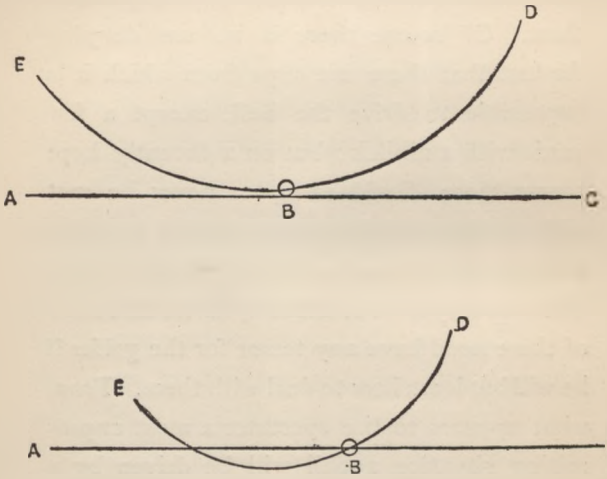
Cupped balls.

"Cupped balls" are a sore trial to the unskilled, and are productive of many a grumble. "Hadn't a chance; over the head every time from the tee," is a formula with which most of us are familiar. "Buried again," once ejaculated a well-known player who had missed his drive, in momentary oblivion of the fact that it was the *tee-shot* at which he had just

failed. Yet the cold-blooded philosopher being the recipient of these confidences may very possibly reflect that not so much were the cuppy lies to blame for the loss of the match as the lack of ability to cope with them. Of course there is no use denying the fact that there are cups from which it is impossible to drive the ball, except a few yards with a niblick; but on a decently kept course these should rarely or never be met with. Other bad lies are graduated from the mere slight depression to the painfully well-defined cup, yet we confidently assert that none of these need have any terror for the golfer if he will but learn how to deal with them. From what appears to the spectator a most unpromising situation a ball will be driven by a professional, or good amateur, nearly as far as from the tee. The knack of doing this may be acquired with a little practice, the great difficulty being a sort of uncomfortable feeling that by playing the stroke as it should be played you must infallibly shiver your club shaft into atoms. For we have slightly to

modify our plan of action in respect to a teed ball, or a good lie.

A C is the level of the ground, B the ball; there is no difficulty in sweeping the



DIAGRAMS SHOWING MODIFICATION OF SWING FOR A CUPPED BALL.

swing D E through the ball, throwing our arms after it, as described in the preceding chapter. But let us suppose the ball lying in a cup, then the circle D E properly carried out is partly below the level of the ground;

but when the club head reaches the ground it is, in a manner, brought up short with a jerk, though we must gather up with a sharp nip and follow on as we best can. It is from this abrupt meeting with Mother Earth that the stroke is known technically as the jerk; though there must be nothing of the jerk about the swing, which must be free and unlimbered as at the tee. It will be seen from the diagram, which for explanatory purpose is exaggerated, that a more vertical stroke is necessary. One has to imbibe the idea that one is about to hit the ball into the bowels of the earth instead of along its surface; and owing to the not unnatural feeling that the club must break in the process, we nerve ourselves with somewhat of reluctance. But, as a matter of fact, the resiliency of a shaft—a good shaft—is extraordinary. It is not uncommon to see the club head stop at the ball in one of these jerked strokes, and the shaft be none the worse. Once gain confidence, catch at the idea that you are about to cleave the ground, and the stroke is easy.

The jerk.

A fair introduction to it would be to take some balls into a bunker with sides not over steep. Lay them down so that they rest level on the sand, not cupped, and with some iron club, cleek, or driving mashy, try this downward stroke; hitting as it were into a sandbag, you will have no fears for your shaft, and the ball will fly away with the straightness of an arrow.

This brings us to another and most important consideration. All that has been said above as to jerked shots applies primarily to the brassey, or whatever club we choose to do service for us through the green; but every word of it is equally applicable to iron clubs, cleeks, mashies and their sisters, cousins and their aunts. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that a good cleek drive can hardly be compassed in any other manner, even when the ball is lying on a level: distance is undoubtedly gained; the jerk in some unexplained way appears to endue the iron head with more or less of the elastic qualities of wood; approaches with cleek, iron, or mashy,

requiring any force, are played with deadly accuracy by this method, for, as Mr. Hutchinson has said, the ball flies away "with a strict attention to business that is truly delightful," perseveres in its line, wind or no wind, and probably finishes by "giving you a good look at the hole." A ball may lie well, but yet so close to a hill that it cannot be treated as teed; if it be slightly cut, it will rise much more quickly and clear the face, but of course allowance must be made by playing much more to the left than we should have done for a straight drive. By standing more "open," *i.e.*, advancing the right foot, and playing from it, and raising the club more vertically than usual, as much "slice" may be imparted as is desired. The stroke is useful, as it often gains more distance than an iron club would yield. On the whole a "bad stand" is worse than a bad lie, for we are robbed of power; often, of course, malignant fate loves to heap Pelion on Ossa, and give us both together; a cupped ball hanging on ground frozen, or baked to the hardness of adamant by a

summer sun; a face in front, and a bad stand; this is a combination which will tax the golfer's philosophy, "an he be not pretty valiant and cunning in fence;" but with soft ground bad lies are less formidable, yielding, as they do, more readily to the suasion of the jerk, which we have endeavoured to describe.

CHAPTER VII.

THE QUARTER GAME.

WE may now be said almost to enter the domain of pure science, for few not familiar with golf from childhood, and thus to the manner born, would realize the amount of skill required before a golfer can be designated as really first-class with the iron in all its moods and tenses. It looks so easy, as do most things when properly done, and doubtless a master of the art does so consider it. Like charity, good approach play covers a multitude of sins; it makes a man fully equal to, not to say better than, his adversary, who, though a far stronger driver, is loose in this all-important branch of the game. Talking to Mr. J. E. Laidlay one day, the present writer remarked of somebody that he was a most terrific driver, and would pass most people by

twenty or thirty yards from the tee. "What does it matter," he answered, "if he's a hundred yards past you?" There spoke a master, slightly in the language of hyperbole, of course, but to him it would not matter; it *does* not matter a row of pins whether he is over-driven or not, so deadly is his approach play that he need fear no mortal man. The ideal is thus to be described: when within approaching distance you play your ball so well on to the green, that at the next stroke you can hardly fail to lay yourself dead, and at the third, knock the ball in with the back of your putter; this is to be done, not once, twice, but *every* time you take your approaching club in hand: he is the real Simon Pure who can look on his match in retrospect, lay his hand on his heart and say he has succeeded herein; still a very colourable imitation of him is he who holes out in three; be in in three from your approach, honestly if you can, but down in that number by hook or crook you must be—to do so is first-class, to fail is

a champion way of losing your match. That is the abiding principle, carry it out how you like; you may be temporarily off your iron, *absit omen;* but the thing has been known to happen, even to a St. Andrews professor; in such case you will have more to do when on the green (or before you arrive there); possibly you may be equal to it, extra accurate in the approach puts, or at holing out those of two yards; nevertheless, the strain is uncomfortable, and it is infinitely better fun to approach in the manner first indicated, and watch the other man do the putting. Besides, consider this: if your first shot is so good as we venture to hope it will become, it is then often a question of holing, not in three, but in two, from your iron, in which happy case, knocking two strokes into one, you will have taken the bread out of the enemy's mouth, and the only cereal he will taste for the nonce will be the bread of affliction.

We have discoursed somewhat airily upon "approaching distance;" but the question may be pertinently asked: what *is* that dis-

tance; where does it begin? You have in a sense "approached" the hole with a drive of 200 yards, which reaches the green; but technically you only "approach" with iron clubs; unless indeed you are a votary of short spoons and baffies (no bad weapons these either, by the way), and not so liable to lead the novice astray: moreover they do no damage to the green. But so long as the leaders of golf use irons and mashies, so long will they have their imitators; and that part of the game must be described. Here let it be observed, that a full shot with an iron is a most uncertain quantity, and the more loft there is on the iron the less likelihood is there of the ball going where you wished it to go. "The moment you begin to swing an iron you go wrong" is a favourite principle with Mr. Laidlay: the ball "falls to earth I know not where," like the arrow in Longfellow, and the stroke is specially dangerous on a windy day. William Auchterlonie thinks the same, and never takes more than a half shot, but the distance he can drive with it is astonishing.

Approaching distance.

If we take yards as our standard of distance, let us say, roughly, that approaching begins at about 140 yards from the hole, that is, less than the distance you should drive with a middle spoon, or brassey, or full cleek shot; and it is about the range of that extremely dangerous stroke, which had better be avoided, known as the three-quarter shot. Now, if we are never to swing an iron, save when compelled by dire necessity, what are we to do when we are confronted by a full iron shot? Graduate your clubs, so that you have, say three, with which you never need play more than a half shot; then, taking 140 yards as the limit, that distance can be driven by a fairly strong-wristed man with an ordinary cleek, by means of the half shot; the same stroke, played with a driving mashy, would correspond say to your full iron, and be far more accurate; next comes a shorter range still; the same stroke being played with an iron, having an average amount of loft, and, if you care to supplement this triad, by a very heavily-lofted iron, not, however, very necessary on

most greens, and being besides difficult to use, you can do so. It may be added that a full shot with a driving mashy, which is straighter in the face, is not so fraught with peril as the same shot played with an average iron; but it is a sound maxim, never to swing your club in approaching if you can avoid doing so; common sense suggests that you are much more likely to be accurate if playing from the wrist or a half shot.

Two styles in approach shots.

There are two methods of playing approaches, both deadly, though it is not often that one man combines in himself the two styles, using either at will. We may call the one "the stiff arm shot," played with rigid wrists and with a sort of underhand following-through action, and the other the "bent arm shot," in which the club approaches the shoulder, being raised in semi-vertical manner, and being "nipped" more sharply upwards on completion of the stroke. Willie Park, jun., Rolland and others use the first, "Sandy Herd" uses the second, and Taylor,

perhaps the deadliest of them all, combines both, he being a notable exception, and so far proving the rule. In learning the first of these styles, the procedure should be the same as in elementary driving lessons: first one hand being used, then the other, and finally both together. Position may be taken up with the ball about midway between the feet; the right foot is advanced more than in driving; the player standing nearly half-facing the hole. When the practice is with the right hand alone, the reach backwards is naturally much longer than when either the left, or both together, are used; but at the first stage it is not a bad plan to allow the right arm free play backwards as far as it will stretch, letting the club head reach to the level of the shoulder, no higher, for by so doing the necessary feeling of freedom is rather encouraged; and all exuberance will be effectually checked later on by the passage of the left arm across the body. There must be no flexion of elbow; all must be firm, taut, and rigid throughout; the moment that

Stiff arm stroke.

joint is allowed to bend, the whole character of the stroke is altered, and it begins to partake of the characteristics of what we have called "the bent arm shot," in which an entirely new set of phenomena arise—to be described later on. Our present exercise may be described as a sort of pendulum movement; or again, perhaps the preliminaries resemble those we should probably indulge in if about to throw a heavy hammer; this is the time, if ever, to lay to heart the maxim "slow back," with a faint pause when the club reaches its backward limit; the wrist has little, if any, conscious play, though somehow it appears to come in of its own accord at the moment of striking the ball: in fact, the stroke is best described by the title we have ventured to give it—"stiff arm": the sort of right hand action a fast under hand bowler uses. The very essence of this stroke lies in the proper management of the weight; the body, shoulders and arms all working harmoniously together, and in perfect time; if any one of the components of the

THE APPROACH.

machine fail, something goes wrong; for instance, if the club, just before and at the moment of impact, is not worked round sufficiently with the right hand, and the corresponding shoulder lags behind, the result will be a slice; but overdo the working round with the right hand, and a pull is unavoidable. As is the case in driving, it is essential to remember the root fact of the matter, namely, that the important part of the stroke is that part of it which remains after the ball has been hit; the whole duty of man does by no means come to an end with that impact, which indeed, is merely episodical; the stroke, *quâ* stroke, is then but half finished; away then with the arms after the ball as far as you can reach, in the direction of the hole, or rather to the left of it, and, provided you acquire the proper knack of this long approach, you will find that against a stiff breeze of wind, with a cleek you can drive nearly as far as with a brassey, for in the main the ball travels low and with great running power. Herein lies the difference

between this style of approach, and what we have called the "bent arm shot," that the first travels with no "cut"; it has weight behind it; forward propelling power, but the moment the right elbow is flexed, and the wrist joints allowed to play, that instant a retarding influence, *i.e.*, "cut" begins to act on the ball. It is important to bear this in mind; the two styles are different one from another as, in the language of the general, is chalk from cheese—the first, therefore, is far the more deadly when playing in wind from any quarter whatever, save only, and except the wind be following, or nearly so. It always blows on the links, or ought to, therefore the study of the effect of wind on differently struck balls becomes not only interesting, but withal necessary.

Cut balls.

The effect of "cut" on a ball, which is also acted upon by a strong wind, no man may exactly foretell; certain broad results of course follow, and are known to all; for instance, with a wind from the left at right angles to the line of flight, a cut ball is

FOLLOWING THROUGH.

carried away to the right; with the wind on the other flank, the ball falls dead, without a foot of rolling power, and will probably be a long way short of the hole. Now this is the very sin to which the average amateur is inordinately prone; not once in six times does his approach shot reach the hole; least of all, when there is any wind against him, almost invariably he under-estimates its force, for to use an iron with precision and effect is not easy under these circumstances. If then we play our approaches with cut it is almost certain that we fall into the besetting sin, except in a dead calm, or when the wind is favourable. An artist like Herd, of course, with a club in his hand from infancy, "teethed on it," as Mr. Andrew Lang says, knows all this, and regulates his play accordingly, but the beginner must not expect in a week or a month to emulate the mastery of Herd over the "cut" approach; probably, therefore, it will be safer for him in the first instance to model his quarter game on the stiff arm principle; he will certainly have a better chance of

"being up," and avoiding the very general fault of weakness.

Now in describing the "bent arm shot," it may be well to explain a leading principle in iron play: this namely, that when the hands grasping the club reach and pass the ball before the club head, we make the ball run after it alights, on the other hand, if the club head reaches the ball before the hands, the reverse is the case; hence the further behind the ball you stand, within limits, the weight being on the right foot, and the club nipped sharply upwards after impact, so much the deader will the ball fall. A little consideration will show that between these two extremes there is scope enough and to spare for scientific execution; to secure the exact amount of run that you wish according to the nature of the ground, or at will to play a high dropping shot with no run at all, to play every sort of intermediate shot; to be able to do all this after the manner of Sayers, Mr. A. F. Macfie, or Mr. Laidlay, is indeed a test of skill.

Bent arm shot.

In all approaches the right elbow must be

kept well gathered into the side, and specially important is this in the "bent arm shot," which we now describe. The player must stand "open," half-facing the hole, the back of the right forearm lightly resting on the right hip, then, according to the sort of shot that is required, so must the club be raised; if it goes over the shoulder it becomes a three-quarter shot played from the arms; lesser segments are known as "pitches," or "lofts." If a high dropping ball with no run be required, then the club must be lifted straighter, and so will it come down, cutting across the line of flight and imparting spin; in effect, what is a radically vicious fault in driving, becomes a great virtue in this kind of approach, when properly played. As in the long game, so also in our iron play, must we consider what becomes of the club after we have hit the ball: if we want distance, we must let the arms and club away; if we want to stop the ball, we must gather the club in and nip it upwards with a sharp little heavenward flick of the wrists; this is a particularly important point to remember,

especially if the pitch is a short one, and the more dead we wish the ball to drop, the more do we bear the weight of the body on the right foot and play with arms and wrists alone. It is necessary to remember in all these strokes that the ball is travelling with what the cricketer calls "a break from the off"; therefore when it pitches, its inclination is to break away to the right, as well as to stop; hence it is well to aim at a point some four or five yards to the left of the hole to allow for the effect of the spin. The grip of the iron must be very firm in all approach play: firm not only with the left, which goes without saying, but with the right also; and coming to the short ranges, a deal of execution can be done by holding it in the fingers of the right, rather than sunk in the palm, as the manner of some is. A noticeable failing in ordinary amateur play, as compared with that of professionals, is that the one class is woefully lacking in *firmness* of approach: it requires considerable nerve when you are only twenty yards or less from the hole, to bring the iron

Grip of the iron.

A PITCH OR LOFT—THE FINISH OF THE STROKE.

down with its face at the proper slant, with all, or nearly all, the power you can impart with your right wrist ; but in this way, holding the fingers of the right hand rather over, a ball may be stopped extremely dead ; the very greatest care, however, must be taken to cut well underneath it, also to remember the upward nip with the wrists after impact, otherwise the the direst catastrophe will ensue ; for with a firm stroke of this sort, if the ball be struck above, or at the centre, with the bottom of the iron, in other words, "topped," its running powers when once it is past the hole seem to resemble those of a cock pheasant. By a loose and dainty grip with the right hand, a ball may also be made to stop dead, but this is a method, in the writer's opinion, hazardous to a degree, for there is absolutely no margin for error ; hence, if we come into ever so slight contact with the ground, before we hit the ball, the club-head is deflected, and the result is inevitable failure. In advocating the firm stroke, therefore, we have this further advantage in reserve : that though the ball be

taken a "trifle heavy," yet, if the full weight of the wrist and forearm be behind the club, the head will cut through the obstructing ground, and though we have lofted short of the place where we intended to pitch, we shall probably have cleared any intervening hazard; there is besides an incidental advantage, for the more firmly we put the wrist into the stroke, remembering always to nip up the club after hitting the ball, the quicker and the more vertically will the ball spring into the air. Jamie Allan, in years gone by, used to put a ball on the grass close behind one of those tall rushes indigenous to Westward Ho! the envenomed points whereof are no respecters of golfers' persons; then, slanting the face of his iron so that it was all but parallel with the ground, taking nearly a full swing, would loft over the rush and drop close down on the other side. Of course this was a mere *tour de force*, but it is mentioned as illustrating the principle of the firm right wrist, and showing what an iron can be made to do in the hands of a past master, such as

Allan was—and in any case, where there are walls, turf "cops," and hazards of like description, a knowledge of this trick of play might prove useful. The character of our approaches must be determined mainly by the peculiarities of the green over which we are playing, but this much is certain, that nothing can happen to a ball when it is in the air, while a very great deal may happen to it if it is scudding along the ground ; a stick, a casual brickbat, or other foreign body may upset the most exact calculations if we run our approach over much ; more, obstructions are like misfortunes, under which genus they may be classified, and are seldom met with singly ; one "dunt" leads to another, and the moment the ball begins to jump about, it usually goes from bad to worse, and this through no fault of the striker. But if we keep it in its proper element, to wit, air rather than earth, as long as possible, so much the greater chance will there be of the shot turning out as we hoped and intended.

There is one fatal fault to which beginners, and for that matter, some good players also,

are at times inordinately prone; they hit the ball on the socket of the iron in approaches of medium distance, with the result that the gutta flies off at a tangent to the right, and all along the ground. The immediate cause of this is an outward turn of the left arm, which makes it impossible for the club to *finish* in the right place; also the eye has not been kept fixed with sufficiently stern determination on the ball. To borrow an illustration from cricket, the club finishes on the *off* side, but it would seem impossible to play this stroke if we bear in mind (i) that the club must finish to the left of the hole (your imaginary bowler), *i.e.* on the *on* side, or at any rate, and this is the very utmost that can be conceded, straight in a line with it; one point more to the right and you court almost certain disaster. (ii) Rivet the eye on the ball and (iii) keep the right arm close to the side, which it should lightly touch, not in cramped fashion, but with freedom of movement, and in the downward stroke, work the club through with the right hand; muscles of left arm and wrist

taut throughout, pushing the club back, in the first half of the stroke, as it were through some resisting medium.

The accepted nomenclature of golf is full of pitfalls and traps for the unwary, being in many, or even most instances, deliberately suggestive of the thing that is not. Thus probably no two golfers would agree as to the precise signification to be attached to a "wrist shot," many applying the term to the vast distances covered by players like A. Kirkaldy, by means of that stroke wherein the wrist takes no leading part, namely, the stiff arm shot, or, as it has been suggested they should be called, "knee shots," seeing that the drawback of the club is assisted by the turning inwards, the "knuckling" over of the left knee. There is, however, a stroke which with greater propriety may be classed as a wrist shot, not on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle—for that joint does in very truth come into action: the stroke in question is at short range from the hole, thirty to forty yards say, or less, and is in the nature of an ap-

True wrist shots.

proach put played with the iron. Its effective use stamps the golfer as an expert; some otherwise fine players never acquire it, but are stiff and unprofessional-looking at that particular distance. Its use is to loft the ball over bad country at the start, when there is good running ground, in fact the putting green at the finish; no "cut" is upon this stroke, and the club head must follow on in the line of the hole. No force must be used, nor the stroke attempted at any distance, or the inveterate tendency will be to "slice."

The shortest approach of all, though it is a misnomer to call it by that name, is of course the stimy; these, like the poor, we shall have always with us, despite the efforts of the abolitionists, who hitherto have been routed with much slaughter. This is no place for polemics, nor an occasion to raise the red flag of revolt against the established order of things; on the contrary, all must admit the delicate beauty of the stroke necessary for the successful negotiation of the obstruction, and the feeling of extreme satisfaction on its

accomplishment. It is advisable, therefore, to devote some practice to it; although apparently difficult, it is not so in reality, if we take the average of stimies that are laid. The nearer the obstructive is to the hole, and the longer the loft necessary to clear it, the more difficult does the stroke become. Thus, with one ball on the lip, and the other two club lengths from it, failure is an almost foregone conclusion; on the other hand, if the balls are but seven inches to a foot apart, the furthest say two feet from the hole, success ought to follow in the majority of cases. The straighter the face of the iron or mashy, the more difficult is the stroke, and *vice versâ*; some acquire dexterity in it by using the niblick, from which the ball rises quickly, but with this weapon direction is extremely difficult of attainment, for the more pitch there is on the face, the greater the tendency of the ball to go to the left; with an iron, on the other hand, the tendency is the other way. Little, if any, play of the wrists should be allowed, and on drawing the club back, its head

Stimies.

should be allowed to go slightly outwards, not pinched in close to the right leg. Mention of the niblick gives rise to feelings of a somewhat mixed nature, still its merits as a weapon in the golfer's complete armoury may not pass, in the words of Calverley, "unreckt, unsung." One reaches the very nadir of imbecility when, the well-drilled caddie having whispered in our ear the words of comfort, "He's in the bunker," we select that precise occasion to bunker our own ball also —slightly to parody and spoil the words of Glorious John, "the force of folly could no further go." But to the most accomplished player it must often happen that he goes into a bunker of his own initiative, and when there, obviously the first thing to do is to get out. If the lie be not quite impossible, and the hazard near the hole, this may be done with some measure of scientific accuracy, we may in fact "approach" out of a bunker. This was a stroke wherein heroes of the type of Allan Robertson by all accounts used to excel: the flippant young slasher of to-day

might irreverently suggest as a reason their abundant practice, but in ancient manuals are to be found directions, in obedience to which you brought your iron down heel first, among other niceties, but the supersession of the old sand-iron, a cumbrous weighty lump of metal, by the niblick renders all such instructions nugatory in so far as latter-day golf is concerned. Nevertheless, it probably is really the case that a ball could be "placed" with the old iron better than with the niblick, the reason perhaps being that with the plane face, one could play straight at the hole; one does play straight at the hole also with the niblick, forgetting the point before mentioned, namely, the inveterate tendency of that club to "draw," owing to the peculiar formation of the head. But, if that be remembered, and due allowance made, there seems no valid reason why we too should not have a chance of emulating these heroes, one of whom, a Kirk, if memory fail not, having holed outright from the depths, and being jeered at as an awful fluker,

backed himself to do it again next time, and won!

The niblick.

There is but little romance about a niblick, though, had such a thing been in the hands say of Roland, doubtless it would have done as much for its owner as did Durandal at the battle of Roncesvalles; Achilles, Siegfried, Skarphedinn, what possibilities if the club had been known to the redactors of the great national epics! But we are more prosy now, and the niblick's mission for the most part is one of mere dull brutality. Thus, as it will be called upon to put up with many a nasty jar, the shaft must be thick, unyielding, and substantial; the head should have a good deal of loft upon it, for the object in view is not distance, but to induce the ball to rise abruptly, perhaps from a bunker with a hard bottom. This, if the face be steep, is one of the worst of all difficulties; no half measures are of much avail here; if the bottom be hard from wet, compacted sand, the safer course is to hit as hard as you can into the sand about two inches behind the ball: the

softer the sand the easier it is to get out; in fact these are the occasions when it will occur to the artist that he ought to lay himself close to the hole, if the bunker be one guarding the green. It is a common experience to see players, accustomed perhaps to inland courses, utterly unable triumphantly to emerge out of an orthodox bunker when they visit sea-side links: the proverb, "aince a bailie aye a bailie," might be rendered "aince in bunker aye in bunker," in such cases. The reason is not far to seek: these enthusiasts will persist in hitting *at the ball;* and the result is a capital game, but it is rackets and not golf. No bunker nineteen times out of twenty ought to cost more than one stroke, often not that, if near the hole; never try to hit the ball therefore, delve straight down behind it some two inches or thereabouts and cleave the sand, the ball will spring straight up even though your niblick head remain fast in the sand, never in fact having passed the ball at all. This is the one exception at golf, the only case in which the ball must not be hit; there-

Bunker play.

in (in all ordinary cases) lies the secret of bunker play, not a very profound one. Of railways, whins, long grass, *hoc genus omne*, it skills not to tell: a sturdy pair of shoulders and the light of nature, the "common thud" of Sir Walter Simpson, will do all that is necessary, or let us hope so.

CHAPTER VIII.

PUTTING.

POLL mankind "from China to Peru" on the question of the relative importance of the respective departments of golf, and there is little doubt what the answer would be. Driving, most enjoyable, but of least consequence; iron play more important and scientific withal, but g od putting to win the half-crowns.

Possibly this is a somewhat sordid view to take, still, to quote the Right Hon. J. P. B. Robertson, even the most unsound *argumentum ad crumenam* is bad to beat, and whether or not we desire to win lucre, good play on the greens wins the match and bad play loses it—unless by good luck the adversary happens to go one worse than oneself.

The thing looks so ridiculously easy, nay, is so, in point of fact, when, as happens to all

of us more or less frequently, "our eye is regularly in." But alas, the obverse of the medal is not fair to see: if bad driving kills its tens, by bad putting the tale of slain is raised to hundreds; and while "there is favour to men of skill, yet time and chance alike happeneth to them all:" putting seems to be no respecter of persons; even the very elect now and again are as the common herd. Nobody always putts well, even those who have a special reputation for it; none will deny that Mr. Horace Hutchinson is, or at one time was, a putter who might be described as marvellous; yet he once lost an open championship by "going clean off it;" and of Mr. Mure Fergusson there is the same tale to tell. He, too, is known as being particularly effective on the green; yet when Hugh Kirkaldy won the championship with 166, Mr. Fergusson was 170, and fourth; but in that score the putts of one foot and two feet which he had missed ran well into double figures.

The result of several years close contact with all sorts and conditions of golfers, in-

cluding those who were and are the very salt of the earth in their respective generations, has convinced the writer of the truth of the proposition he has ventured to advance; with one possible exception, that of the brilliant young Tommy Morris, who came nearer to putting well always, day by day, month by month, year in and year out, than anybody else alive or dead. Yet he, too, nodded now and again, *quandoque bonus*, etc., but only it is fair to say at the very longest intervals, and a short putt missed by Tommy was the talk of the town for a fortnight.

It is humiliating then, but a fact to be accepted, that everybody must play badly on the green and miss the short putts sometimes; but, *cæteris paribus*, he who misses the fewest will win the most matches; in another place, the writer has quoted the words of Sayers, "the man who can putt can play anybody:" we are reminded of it in advertising columns; and its truth is past gainsaying, for certainly as between equal players, nine out of every ten matches are fought out on the greens. That

player usually makes a brave show who holes out all his putts of five feet and under; if we were allowed to count them all as holed out, we might soon venture to challenge the champions: but how, as young Tom nearly always did, to *do* it?

It is not open to us to dogmatize and say that one man's stance is all wrong, for there *is* no absolute right and wrong in the matter; inasmuch as it is plain, that so long as a man can reach a ball with his club, there must be some way of putting that ball into a hole; he may have it a yard behind him and rake it in, or as much in front, and "play" it in, like a pitched up one at cricket—in short, the variations are endless; and if any particular way of standing is justified by the result, good and well; there is no more to be said. Of all the extraordinary styles, that of Mr. John Blackwood was the most remarkable; it was, as Mr. Hutchinson has it, "contorted almost to anguish;" yet most certainly he was one of the three or four most deadly putters the present writer has ever seen. But paralytic

attitudes in the main are bad; elbows and knees, pointing about at unexpectedly uncomfortable angles, pose of body recalling the Greek "Sigma," all such habits are better in the breach; success *may* follow, but it will be *post*, not *propter*. An easy, natural stance is best; nowadays, fashion appears to have veered completely round, and, according to analysis of styles in the Championship of 1895, by Dr. Laidlaw Purves, the great majority of professionals have the ball nearer the left foot than the right. Mr. Laidlay, of course, does everything from his left leg, and his hosts of imitators have adopted the custom: Mr. P. C. Anderson was indebted to his brilliant short game for the amateur championship of 1893, and he almost outdoes everybody, for the ball appears to be nearly outside his left foot altogether. Possibly some exceptionally fine short game player may arise, who will have none of the present fashion, but will revert to young Tommy's manner, who always had the ball so near his right toe that the wonder seemed to be how he cleared it with the

club head; if ever such a player springs up, he again will revolutionize the putting: it is little else but imitation and a matter of fashion.

Medium position.

If then for a wooden putter (the best all-round club for the short game) we advocate a position in which the ball is midway between the feet, we shall not be far wrong, seeing what wide limits there are within which putting may be exceptionally good. The generality of good players stand not square, but half-facing the hole, as in iron play; and, if the above stance be adopted, the weight of the body will be about evenly balanced on the right and left legs. The approach putt is important; say, from twenty to thirty-five yards from the hole, it is fairly easy to get the direction aright, especially if, as in other strokes, the club is made to follow through in the line of the hole; indeed, this is a *sine quâ non*, and always to be borne in mind. No man can ever putt who does so with a nervous little jerk, stopping his club the moment after impact. Golf is a concerted whole, and cardinal principles applicable to

ADDRESS WITH WOODEN PUTTER.

one branch hold good equally in all: as in driving and iron play, so also must the stroke be finished out in putting. The wrists come into free play in our long putts, and it is not a bad plan to rest the right forearm lightly on the hip, as this has a steadying effect. It will be apparent that two things have to be considered, direction and strength; but as regards the last particular, the learner himself by practice must acquire the necessary judgment, for little can be written by way of advice. The wisdom of all ages has crystallized in the maxim "be up," further supplemented by explanatory statements such as "the hole will never come to you," "never up, never in," and *clichés* of similar import. It is difficult to become a good golfer without carrying out this injunction: Willie Park, Senr. was always up, and often in, but his great rival, Old Tom, had to put up with much badinage on the subject, specially in later days, from his gifted son. When in the fulness of time the veteran assumes a coat-of-arms, some such device as this may be appropriate: vert, two

putters or, in cross saltire; in base, two golf-balls, argent; *crest* (suggested by Mr. J. Ogilvy Fairlie), within a wreath of bayleaves proper, two flags in pale, dexter argent, sinister gules, staffs sable. Motto: "Be up," or alternatively, "Never up, never in."

Putting, long and short alike, requires a tactile delicacy with which probably not everyone is endowed, seeing there are so many habitually bad putters; but when such skill as we have has temporarily deserted us, when nothing will induce the long putt to go the length of the hole, it is useful to remember that more run can be put upon the ball by allowing the sole of the putter to meet and pass over the ground the very instant after the ball is struck, much, in fact, as the iron or cleek follows through into the ground at an approach stroke. This way of putting has the great merit of making the ball run extremely true: an excellent player, the late Bob Kirk, invariably played his long putts in the manner described, and with deadly effect; but on a keen green it is difficult to avoid

out-running the hole, and it is only therefore to be recommended when conditions are favourable, and ground somewhat dead.

Thus far we have mainly been concerned with the long putts ; more important still are those within near radius of the hole. There is a most unsatisfactory distance, say two feet six to three feet, where we have the uneasy feeling that by holing out we shall gain no particular glory, for everybody, ourselves included, expected it; whereas, if we miss, it is considered discreditable in the extreme. Possibly it is this uncomfortable reflection which may in part be accountable for the missing of short putts, the thought itself, the moral effect of the mere idea, bringing about the very catastrophe we would fain avoid. Playing in a half-hearted manner, at a short putt or anything else is fatal ; have a policy and stick to it : possibly it may be a mistaken one, but it is less annoying to fail through a mere error of judgment than ignominiously to come to grief through instability of purpose—falling, as it were, between two stools. More than any-

Short putts.

thing else, the holing out part of the game requires firmness and decision ; once within that distance, in the writer's opinion, flexion of wrist should cease ; the joint should be braced up, and a very firm grip taken of the club ; if this last instruction be remembered, the necessary firmness follows almost naturally. It is only proper to add that some whose opinions are entitled to respect are advocates of loose wrist play, it resolves itself as usual into individual preference ; but certain it is that the method here recommended causes the ball to run wonderfully true ; and it is almost a matter of certainty that more putts are missed by a slack grip, and loose wrist, than by a too firm grasp : indeed it is arguable whether the grasp *can* be too firm.

It will not escape notice, and it is well to emphasize the fact, that a sharp distinction is here drawn between approach putting and holing out. But it may fairly be asked, where is the line to be drawn ? where does the long putting stop and the other begin, since, of course, every ball is liable to be holed ? Well,

to send a twenty-yard putt to the bottom of the hole is a fluke. When Kirkaldy or somebody else does it in a big match, scribes write special articles about it for the society papers and other; but if the humble amateur honestly plays for and holes out a putt (say) at sixteen feet or thereabouts, the most bilious antagonist durst hardly bring against him a railing accusation. To be sure, the odds are considerably against the striker at that distance; still, in honest language, it cannot be called a fluke. Accordingly, there or thereabouts, holing out, and with it the stiff wrist and arm system, may begin. With all the strength of language at command, one would implore the learner to keep his body as steady as a rock, for this is a point of cardinal importance. There is a tendency, fatally easy to acquire, of allowing the body to come forward with the club, to bear it company as it were: sternly repress it, for putting is of the arms alone, and body has neither art nor part in it. As a rule, very few people hit their short putts (a yard or so and under) hard enough;

Body to be kept steady.

certainly it requires considerable nerve, but, as against that, the chances of holing are much enhanced. Let anybody try for himself how hard a putt may be struck, and yet remain in the hole. Sir Walter Simpson has well remarked that people under-estimate the catching power of the hole, treating it as being more difficult to get into than it really is. All sorts of microscopic obstructions are perceived—a little ridge here, the end of an earthworm's tail there; none of these things, as a fact, being of any consequence, if we would only bring ourselves to ignore them. It is the history of Mitaine and the Fortress of Fear repeated, at least for him who dare act as Charlemagne's godchild. Hole out, therefore, with spirit, specially so if your putt is only for a half; if, in these circumstances, your ball is not at the bottom of the hole, it might as well be at the bottom of the sea. Even if playing the like to win the hole, it is more business-like—altogether better golf—to "go for the back of the tin," as it is called. It savours, perchance, of hypercriticism to carp

at a putt which has fulfilled its purpose; but some of them seem habitually to sneak in as if they were ashamed of themselves, crawling in at a side door, or gingerly coming up to the brink, pausing, like a bather "funking" the plunge on a cold day, and anon disappearing. Most of "Young Tom's" putts used to go rattling against the tin and fall back into the hole: it is an unfailing sign of good play.

It will, however, be obvious that the above remarks must be seasoned with a grain or two of a useful condiment; these tactics avail not under all circumstances: there must be a measure of Plato's "diacritical skill," and boldness shall be tempered with discretion. When a half is all that is wanted to win your match, it is folly, through sheer exuberance of confidence, to run for the hole. A terrible case in point is often cited by Tom Morris, who, somewhere about the sixties, in partnership with Mr. (now the Rev. J. G.) Macpherson, played two professionals, "The Rook" (Bob Andrews) and Watty Macdonald, in a big match. Tom's partner was at that period the

finest amateur of the time—a sort of John Ball, Jun.—as good in the main as the best professionals. The match was at Perth, and when the last green was reached, Tom and his man were in the otiose position of dormy, and besides, were about to play one off two. The green was of the hardbake variety, as clay in summer, or what not, and Tom's first putt was neither bad nor good; his partner, with over-weening pride, tried to hole, ran three or four yards past down a grassless slope, Tom missed, and the hole was lost, and the match not won. The Valkyrie, choosers of the slain for Odin, would have had one victim that day for certain if Tom, genial though he be, had had a voice in the matter; and we others may with advantage reflect

"νήπιοι, οὐδ' ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλέον ἥμισυ πάντος."

The main difficulty in short putts, or rather those best described as ticklish, is to hit the ball true. The stranger sees golf for the first time, borrows your putter, and incontinently puts you to open shame by succeeding where

you have just failed. He does this by virtue of sheer ignorance, and probably obligingly adds, "any fool could do that." It is a comfort to think his day will come. You knew the danger of running out of holing; he did not appreciate the fact that the possible *loss* of that hole implied a difference of two holes in the match, assuming that your first putt was to win; thus he hit the ball with strength sufficient to send it six feet past, and at that pace putting becomes comparatively easy.

The line of retraction.

The secret lies less in the manner of stand, thumbs, elbows, and other nostrums innumerable, than in the way the putter is drawn back. It is very easy to draw it back in wrong line, if while addressing the ball we bear too heavily with the sole upon the ground; this preliminary touch should be of the lightest, approximating as nearly as may be to an "airy nothing," or almost dispensing with contact altogether. The onlooker standing facing you beyond the hole, can nearly always see whether the putt will be holed, for he notices at once whether or not the club-head

goes back in proper line; his point of vision is entirely different from yours; for you, who wield the club, and have a vertical view, things often are not what they seem, and it is all too easy for you to imagine your line of retraction correct, when in reality that is very far from being the case. Jamie Anderson, a triple champion, and one of the best putters who ever lived, used to be perfectly aware of this source of error, which he largely eliminated by making allowance for it. He knew of the general tendency, or perhaps, his own, to pinch the club head in, so that it travelled back, not in a straight line, but in the arc of a circle, whose centre is behind the player. Balls *may* be holed in this way of course, as in any other, but not with certainty; an inexplicable curl to the left is imparted by the circular movement, and though to all appearance the ball will proceed straight, yet at the last moment, it will jib, and time after time pass by the left edge. It is a useful stroke, however, if purposely played with the object of circumventing a stimy; the tendency to curl in may be en-

couraged by playing entirely from the left leg, and by turning the wrists over at the moment of striking; but this is like gilding refined gold, and a device only to be attempted in desperate straits. To the individual player the best advice would seem to be to allow the hands, and therefore the club-head, to go fairly well out from the body at the beginning; the stroke is in fact a small segment of the circle which would be described if a full drive were in contemplation. Experimentalizing with a ball on a straight line on the carpet may be recommended, assuming the non-hostility of presiding domestic deities; if, standing half-facing the imaginary hole, right forearm resting lightly on the hip, the club head follow that line backwards, there will be the sort of feeling that we have endeavoured to describe, of the hands going away from the body—Jamie Anderson's nostrum, in fact, for the correction of natural error. We can of course fall into the opposite extreme, and raise the club too straight, which will make us liable to miss the hole by the right; "shoved it clean aff" is the

way the professional expresses himself, when with an outward movement of the wrists and left elbow he makes a mistake of this description. The *via media* is discoverable, with a little practice and advice, though to keep in it, avoiding bypaths on either side, when we come to practical golf, is, we admit, not altogether so easy as one might wish, and the theorizer may provide himself with an illustration over and above those already supplied by Agur the son of Jakeh.

The cleek as putter.

Every golfer should learn to use both putter and cleek on the green : the remarks hitherto penned have reference to the wooden club alone, but their general substance is equally applicable to the cleek, for which, however, the stance may be slightly modified, and position taken more over, and perhaps slightly in front of the ball. The cleek, in the writer's opinion, is by far the better club to use when the greens are keen; some of course use it habitually, but its advantage on keen greens is this : the loft on the face of a cleek puts a sort of drag on the ball ; we have already seen how difficult

ADDRESS WITH PUTTING CLEEK.

it is to hit a ball true when it has to be struck with extreme delicacy, as when it runs out of holing almost if you wink at it; on these occasions, if you use say a light-headed cleek, you are at liberty to hit much harder than you would dare with a putter, consequently your chances of hitting true are so much the better. A putter *must* always meet the ball with a full right-angled face; but with a cleek you have an infinity of slopes at which you may present the face to the ball; you can therefore play all sorts of pranks according to the sort of putt with which you propose to square accounts. A well-balanced cleek is essential, they are somewhat difficult to get; many are cumbrous and heavy, but experience alone will enable the golfer to pounce on the right article when he sees it; he should then at once pawn his umbrella (or somebody else's) and buy it: a good cleek is worth a good price, and "*Rapiamus amici occasionem de die*," says the bard.

Putting-irons, that is to say, irons with right-angled faces, are sold, but they cannot be said

ever to have received official sanction at the hands of leading players, either professional or amateur—that, however, would be but a poor argument against their use by any individual who should thereby find himself able to putt with greater effect. The same may hardly be said of Willie Park's patent putting-cleek, for most of the leading players have given it a fair trial, and the sale of the club has reached very many thousands. Some pin their faith to it, others do not; Herd, it was noticeable, notwithstanding his testimonial, had returned to his common cleek in the 1895 championship, tired perhaps of his worship of strange gods: his putting was admirable, and he had a seventy-seven, the lowest round in the two days' play. Taylor, however, beat him, using a club of special make; "Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone;" between such exponents it would be presumptuous to decide. Whatever the club used, in the favourite words of "Old Tom," the ball *maun* be hit.

CHAPTER IX.

PLAYING THE GAME.

To describe a person as "a golfer" may mean little, or much, according to the standard of general knowledge or ignorance applicable to the user of the phrase. It may be the grossest of misnomers, or it may indicate a very Bayard of the links: one whose practice, knowledge, instincts, are alike without reproach. It was by this phrase that one of the greatest of all authorities on golf tersely summed up a discussion as to the relative merits of two players, A. and B., both admittedly in the front rank; so far as mere skill went, there was nothing to choose between them. "Ah, but Mr. A. *is a golfer*," said the pundit. Volumes could have added nothing to the trenchancy of this remark, rightly understood, and it should be the aim of every learner to

fall no whit behind this ideal. It is no part of the writer's duty to indite a treatise on the cardinal virtues, all and singular, in their relation to golf, but there is room for the broad remark that the cultivation of most of them is desirable; for in truth the game is one of the most exasperating hitherto devised by the wit of man. In practice, therefore, success is largely due to temperament; a thousand little trifles hopelessly distract the keen man, who is also choleric and nervous (perhaps the worst combination), which would altogether escape the notice of his more stolid brother. Fretting and fuming at the wind, at that "verdammte" lark, at "that ship bearing down on him," the one lacks the requisite concentration of purpose; his delicately-adjusted machinery cannot fail to be thrown out of gear by any trifle, whereas the other lays to right masterfully, and goes ahead in blissful oblivion of the fact that wind, larks, and ships have also their allotted place in nature's cosmogony. *Fortunati nimium!* the "dour" phlegmatic man has the advantage, but con-

Temperament.

stant practice may do much for his less well-endowed friend, who, if he will exercise sternly repressive measures, take himself by the head, and resolve with determination that nothing shall put him off, will have done much towards schooling himself into "a golfer."

As a first step towards taking our place on the links, apart from the merely mechanical aspect of the game, it is our bounden duty thoroughly to acquaint ourselves with the laws and etiquette of golf. Now it is a singular fact that there is no game known into which a tyro will more confidently plunge without the most elementary acquaintance with either the one or the other than this very game of golf. Having bought a few clubs, and a ball or two, gaily he rushes into the middle of things, outrages law and order in nearly everything he does, but says of himself, and his friends say it of him that, save the mark, he is a golfer.

Not so, *indoctissime virorum;* there are a wheen stey braes up which you shall win, or ever you lay that unction to your soul—

and one of the stiffest of them, at this moment of writing, is that known as the rules of golf. Now very much has been said, and more written in derogation of these rules, regarding which it would not be surprising to learn that the spooks of lawyers and grammarians of all nations and ages, from Hermes Trismegistus to Lindley Murray, have by them been made uneasy in their graves, and are now busily haunting the framers thereof: but meanwhile our Justinian has not arisen. But while, of course, the Abbot of Unreason himself would not suggest that the learner is to assimilate these rules to the extent of offering decisions on minute points as to which old and experienced players may disagree, there is every reason—indeed, it is imperative—why he should master the elements, the *legum incunabula*, as far as possible. He will then learn for instance, that it is not allowable to ground the club in a hazard, say, a hard road. "Oh, but I made no impression," he might say. That would be so far satisfactory as indicating a partial mastery of the distressing subject of

On rules.

bunkers and what to do in them, or what not to do, but would be inadequate in the given instance. There is a more subtle reason : fate and a bad shot having, in all likelihood, landed you in your predicament, you must abide the consequences—must suffer and be strong ; resisting the temptation to rest the head on the ground ever so lightly, for thus, in every sense, you would be more in touch with your ball, and the shot proportionately easier to play. You gain an indefinite knowledge, a sense of greater accuracy by the sense of touch, which is an unfair advantage properly tabooed, and loss of the hole is the consequence. It will be well if the learner discover and remember what other peccadilloes entail this serious penalty ; for it must always be remembered, if he were in a fair way to win a hole which, however, by some such disaster he has thus actually lost, that would be a difference of two holes on the match ; and many hundreds of pounds have been thus lost and won by a narrower margin. You die the death if you bend or break anything growing,

except as reasonably provided for: if you ground your ball in a hazard; if your ball hits you. your partner, caddy, or clubs; if you strike it twice; if you touch the line of your putt, except lightly with the hand; be especially careful not to touch it with your club or foot. An unwritten law of etiquette is always observed; never walk over your *opponent's* putt, nor touch *it* with anything whatever. Your opponent is expected to look out for himself, and not allow your ball to hit him, his caddy, or clubs; if he fail to be sufficiently circumspect, *he* is penalized by the loss of the hole; a like penalty overtakes him if he moves your ball. All this, of course, *mutatis mutandis*, applies to you. When on the putting green, you must not interfere with the action of the wind, you must not ask advice except from your caddy, partner, or partner's caddy; and under St. Andrews' Rules a lost ball is a lost hole; though there are many greens where, owing to local circumstances, this penalty can scarcely be upheld. "*Qui facit per alium facit per se;*" for legal

purposes you must regard yourself and your caddy as a homogeneous whole, and accept responsibility for your joint and several actions. Attention is specially drawn to the cases where loss of the hole is entailed, since they are the most important; but those involving loss of a stroke must also be carefully studied in the original, not to say very original, language.

On etiquette.

Pass we now to a no less important topic— that of etiquette. Following the ancient custom by which a card of directions was handed to those who attended court, so now it has seemed desirable to incorporate with the rules a few paragraphs indicating the accepted usages in golf. Formerly, when the game was confined within narrow limits, all these customs were observed as a matter of course; but experience shows almost daily that there has arisen a disregard of the most ordinary courtesies, which can only be described as scandalous. If this be thought too strong an epithet, attention may be directed to the report of an accident which occurred on the Braids about

the end of 1894 or early in 1895. It resulted in the death of a player, and was directly attributable to a breach of established custom, or etiquette. The unfortunate victim had driven off, "*at once* followed his ball, and had proceeded quite thirty yards, when his opponent, whose turn it was to play, cried 'Fore,' and drove off." The ball hit the first player, stupified him; he recovered temporarily and went home, but died next day. Commenting upon this occurrence, a writer in the *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, remarks, *inter alia*, "the etiquette of golf is very clear on this point, but it is more often honoured in the breach than the observance. I have seen golfers—enthusiastic, no doubt—become so much interested in their own game that it was hardly possible for them to give the slightest consideration to a partner. The deplorable accident on the Braids will perhaps have effect on the impetuous golfer." A consideration of the decalogue, now printed with the rules proper, will disclose the fact that nine out of ten paragraphs are based upon altruistic principles; but yet

it can scarcely be said that on the links a faithful observance of the Comtist doctrine entails upon us a particularly large amount of self-sacrifice. These paragraphs comprise most of the essentials, but cases occur—are reported from time to time in the golfing press—to grapple with which in a spirit of prevision would baffle all the Solons of history. Consideration for others, courtesy, gentlemanly feeling; this is the basis of all golfing etiquette; for those not thus happily endowed there is the letter of the law to be studied, and one hopes, observed. Therein is to be found an intimation that no practising of putts should be indulged in after the hole has been played out, when other people are behind. That is very obvious and proper, but who could have foreseen and provided against such a case as the following, which has appeared in print? Time: one of the shortest, darkest days in winter. Scene: a crowded green. *Dramatis personæ:* two men playing a single, relays of people waiting their turn. One man gives up the hole, nevertheless the other persists in

holing out by himself. Again, the present writer has played behind men, worst of the bad, it is needless to say, who, after a hole finished, would produce pencil, scoring card (doubtless a patent), and go through the intricate calculations necessary to show the number of strokes taken. Now apart from all question of the courtesy of the green, it cannot be too strenuously insisted on that this is the most wretched travesty of golf that can be conceived. Match play is not a game of scoring at all; nay more, the two are incompatible, for what is apt and suitable in the one case would often be the rankest of folly in the other. Sir Robert Hay, the best, or one of the best amateurs of his generation, was once asked at the end of his round what his score had been; he replied that there were only two days in the year when he could answer such a question, the spring and autumn medal days. To hole out in fewer strokes than your opponent is the point, and if it is desired to gain some general idea of the standard of play as a whole, any golfer worthy

of the name can recall his strokes when he comes in, counting them up at leisure. It may be granted that this is a difficult matter when the total runs deeply into three figures; but this is exactly the class of play which ordinarily produces the worst offenders, and unless a standard can be reached, an average, say, of not much more than five strokes per hole, any attempt at counting should be abandoned as the merest futility, and under any circumstances the practice for the ordinary run of players is far from commendable. The result in any case is of little value, since in matches every ball is not holed out, stimies again come into the account, or perhaps a man holes out casually with one hand, and credits himself accordingly, whereas if he had been under the actual stress of medal play, he would have treated the same putt with respectful deference, and eventually, after infinite pains, have missed it. Like wealth, *irritamenta malorum*, so is the counting of a score; it is apt to become a mere fetish, bringing evil on its worshippers, and through them on the innocent who un-

justly suffer as when ordinary etiquette is set at defiance.

Another nuisance is the solitary player, who of late years has evinced a tendency to obtrude his unwelcome presence even on a crowded green. With all the assurance in life he has been known calmly to tee up in face of matches twenty deep and more, and march off in state by himself. His amusement is not golf, for that "is played by two or more sides." He has no *locus standi* whatever, and is simply in the way—a cumberer of the ground. At the same time, if the links where he is pleased thus to disport himself are public, it cannot be said he has no *right*. In such case, again, nothing seems feasible but to appeal to his sense of the fitness of things—of etiquette. Where adequate regulations exist, of course, he can be suppressed; indeed, in some places this eminently desirable consummation has already been reached; but anybody who *bonâ fide* desires to practise—to have it out with some club which has temporarily disgraced itself and its owner—such an

one can almost always discover opportunity, only, *bien entendu*, he should invariably give way to the regular traffic.

Or again, what is to be said of him who starts off without a single wooden club in his possession—carries perhaps a cleek, an iron or two, and a niblick? Consider the labour of it! Pity the poor green-keeper, and those whose fate it is to find their ball in the holes the offender has dug; for to this stamp of person it never occurs, or rarely, to replace a divot. Any game—marbles, pitch and toss—would have been preferable, one would have supposed, to this dismal caricature; but, truly, the new golfer "surprises by himself" in the multiplicity of his devices for setting etiquette at defiance. Better leave the game alone altogether than attempt it after such fashion as this.

Once started on your match, it becomes necessary for you to consider generally the other players on the green, and more particularly your immediate opponent. Some men dislike one thing, some another; most people

dislike a solitary figure standing behind them (in what at cricket would be the prolongation backwards of the line of sight) when they are about to make a stroke. The safest plan of all is to plant yourself at the back of the striker where you cannot be seen; but wherever you are, be motionless on the stroke. It is a breach of etiquette continually to harp on the bad luck, the bad lies, and so on, which fall to your share; but ten times worse an offender is he who throws his opponent's good luck in his teeth as matter of reprobation. Doubtless it requires a measure of self-control to abstain, the more so as no one ever seems to think himself specially befriended of fortune—no, not if he has run through four bunkers in succession and holed two thirty-yard putts in four holes. While careful as to your own conduct, then, for your own comfort, avoid playing with those who care for none of these things. Shun the man with a grievance like the plague, or him whose tongue goes like a bell-clapper on every subject except the matter in hand. "I just enjoy

a match with Jones, he never opens his mouth from start to finish," was a remark, *mutato nomine*, once made to the present writer.

Now, after all these homilies, of which the reader will be heartily tired, let us return to more practical golf. Since it always blows, more or less, upon sea-side links (as we have remarked before), one of the first things to be studied is the effect of wind upon the ball; and according to our powers, so must we modify our usual methods. Some play a better game down wind, others against it, though this is less often to be seen. A great deal depends upon a man's style of driving; thus, those who naturally drive a long-carrying ball will enjoy themselves when there is half a gale behind them; those, again, whose trajectory is lower, and who drive a ball that runs a good deal, are usually better when the wind is in their teeth. But something may be done by art to assist nature. The low driver can take a higher tee than usual when he wants to drive high, and he may stand a trifle further away from his ball; or if there

Study of wind.

be a bank at the tee with some slight upward inclination, all or any of these things would be likely to help his ball in its aërial path: for it stands to reason, the longer he can keep his ball in the air, so much the more time will there be during which the wind will act favourably upon it. A light club is to be preferred to a heavy one for this style of play, with the reservation, however, that it is not a good plan to change your favourite in the middle of the round if you are doing good work with it. It is almost impossible to get two clubs so exactly alike in spring, weight, and balance that you cannot tell the difference, and it may well be that you will require a couple of drives or so to familiarize yourself with the one in reserve; these two drives may be but half hit, and that is quite sufficient sometimes to turn a match. It is proverbially risky to swop horses when crossing a stream; if playing to your satisfaction, therefore, let well alone, for you will not better it. It is different if you are driving badly; on these sad occasions a change of club will often

exorcise the demon, more particularly if the spare one be of decidedly different weight. There are some days when nothing comes amiss to us—heavy or light, supple or stiff—the muscles seem in proper trim. A day or two later, again, and lo! our driver has transformed itself into a cumbersome instrument, with no more life in it than a quarterstaff. Of course, the change is in ourselves; a hot, moist day may make us languid, or that much-maligned organ the liver may really, for once, be to blame; but, be the reasons subjective or what they may, this is the time to swing calmly and play easily with a light club. Be master of your set, though the heavens fall. Grasping the leather lower down sometimes does good when your clubs run away from you, for this of course decreases the leverage, and makes them less unwieldy for tired wrists. To drive really well with a strong gale of wind behind is not so easy as might be supposed, for the club is often blown down too hurriedly, and the striker is fighting to maintain his balance; consequently the timing of

the stroke is rendered more difficult. And supposing all goes well, the extra distance gained is discounted by the difficulty of persuading the approach to remain within reasonable distance, to say nothing of the further difficulty of putting, if the ball be oscillating all the time we are addressing it. Nothing save judgment and experience is of much use under such conditions. In driving against wind, low tees, or, better still, no tee at all should be used; this is admirable practice for playing through the green. It is often observed that if a player accustom himself to the use of a high mountain of sand he may certainly drive the first shot well, but he will be anything but dexterous at the really important one—the second, that is, if it has to be played with a wooden club. But he who lays his ball flat, or even hanging, as do some artists, in order to cheat the wind, will be master of most situations through the green; he has an additional advantage also in that he will gain something in length by using his driver, where the other would not feel safe

but with brassey or spoon. In approaching against wind, the great difficulty with every amateur, short of a really first-class player, is to be up the full length of the hole. It is astonishing how easy it is to catch, as one may say, this prevalent disease—to find oneself ten, fifteen, or twenty yards short, even though, conscientiously and with all foreknowledge, we put as we fondly hoped sufficient pith into the stroke. A fairly plausible reason for this all but universal shortcoming (very literally) may be this: the majority play approaches of all sorts with an iron; all irons send the ball pretty high into the air; it is the one club you call for when you are plastered up against a high face; an adverse wind makes an iron shot rise higher than it would otherwise—in a calm, for instance, thus its tendency is, to use a shooting metaphor, to tower, so much so, that in anything from a stiff breeze to a strong gale, although perhaps the ball while it was in the air may, so far as the distance is concerned, have reached the hole, yet it is blown back, and on touching the

ground actually rolls backwards towards the player. If, in addition to this, the stroke has been what we have described as of the "bent," distinguished from the "stiff arm" variety, the spin which will have followed as a necessary consequence will still further retard progress. To make sure of being up, the ball would have required to carry well up to, or even beyond, the hole; and few there are who could steel their hearts sufficiently. Allowance is instinctively made for a certain amount of run; but, as a fact, the ball will not run at all, or very little, unless it be hit in a very special way. In the writer's opinion, all approaches of this sort are perfectly simple and easy to play, either with an ordinary cleek or driving mashy: this last should be as straight in the face as it can be made. Mr. Forrester, of Elie, makes an iron that is useful in these circumstances; it is so weighted that the mass of metal behind the face is applied above, or perhaps exactly at the centre of the ball. If the weight be at the bottom of the head, the ball will be lofted high, and *vice versâ*. Use, therefore, a cleek

or what you please, and play with about the same strength as you would have used had you taken your iron, and the lower trajectory and increased run will save you from the universal reproach, at least, on an average of occasions. Often the wind blows from some angle that makes it extremely difficult to judge whether it is favourable or the reverse. It is perhaps safe to say that, for all ordinary purposes, when it comes from a direction exactly at right angles to your proposed line of flight, from either side, its general effect is in a measure to retard progress. It is perfectly true, however, that there *is* a way of utilizing it, even though it be slightly more against you than is represented by a right angle. Some prefer a wind from the right, some from the left; but he is a professor of high art indeed who can extract advantage from it both ways and drive perhaps longer balls than in a calm. To "play up into the wind for a pull," or slightly (so very slightly) to cut it with the wind from the left—to do all this at will is good counsel indeed, but a counsel of perfec-

tion not likely to be reached but by years of practice, if then. For the beginner it is sufficient to indicate this much, that in a cross-wind from the right he will come to no good if he slice; the ball will go straight, indeed, the wind will take care of that, but the distance will be contemptible, and the ball drops an inert, lifeless thing. Sometimes the player may think he is driving well. His shots go away quite straight, with good carries; they are, in short, of eminently respectable appearance, but somehow they are thirty yards short of where they ought to be; they have been "cut up into the wind," and are in consequence mere showy deceivers. Such a very little, too, will do all the damage. If the wind had been from the other side, they had perchance been better than common.

The same observations apply to "pulled" balls when the wind is from the left: they also go no distance, and are only a degree less unsatisfactory than the others, for the reason that pulling is a less heinous fault than slicing or heeling; a ball struck perfectly true in the

centre of the club will pay the least possible regard, one might say, none whatever, to the wind, from whatever direction it blows; if, then, you can afford to treat it as a wholly negligable quantity, there will be little amiss with your long game. It is good policy to play up into the wind's eye from the tee, for though you lose a little distance in the first shot, you gain an advantage for the important second; besides, you may have a bad lie, and it is far better that you should have all the advantage possible when you have to play a badly cupped ball; it is dispiriting work having to hammer away with cleeks and irons against the wind. Many little stroke-saving devices will doubtless suggest themselves as the learner garners his experience, not much in themselves, perhaps, but still worth turning to account if occasion arise. Thus, the sun may be at its lowest on the horizon, say, on a December day, shining with brilliant dazzling light exactly at the level of a man's head; under these circumstances it is difficult when facing it accurately

to judge the strength and direction of a long putt; recollect this, therefore, on the approach, and endeavour so to play it that you may have the sun at your back when you are on the green.

CHAPTER X.

HINTS AND CONCLUSION.

THE sermons that have been preached from the text "Never press," if collated and published by some experienced editor, would probably fill several large volumes. It is advice always given, shall we say seldom heeded? Although everybody professes to realize the incontrovertible truth, that not only do no good results, as a rule, follow, but inconceivably miserable bungles are directly attributable to a disregard of the maxim, yet the temptation is too great for average human nature to withstand. It is so hard to persuade ourselves that we shall not add some fifteen or twenty yards to our drive by trying to hit just a little harder; and the worst of it is, that examples might be quoted in support of the practice. "Old Tom," for instance, in his

palmy days could "press a ball an' mak' it share" (*Anglicé*, sure), and his gifted son, young Tommy, even to a greater extent; but it is unsafe to imitate genius in all its methods. The Eton boy who would put a spondee as the fifth foot of a hexameter because Virgil has done so with effect, might fail to convert "my tutor" to approval of that specious plea. No, though often tempted, we must construct for ourselves some formula of sufficient exorcising power, such, for instance, as holy St. Dunstan's "vade retro strongbeerum discede a lay fratre Petro," for only by keeping ourselves well in hand shall we hardly escape the ignominious foozle. Not by any particular effort of our own shall we do most execution; our brother, too, is human, and may make a mistake which, if it happen to come opportunely, may promptly turn the match. A sneaking belief in fatalism is not to be reprehended; everybody lays approaches dead, or holes good putts sometimes; and if they are destined for you to-day, so much the better; that is not a bad frame of mind; better this

than trying for something which may land you in disaster; for, as Sir Walter Simpson aptly says: "Your forcing shot sends the ball from bad to worse, and what might have been won in five is lost in seven. A secret disbelief in the enemy's play is very useful for match play." To persevere while there is a shadow of hope is of course necessary, though in the interests of players who may be waiting behind it is not desirable to carry it to an extreme, as in an instance within the writer's knowledge. The match was a foursome; one side were well on towards the hole, and lying clear; the other were in hopeless trouble, in a cross ditch, against a high turf bank. After strokes numerous as blackberries in autumn, it occurred to one partner that the time had arrived when, as far as that hole was concerned, they might as well accept the inevitable. "Hadn't we better pick up," he said, "we've played nine more?" "Not a bit of it," was the unexpected answer, "we'll make it up on the green." Golfing records teem with surprises, matches pulled out of the fire in the

face of odds of five, ten, nay, twenty to one. It is very ancient history now, but the match for £400 between old Tom Morris and Allan Robertson against Willie and James Dunn will serve to point the moral, if not by reason of its triteness, adorn the tale. Matches of the sort were decided in those days, the fifties, not as now by the aggregate number of holes won over all the greens played, but the result over each counted as a match. Tom and his partner had suffered a very heavy reverse at Musselburgh, where the match began ; beaten there by thirteen holes and twelve to play, over their own green, St. Andrews, they just managed to win by three holes on the day. North Berwick, therefore, the neutral green, was to decide the ownership of the £400. And who would not feel at ease in such case if he were four ahead and eight to play? for this was the position of the two Dunns. Their backers were jubilant, and odds of twenty pounds to one were laid at this stage. One of the backers, the principal one, so far lost his interest in the immediate play as to leave

the links and go into the town. There subsequently he met a friend: "Well, all over, I suppose," he remarked. "Yes," said the other, "but I'm afraid it's the wrong way for you." Four behind and eight to play, Allan Robertson and Tom stuck to their apparently hopeless task, no whit discomfited: they won the first hole, also the second; then came a halved hole, anon a third win for them; the fifth was halved, and the sixth they won—so the match was all square, and two to play. Tom played off amidst intense excitement; the shot was a good one, but badly followed up by his partner; even now, had the others played properly, they might have retrieved, nay, must have so done, but they made a fatal mistake; wandered off the course and came to grief, the more immediate cause of which was a half buried boulder, off which the iron kept glancing. It was proposed in all gravity to send for a spade and dig up the rock of offence, but the umpire not unnaturally declined to accede to the suggestion. Thus Tom and Allan won a hole which they ought to

have lost, became dormy, and won this extraordinary match, escaping, like the patriarch, with the skin of their teeth. Scarcely less remarkable was a match in the amateur championship of 1895, won by Mr. Leslie Balfour-Melville. The round in question was played against Mr. Lawrence Auchterlonie, one of the very strongest in the field, a brother of the open champion of 1893, to whom he was, and is scarcely, if at all, inferior—many, indeed, regarded him as a likely winner. The crisis occurred at the third last hole; the match was all square and three to play. Mr. Auchterlonie had two "rasping" drives, the second of which landed him well on the green, not more than six yards or so from the hole; his adversary, meanwhile, more or less in difficulties all the way, had by far the worst of the long game, not having reached the green in two, and after his third shot, had to play two more from rather an awkward place; in four he was but a yard or so nearer than Mr. Auchterlonie in two; the latter laid himself apparently dead, eighteen inches from

the hole, the other holed out unexpectedly, a five yard putt: playing too quickly and nervously, Mr. Auchterlonie missed, and the hole was halved. At the next, Mr. Balfour-Melville in his turn missed a very short putt, and again the match appeared practically over, for he lost the hole, and was one down; but once more the pendulum swung the other way, for he laid a magnificent drive absolutely dead at the eighteenth, holing out in the unusual figure of three. The match had now to proceed until one or other won a hole: the result was soon declared, for Mr. Auchterlonie visited the Swilcan Burn, as many of his predecessors had done before him in that deciding hole, when playing against Mr. Balfour-Melville; that gentleman, therefore, won this heat, the semi-final, and later, in the final, disposed of Mr. John Ball, Junr., after a tie, the Hoylake player also being caught in the same hazard. Never, perhaps, was a tournament played in which the winner had so many halved matches, all ultimately decided in his favour in exactly the same way. Reams of paper might be

covered with analogous cases of which these two matches are typical; golf is indeed a game of frequent surprises. "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof," and a good finish is pleasing unto the crowd, but it is somewhat trying to the chief actors in the scene. Some players are apt to begin a match a trifle carelessly, and with insufficient appreciation of the fact, that the missing of a short putt, or an indifferently played stroke early in the round, may act as a millstone round the neck, necessitating a fight for bare existence at a later stage, when tension of nerves may have approached the breaking point. Better, therefore, to avoid this by extra care at the beginning, before the burden of the day has galled the withers overmuch. "Whatsoever thou takest in hand, remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss." A putt missed at the last hole to save or win the match provides infinitely more bitter reflections than one of the same length missed at the second hole or the third; less charitable remarks will be passed upon it by spectators,

yet the net result is identical. Men solace themselves by repeating the saw, "A bad beginning makes a good ending," but it is at least as logical to hold that a good start is equally or more likely to produce the same result. "Well begun is half done," or, as expressed in the "Lay of St. Odille:"

"Now I think I've been told, for I'm no sporting man
That the knowing ones call this by far the best plan,
Take the lead and then keep it—that is, if you can."

It is a great mistake to sacrifice all dash at the altar of caution; discretion should be tempered with some proportion of valour; how often do we see that nadir of ignominy reached, a ball bunkered at one off two, simply because for safety's sake, forsooth, a putter was taken instead of the proper club, the iron. Everybody makes excellent strokes in practice, holes a large percentage of difficult putts and the like, for the reason probably that he cares not whether he succeed or fail; he plays with an ease and *abandon* characteristic of the schoolboy or professional, which is of the true essence of golf. Thus, a man

with a considerable number of holes at his debit, if he be a man at all, is like to prove dangerous, for he will "go for everything," and it is astonishing how often he will succeed. On the other hand, nothing is more apt to demoralize the leader than the gradual loss of his advantage; it may be due to a series of flukes, or to a run of exceptionally brilliant play on the part of the other; but when the holes begin to drop away, "like snow aff a dyke," as Tom Morris expresses it in natural allegory, then is the time to take courage in both hands, and meet the opponent with his own weapons.

Apart from his excellent golf, there has been and is no better exponent of the match game and how to play it than Andrew Kirkaldy, whose methods are well worth studying, for many a little point may be learnt and treasured up by simply noting how, in the language of the whist-table, he invariably plays to the score. Remarks such as, "I had to go for it," or, "there was nae use o' risking it," and so on, may frequently be heard to fall

from his lips, according as the varying fortunes of one of his big matches happen to demand discretion or its usual antithesis. Beat your man if you can and never mind your score is the only true system; all else is vanity, if not vexation of spirit.

There are many chances in a man's favour when he has the worst of the game; or, as it was once whimsically expressed, by a defeated one, in his subsequent narrative: "One great advantage the brute had, he was always playing two more on the green." It had been neck or nothing; the putts at two more had gone in; the others, less boldly played, had just missed—*voilà tout.* The beginner will naturally desire to improve his game as speedily as possible; he should therefore avoid playing with those whom he can easily defeat. But on the other hand it is unwise to select those who are immensely stronger, for notwithstanding any reasonable odds conceded, the better player will still be likely to have the advantage. In the one case there is the danger of playing down to the level of the

weaker vessel, which most assuredly will happen; in the other, there is the risk of being crushed and disheartened: a despairing feeling that it is useless to struggle against *force majeure*. Choice should accordingly be made of adversaries as nearly equal with oneself as possible, any advantage, say to the extent of two strokes or so, inclining to the other side. You will then have to play your hardest to win; nor will the match be spoiled by the introduction of odds. One great beauty of golf is, that no matter how good or bad you may be, you can always find another at your own level. Mr. Gilbert Mitchell-Innes proved most conclusively how in his own case his play was improved by habitual practice with better players. None could be found in the ranks of the amateurs, when he was at his best, for he was quite at the top of the golfing tree; but those were the days when young Tommy, Jamie Anderson, and Davie Strath were in their prime; so Mr. Innes threw in his lot with them, and, partnered by the unrivalled Tommy, played the other two professionals,

one is afraid to say how many matches, but the holes numbered about 600, or, say, between thirty and forty rounds. Unfortunately, no detailed record of these matches has been preserved, so particulars are lost.

> "Urgentur ignotique longâ
> Nocte, carent quia vate sacro."

This is disappointing, for without doubt they would even now have proved interesting reading. The play usually was of the very finest; the unrivalled genius of young Tommy was almost exactly matched by that of Davie Strath, while of Jamie Anderson it is sufficient to say that subsequently he carried off three open championships in succession. It will be admitted, then, that the company in which the amateur found himself was of the best: no mistake was possible in those matches; and play went on with a machine-like regularity not often seen in golf of the present day, which may be described as compounded of harder hitting, more mistakes, and brilliant recoveries. The upshot of all these rounds—played at St. Andrews—was that the two

professionals were two matches ahead, but were eight down in aggregate holes; for Tommy and Mr. Innes in one match of thirty-six holes won by eleven, one of their rounds having been a record, namely, seventy-nine. So long as the amateur continued to play with this brilliant trio, just so long did his game remain at a standard about one-third better than usual; when he returned to Musselburgh, playing there the ordinary run of matches, in which professionals took no part, he deteriorated again to about the same extent—of all which, therefore, the moral is according to the wise man's saying, "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." The virtues of the "statutory half-crown" must in no wise be overlooked, at least, in our everyday matches amongst friends—for just as sixpenny, nay, even penny points, make all the difference at whist, where few would think it worth while to sit down and play for nothing, so does the consciousness of this silver medal, depending upon the result, act as a sort of fillip, when

attention, perchance, begins to flag. It may be said that golf is sufficient to delight by itself, nor stands in need of factitious charms of the nature indicated—granted: when we do battle with a stranger, or enter for a tournament, or something of the sort not of our usual custom. But there are matches and matches; custom and familiarity are apt to engender slackness if we play with the same man three days a week; so the half-crown may be just the spice of condiment, perfectly harmless, necessary to season the game—it is a fine for bad play, and at the year's end nobody will be a penny the worse. Its advantages are immediate, not prospective; moreover, it deprives a notoriously poorer player than yourself of vapouring at your expense, for otherwise he might say, "Oh, Jones—yes, he's not much use; I always play him even myself." It is unlikely that he would long continue so to do, even with this modest sum dependent on the result. Needless to say, no form of gambling should be associated with golf; the word, of course, is purely relative;

but any sum, the loss of which would be of the least importance, is best left unplayed for: there should be the most perfect indifference to wins or losses from the financial point of view.

Some men feel preternaturally aggrieved when asked to hole out a short putt; it should be scarcely necessary to say that they have absolutely no grounds whatever for annoyance at such a request. The extreme shortness of putts that *are* missed every now and again is justification enough and to spare; those of twelve inches, say, the length of the leather of a club, have been muddled over and over again; and once the present writer saw one missed, so ludicrously short, that he had the curiosity to measure it—just inside six inches; no mistake about it, and the misser thereof is in the front rank of amateurs, a winner of many medals; and the occasion was a medal round in which the writer was playing with the gentleman in question. It has always appeared matter of regret, emphasized by the reminiscence just recorded,

that the custom of giving putts ever came into vogue at all. "Shall we say halved?" says the player eighteen inches away to you who are two feet six from the hole; for well he wots that you will hole out, and for himself—well, perhaps that is his shaky distance. In "serious golf" the reply should be the courteous one: "Putt it out, mine enemie," in fact, the occasion should not arise, for, in important matches, everything ought to be holed out just as in medal play, or the hole given up; if this were the universal practice, it would save much misunderstanding. Under the present system annoying things may happen, and often do; for instance, your adversary says to you, "you can't miss that, I suppose," or makes some similar remark; he has no business to say so: either he should frankly say "that's enough," or stand like an image till you have taken your precautions, and, let us say, holed out. But what *may* follow is this: the fact of the remark having been made is to create in your mind a feeling of uncertainty as to whether you are expected

to putt out or not; this destroys your concentration of purpose; you play in a half-hearted way, and do miss; the hole, of course, is lost, or you failed to win it; you stride off to the teeing ground fuming, and incontinently miss your next drive. What, then, to do in the circumstances? Why, this—the advice has been given before in this book, but it is sound, and will bear repetition—have a decided policy and stick to it; when an opponent "supposes you can't miss that," say, "No, I can't," but on no account whatever try to play it, for possibly the result might falsify your bold assent—pick the ball up—kick it away to the teeing ground, and follow there yourself; you have right on your side, for by any such remark a man gives away his position. Or again, impropriety has been known to assume this form; the opponent says nothing, but turns and walks away; tyro, in a weak moment, plays, and misses: "what, did you miss it?" says the other: gnashing of teeth, and the result as before. Here again, the last thing you should ever do is

to try to hole that putt; when a man says nothing, but turns and walks away, that action is tantamount to an admission that the subsequent proceedings interest him no more. It seems a pity that such a loophole should exist; but so long as the system of giving putts remains, we must be prepared for such contingencies as those mentioned.

In the early weeks or months of the golfer's novitiate, it will be advisable for him to play singles, as giving him more practice, but when he has attained a fair pitch of proficiency, he should be broken to harness in foursomes. He will now, perhaps, feel saddled with a sense of responsibility to which before he was a stranger; his mistakes may weigh more heavily on him; and his game, perhaps, become cramped through over-caution. Practice will soon give confidence; credit, of course, being given for such a modicum of *savoir faire* as would forbid the selection of a notoriously choleric or otherwise disagreeable player as companion in arms: the majority of men are good-tempered enough, and easy to get on with. Nor are

there many golfers, of any standing, who fail to apprehend the fact that any match is but a poor one that will not stand a bunker or two in the course of the day's play. All sorts of combinations are of course possible, not the least enjoyable being that sort of match where you have a really first-class long-driving partner, professional or amateur, with whose assistance you play two men each individually stronger than yourself, but weaker than your partner. In such cases, experience shows that on the average of occasions, however good a match may appear "on paper," victory will incline to the side of the first-class player. It seems somehow a law of nature that these men should come to the top oftener than not, despite any handicap or odds within reasonable limit. But with such a partner, you, as the weak vessel, must not imperil your joint interests by over exuberance of effort: with all humility you must accept the situation and play into your leader's hands. It is, in fact, not easy to realize the tremendous powers of a first-class professional if only his partner will

play to order; to keep the great man safe is the main thing; it is a matter of comparative indifference to him, if he can reach the hole at all, from what distance he essays to do it. For instance, suppose it is your turn to play, and a hazard at such distance as may happen to be within your carrying power, if you hit nearly your best ball; suppose also that you are over, and have put your partner within his iron or cleek distance from the hole—good. But tactical considerations suggest a course which would probably succeed more often on the average; you have run the risk, and for what? Simply to put your professional at one distance rather than at another, at which he is (or ought to be) equally good. A man who is master of all his clubs, and we must concede so much to professionals, is master of all distances also; and it is, or ought to be, as easy to him, or almost as easy, to approach with driver, brassey, or middle spoon, as with cleek or iron. If anyone, for the nonce, were to discard every single club in his possession, save only his putter, and ally himself with

some such player as Wm. Auchterlonie, or Andrew Kirkcaldy, they would prove a formidable couple, and would not be beaten by any two much short of first-class amateur rank. This was well understood by them of old time; the matches won for his partners by a professional of such outstanding genius as was young Tommy, almost transcend belief; that was almost his speciality; he could accept the situation; he summoned to his side the lame, the halt, and the blind, or rather they summoned him; and contrived to hold his own almost with the best amateur talent of the day. It is not good policy to interfere with your partner, unless he definitely asks your opinion; leave him to play his own game without remark: his ways may not be your ways, and even when he has been primed with such observations as you submit at his request, the chances are that he intends to disregard them. He may give you a cold shudder by calling for his play-club at ninety yards from the hole, but you cannot judge others by yourself; he may prefer that particular weapon where you would

take your lofting iron, and though clearly the wrong club for most people, for him it may be right. It is scarcely necessary to say that falling foul of your partner on account of his bad play is a deplorable mistake, from whatever aspect it be regarded; the very most you are at liberty to do by way of relief to aggrieved feelings, pent up to explosive point, is to make a sort of safety-valve of your caddy, into whose ear you might perhaps whisper, that Mr. Smith seems a trifle below his game to-day: the caddy will not care much, but for the moment you will feel more at ease; and perhaps the whins will not repeat King Midas's secret much before the end of the round. Avoid also the other extreme; few things are more wearisome than an *obligato* accompaniment of "Good *shot*, partner," or "well played, indeed," after every stroke, more particularly as you happen to know that that last iron shot, though it has somehow scrambled up near the hole, was played in anything but the way you had intended. Here and there a man may prefer butter laid on with a trowel; that is for you to

decide, according to your skill in reading human nature, but, "a man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet;" best say little, all the more valuable, perhaps, when it does come; and great is the gospel of taciturnity at golf, not to be compressed into the thirty-four octavo volumes of Carlyle's "Eternal Silence." Successful foursome play means mutual confidence; sometimes two men understanding well each other's game, appear all but invincible, winning their matches even against better players individually stronger than either of them. The moment one partner begins to think that the other is shaky in his holing out, farewell to good play; for nothing in the world is more hampering than the feeling that you *must* lay your long putt within a foot of the hole; the probability will be, that with the insensate malice of most inanimate objects, your ball, time after time, will stop at the precise distance which, on that day, has most terrors for your partner—quite otherwise when you know the yard-and-a-half length troubles him not a

whit: you are then free to try to hole your own putt, and if it fails, it will remain stone dead—for this appears to be the law in such case made and provided.

Medal play, so far as enjoyment goes, in the opinion of many, is a delusion and a snare. To be sure, the man who wins, if he does so in a large field, has probably had, in popular phrase, a good time; but what is he among so many? The disappointed will be principally those who have made the best scores, short of being actually first, and the better the score the worse will be the retrospect, for assuredly one or two putts, or something of the sort, would just have turned the scale. As for the mass, ten, fifteen, twenty strokes behind, what are they profited? Nevertheless, these medal days are crucial tests of play, of nerve, of stamina, of everything in short that is worth putting to the touchstone, and provided they be not of too frequent recurrence, the golfer will do well to learn how to play, as the saying is, with a "card ahint him." A good start is of paramount importance, for who shall

describe the miserable incubus of a double figure or thereabouts ere you have well begun the day's work. A wise man, therefore, will allow himself ample time for a few preliminary drives, to put his muscles into working order, for to arrive at the teeing-ground flurried and late is to court disaster at the outset. It is useful to remember that you are but a unit among many, and whatever your partner may be doing you should play your own game in the way that is easiest to you, irrespective of his proceedings; where the aggregate strokes is the objective, it would be folly to attempt a difficult pitch over a bunker from a bad lie, though your partner were lying dead, when you could take what in a match would be the ignominious course of putting round it. Every stroke must be played, not as if on it alone depended the medal, but with particular reference to what is to follow next, a series of links until the whole chain is complete. The good holes will come to you, so to speak, of their own accord, without any special effort on your part—such effort, indeed, is worse than

useless, for being done into English, it probably means "pressing," which is likely to lead to even greater trouble in medal than in match play. It is the greatest mistake not to persevere to the end, if by any figure of speech you can be said to be presenting a respectable appearance. Nothing has been more often noted than the frequency with which all or most of the best men come to comparative grief, and the odd thing is, that this happens on days which, meteorologically speaking, ought to favour the production of scores lower than the average. But somehow, the best cards are often returned on the worst days; what could have been finer than Mr. Laidlay's seventy-eight, for instance, in the spring of 1895, at St. Andrews, on a day when to be in the neighbourhood of ninety was no bad performance. As far as possible, it is a good thing never to know your score; you may perhaps begin to count it when you have two more strokes or so to play; you will have a general sort of impression of the fact that you are fairly good, if that happens to be the case;

but curiosity as to details is better suppressed. If this advice be observed you will never be frightened at your score: a morbid sort of disease which has cost patients many a medal. It is, however, of the utmost importance that you should satisfy yourself after each hole that the strokes have been correctly entered; therefore, your marker should invariably call out five, four, or whatever the number may be, after you have holed out, only do not, if you can help it, mentally add up the totals. It should scarcely be necessary to say that nothing can be more unjustifiable than, unsolicited, to tell a man he has so many strokes to win, or to tie, as the case may be; if he wants the information, there are usually plenty of channels through which he may acquire it, but the chances are that he will much prefer to be left alone and allowed to play his own game, free from outside interference.

In conclusion, if by any words of his the author be so fortunate as in any degree to lighten the drudgery which almost of necessity must accompany the learner's earlier

efforts, he will have his reward ; but no golfer ever learnt by books alone ; the importance of habitual practice is pointedly emphasized by the declaration of an open champion, a double winner of that honour, that he cannot rely upon his game unless after six months' practice. But a reasonable degree of proficiency once acquired, few games are comparable to that which has held attractions for kings, queens, and princes ; Mary Stuart, James VI., his son Prince Henry, Charles I., the Duke of York, afterwards James II., the Marquis of Montrose, Prince Charlie in the Borghese Gardens, Duncan Forbes of Culloden : these are a few of the illustrious personages whom history has handed down to us as lovers of the game. Sexagenarians have yielded at discretion, becoming, too, very fair performers, deploring the while the squandered years of their youth, and the joys that might have been. The unthinking may sneer at golf as an old man's game ; the old man will not play it as well as the young, the lusty, and strong, yet quite well enough to profit

in many ways: there is much virtue in health, in enjoyment, in exercise. A round of the links, good play, and a match well won at the last hole, all this will induce a complacent feeling of satisfaction with things in general and with ourselves in particular; in short, that blissful deil-may-care condition described for us in the lines, frequently on Tom Morris's lips:

> "Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
> O'er all the ills of life victorious."

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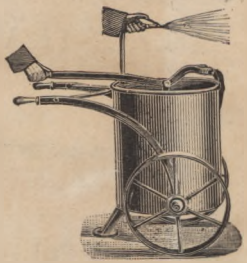

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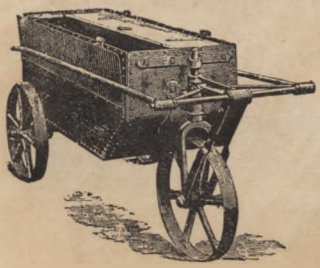

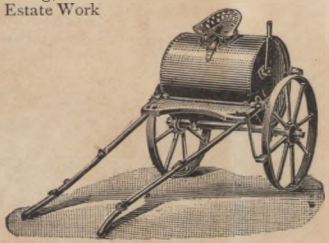

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