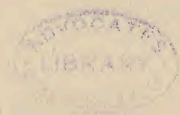


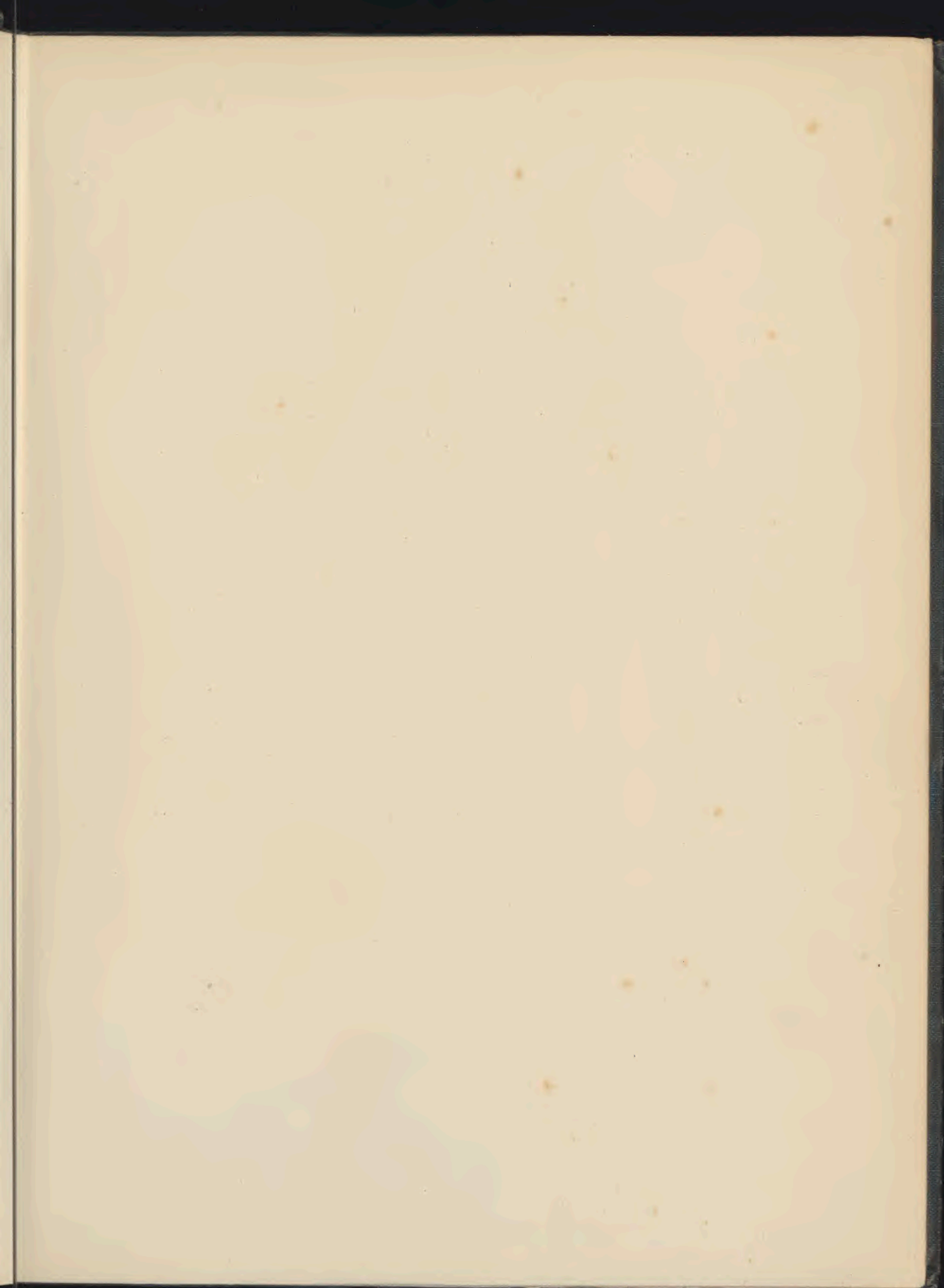
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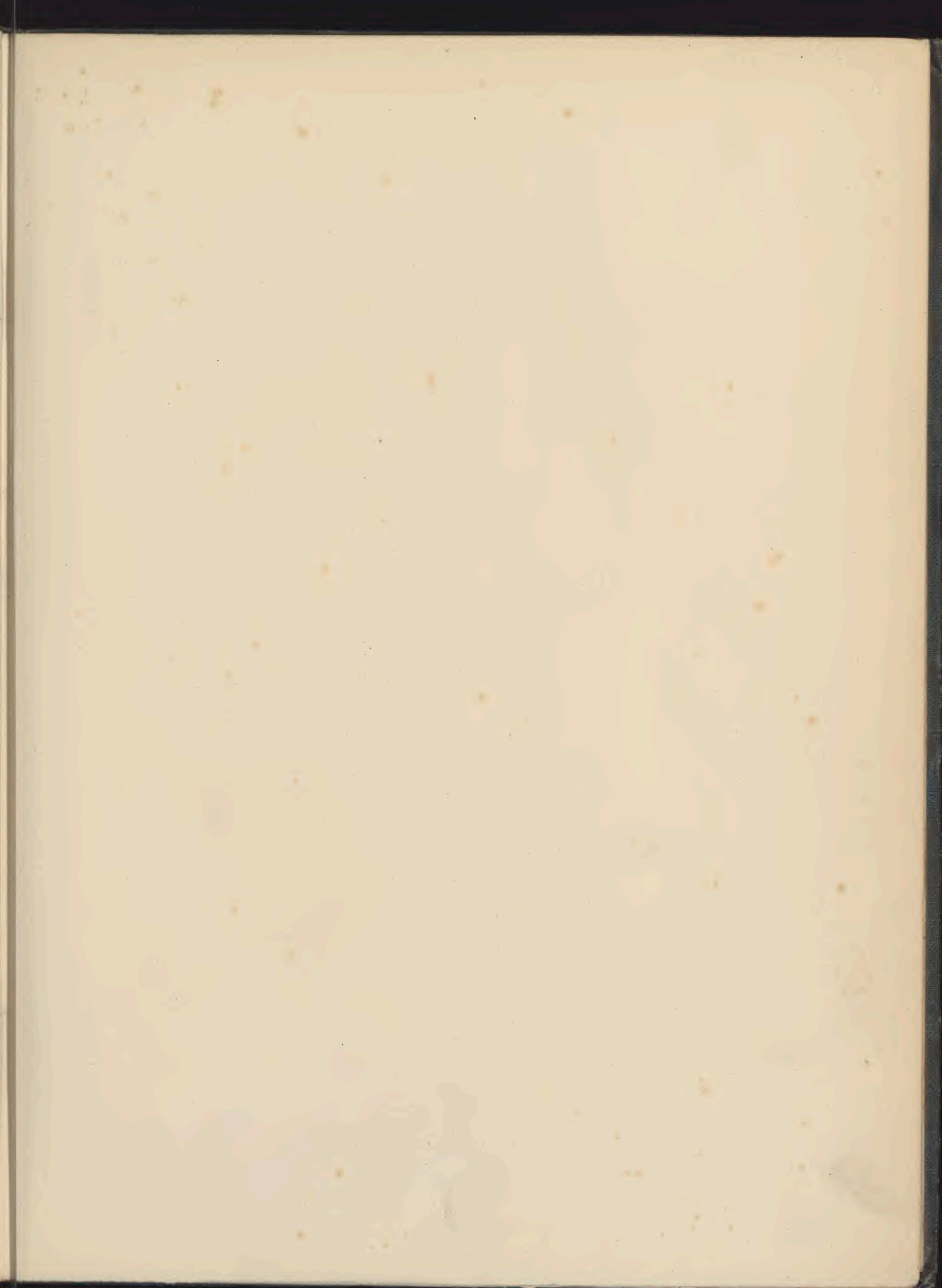


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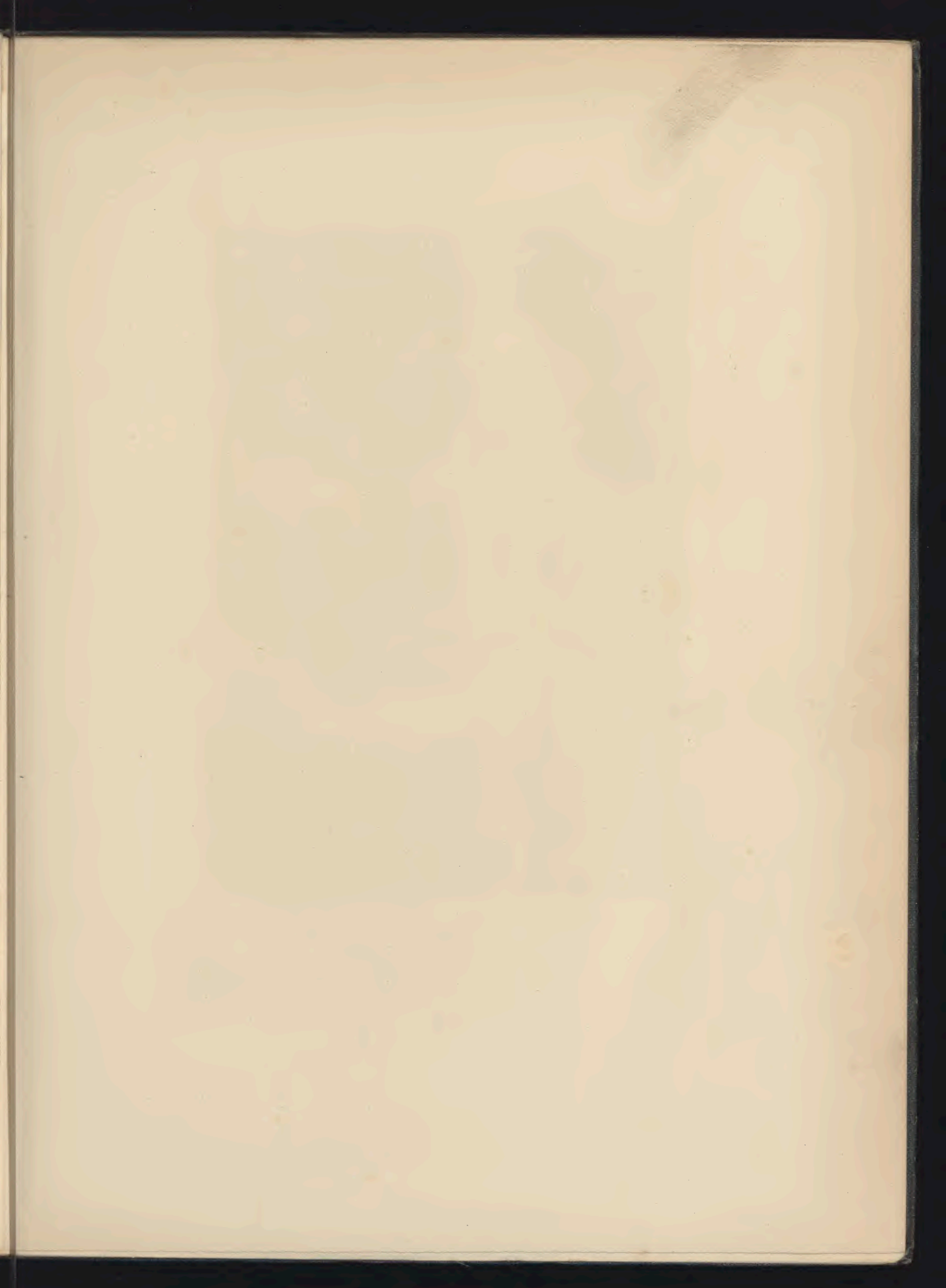






REMINISCENCES OF THE
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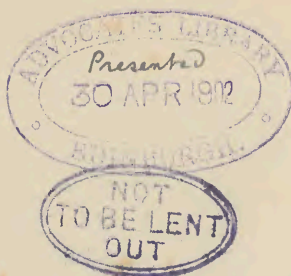
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*Yours truly
Thos. S. Arthurson*

REMINISCENCES
OF THE OLD
BRUNTSFIELD LINKS
GOLF CLUB

1866-1874

BY
THE LATE THOMAS S. AITCHISON
AND
GEORGE LORIMER



PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION

1902



PREFACE

IN presenting this little volume of Reminiscences to the notice of my fellow-members of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club, it is right that I should state that my share in the work has been to a great extent merely that of editor. The idea of putting together something in the shape of a memorial of the times existing immediately prior to the Club's abandonment of its old headquarters was that of Mr. Aitchison, and was, I have been informed, originally suggested to him by an old golfing friend, the Rev. John Kerr of Dirleton. When he invited my assistance a year or two before his fatal illness, I felt pleased to be of service to him. He was then merely collecting material. Later on it was settled between us that, as I had more time at my disposal than he, this should be put into my hands with a view to publication, and on the last

occasion of our meeting I submitted a scheme for the arrangement of the matter which met with his approval. The manuscript he then took away with him, and as he fell into bad health shortly thereafter, nothing more was done. After his death I had dismissed the subject from my mind, when Mr. John Aitchison handed me the different papers referring to the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club which he had found in his father's repositories, and suggested the propriety of my carrying the matter to a conclusion. This duty I was quite willing to take in hand, for I considered it an honour and privilege that my name should be associated in such a way with that of one so highly esteemed as the late Mr. T. S. Aitchison.

In the execution of it, in view of the fact that no inconsiderable part of the contents of the Club's *Book of Lays* was to be incorporated, I have thought it advisable to introduce a good deal of fresh matter which I hope may be found interesting. The awkwardness arising from the dual personality of the narrator, I have endeavoured to obviate by the insertion of an occasional footnote.

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In conclusion, I have to thank that eminent body of Christians known as the Monks of St. Giles for their permission, courteously expressed through Father Peerie, to make use of the poems, "Play on Paxton" and "Oro," which have already appeared in their collections. I have also to thank Mr. R. K. Inches for the use of the sketch of the Old Club-house at Bruntsfield Links, which has been reproduced as an illustration, and the Rev. Mr. Kerr for the loan of one or two of the early numbers of the *Golfers' Annual*, which I found very useful.

G. L.



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REMINISCENCES



THE OLD CLUB-HOUSE.

REMINISCENCES.



CHAPTER I.

The Origin of the Club—The Early Minute-Books—Members in 1866.

ACCORDING to Mr. Josiah Livingston, then Captain of the Club, in his speech at the Centenary Dinner which was held in the Freemasons' Hall on the 28th March 1861, the origin of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club was due to political causes.

A hundred years back from that time brings us to a period when the recollection of Prince Charlie was vivid in men's minds, and the memories of those who had perished in the disastrous Rising of 1745 still fresh. According to Mr. Livingston, there was a section of the old Burgess Club whose sympathies were with the lost cause. It was a hateful thing to them to be called on to drink to the health of the representatives of the powers that then

were, through whose instrumentality the blood of their relatives and friends had flowed on the battlefield or the scaffold. Association with those who gloried in the downfall of their fondest illusions was increasingly distasteful, and, after bearing with it for some time, they at last withdrew, and founded the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club, or Association, as it was then called. I¹ asked Mr. Livingston for his authority for the statements he then made. With a twinkle in his eye, he said, "You will find it all in the minute-books, my boy"; and afterwards, when I happened to be Secretary of the Club in the year 1871, I went to that source of his inspiration, but my investigations were not satisfactory. Previously I had respected Mr. Livingston merely for a superabundance of the matter-of-fact virtues which all respectable members of society in a greater or less degree possess, now I felt bound to admire in him a vigour of imagination that would have done credit to a De Rougemont.

The minute-books in those days were kept in a green dispatch-box. There were a dozen or more in number, beginning with sundry small volumes of the shilling notebook style. Through these I steadily ploughed my way, and soon realised that the origin of the Club given by Mr. Livingston was the mere creation of his own fancy. True, the first and original minute-book, if it ever existed, was no longer in its place, the furthest

¹ G. L.

back dating from about ten years later than the date given by him as that of the foundation of the Club; but from the records contained in those, especially the earlier ones still remaining, it was apparent from the importance attached to the correct division of "prize balls," and the nature of the paltry disputes which were ever and again recurring, that the members of the Club were not men likely to be guided in their actions by any sentimental ideas.

When I began my labours, it was with the hope of finding matters sufficiently interesting to make it worth while to put a short selection into type for the benefit of my brother members; and, though the subject matter was so far disappointing, I actually filled about eighty pages of a notebook with extracts of one kind and another. This notebook, I may say before taking leave of it, was handed for perusal to a brother member. Unfortunately he was at that time removing from one set of chambers to another, and in the flitting the book disappeared and was never more heard of. Its loss was not, I then thought, a great calamity, for a more uninteresting series of minutes than those recorded in the earlier volumes could not be imagined. Now, however, that the minute-books themselves have disappeared, I feel disposed to regret the mischance which then took place more keenly. According to my recollection, the Club to all appearance existed mainly for the purpose

of providing its members, in a round-about way, with golf balls. In those days, the old feather balls cost from three to four shillings apiece, a greater sum relatively than it is now, and more to be thought of at a time when saving habits were far more in vogue than they are at present. No doubt it would go against the conscience of many to buy golf balls in cold blood, so to speak, at such a price. A subscription to a Club and the incidental expenses thereof was a different affair, and as its rules and arrangements provided for a very liberal supply of balls to be played for, the difficulty was in this way ingeniously got over.

Apart from golf balls, which were everlastingly alluded to, there was one subject of frequent recurrence in the minute-books, and that was the discussion as to whether or not members should drink wine at table. Apparently a few of the wealthier—perhaps I should say more extravagant—preferred wine, but they were in the minority; and in every case in which the matter was brought to a vote, it was decided that wine should not be allowed. On the other hand, there is an entry in one minute, according to which the treasurer was directed to purchase a suitable cabinet, with a good lock, in which the whisky required for the use of members was to be kept. References also occurred in regard to a custom which existed at that time, but fell into desuetude early in the present century—that was

the privilege enjoyed by the captain of having his clubs carried by a caddie clothed in the livery of the Club. These Club caddies, to all appearance, held their office *ad vitam aut culpam*. The last so elected was the late Douglas M'Ewan, clubmaker, Wright's Houses.

After the first twenty or thirty years of last century the minutes became rather more interesting, and there were traces of a greater spirit of good fellowship than apparently before existed. For instance, there is not one single record of any present in wine having been given to the Club until we come to the time of Mr. John Miller, afterwards for many years the father of the Club. The day of his marriage coinciding with that of another member, whose name I¹ forget, the two thought proper to remember the Club on the occasion, and sent a dozen of wine to the treasurer for the benefit of members. That would probably be about the year 1820, after which time notices of similar gifts were frequent.

About ten years later the minute-books became very amusing. This was the period—and it was a long one, extending over several years—in which the late Mr. George Cairns (the donor of the Cairns Medal) acted as Secretary. More entertaining minutes I have never met with. So far as I could read between the lines, they had very little to do with the actual history of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club, but were evolved out of the inner consciousness of the secretary, who magnified his office,

¹ G. L.

and at the expense first of one and then of another of his brother members, found opportunity for all kinds of amusing innuendos.

Here my perusal of the minute-books came to an end. Why it was that I¹ discontinued my researches just as they began to get interesting I do not now remember, but so far as my present purpose is concerned it is of no consequence. With these times, as with those that preceded them, I have nothing to do. The modest aim with which I set out is merely, and very briefly, to recall the memories of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club in the years when I first knew it, from 1866 for ten years or thereby onwards, when its membership, still restricted, was made up of a set of men, some of whom are still with us, though most have passed away, more closely linked together in the bonds of good fellowship than I have ever seen in any other society with which I have been connected.

In 1866 the roll of membership stood thus:—

Thomas S. Aitchison, *Captain*.

John Purdie, *Treasurer*.

John Richard, *Secretary*.

John Miller.

Alexander Aitken.

Anthony Shiell.

James Greenhill.

John Robertson.

William Cotton.

James K. Chalmers.

James Carmichael.

J. T. Jamieson.

Jas. A. Sidey.

Dr. Bryce.

A. Fulton.

John Purdie.

Thos. Gill.

¹ G. L.

BRUNTSFIELD LINKS GOLF CLUB

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James Bryson.
Robert Chalmers, jun.
Thos. Dall.
James Ritchie.
Josiah Livingston.
James Lewis.
C. J. C. Schneider.
J. W. Young.
Thos. Usher.
William Caldwell.
A. F. Somerville.
Alexr. Young.
Hugh Somerville.
Robert Bryson.
David Croall.
A. B. Walker.
W. Dall.
Andrew Findlater.
D. F. Lees.
William Lees.
Thomas S. Aitchison.

J. Bowe.
David S. Sidey.
John Richard.
R. M. Russell.
Geo. C. Adams.
J. D. Nichol.
W. R. Clapperton.
A. Whyte.
Andrew Usher.
Henry Budge.
William Muirhead.
John Clapperton.
Charles Henderson.
G. M'Intosh.
C. M'Cuaig.
Robert Paterson.
J. A. Morrison.
James Robertson.
Thos. Hall Cooper.
George Lorimer.

CHAPTER II.

The Course at Bruntsfield Links—Arrangements at Clubhouse—"The Box's Appeal"—Arrangements as to Play—"Minutes of Council Meeting of 20th April 1869"—Presentation to Melville Russell—"Lay of Melville Russell, Ye Secretary"—No Politics discussed—Story of Election of 1865—Mrs. Forman's—Prominent Members of Club—The Book of Lays—"Dedication"—Excursions to other Greens.

IN regard to Bruntsfield Links it may seem superfluous to say anything. There is no chance of their ever falling into the hands of the building fiend;—as they were in the days of our forefathers so they are, and so they will remain. But this is only partly true, even so far as the surface is concerned; and recently their outward surroundings have been entirely altered. Fifty years ago a fair amount of whins were to be seen, especially in the north-west corner; while the grass was shorter, and did not grow so rankly as it does at present. Less than fifty years ago a toll stood at the point at which Gillespie Crescent branches off from Leven Street—it was only removed in 1857; while the group of buildings known as Wright's Houses, and a few villas, were the only places of habitation in the immediate vicinity.

At the time I¹ speak of, we used to start from a point close to the north-west corner, the first hole being at the extreme east end of the green. This was the second longest hole on the green, although it was only 270 yards, or thereby. The next was the longest; it was situated a little to the west of View Park School. After this we crossed the road, and tee'd our balls for the next drive on the north side of what used to be called "The Tumblers' Hollow." This was the solitary intervening hazard—if, indeed, where all was turf, it could be called a hazard—which the Links possessed. Across it we drove to the third hole, which was close to the south end of the wall enclosing the park, in which stood the house for long used as the residence of the head of the Roman Catholic Church in these parts — Bishop Gillies. From it, still skirting the boundaries of the Links, we drove due north to the fourth hole, which was nearly opposite the end of Leamington Terrace, and which, from the natural undulations of the ground, and the risk of getting into the road if one played too strong, was perhaps the most interesting hole in the course. Thence a very short one to the near side of the road leading from Bruntsfield Place to Whitehouse Loan. This we crossed before teeing for the sixth and last, which was, where all were dull, the dullest of all. It was just on the

¹ G. L.

edge of the green, at a point about the middle of the present Glengyle Terrace, and close to the little cottage where Douglas M'Ewan carried on his business of club-maker. The course would nowadays be thought singularly tame and uninteresting, but many a good game we enjoyed upon it. It was at its best in early spring. Then it was not bad at all, so far as the turf went; but later on the grass got too long; and in the month of October, when we resumed play—for there was very little play in August and September—it was always at its worst. At one time, indeed, an attempt was made to improve matters in regard to the putting greens. Sand was brought up from Musselburgh, and spread upon them; but the grazing tenant promptly objected, and so the attempt failed.

At the quarterly meeting in October, there was always a shaking of heads over its condition. "The Green—the source of all our enjoyment" used to be a standing toast at our dinners. It was generally intrusted to the late J. W. Young, W.S., the only one of our members who made any serious attempt at oratorical display; and in very stately and flowing language he did his best to sing its praises; but at last he gave it up, and in proposing it at an October dinner, after an elaborate explanation of the origin of the phrase "*toujours perdrix*," he intimated that, in the matter of this particular toast, it had become a

case of *toujours perdrix* with him, and that this was positively his last appearance in that capacity. Thereafter, for some time, it disappeared from the toast list.

In those days, the club met in a house facing the Links, close to the old Golf Tavern, which formed the headquarters of the Burgess Golf Club. It consisted of ground floor and sunk flat, the latter being occupied by Mrs. Stewart, who took charge of the premises, and attended to our comforts on the occasion of our dinners. For our own use we had one long, low-roofed room. Originally there were two, with an intervening passage, but the partitions had been cleared away. That one room was all we had. In one corner was an arrangement of basins behind a screen, which served the purpose of a lavatory; in another stood a cupboard, in which, along with a plentiful supply of plates and glasses, were to be found the various kinds of liquid refreshment most in demand, together with bread and cheese and biscuits, in addition to which there was usually a cask of draught ale on tap, which stood beside one of the windows. To these good things we helped ourselves, dropping the equivalent into a box which stood on the mantelpiece; but it was a most unsatisfactory mode of procedure, for the box could not give change, and so payment had often to be postponed to the occasion of the next visit, when it was perhaps forgotten. There was an ever-recurring deficit in regard

to which every treasurer in turn made his protest. W. R. Clapperton, indeed, did more than this, for he made the box speak for itself in the verses which follow, which verses, I may mention, were the first that saw the light in the particular epoch of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club about which I am writing.

THE BOX'S APPEAL.

W. R. CLAPPERTON.

Ye Golfers all who like to drink,
I pray you from me do not shrink,
But pay cash down: I never sneer
At "Overtures" to Meyerbeer.
Say, is it "Grog," or is it "Neat,"
You most affect when you are beat?
Here, take your choice, but let me show
Your movements not "Adagio."
Or if you feel your coppers hot,
Just hand them here, for well I wot
From me you can obtain a pass
To cool them down with "Thorough Bass."
Nay, never growl, "'Tis only Usher's,"
Or t'other man's—the "Rhyming Buffer's":¹
Pay up your score before you go,
And "Mind the Box" a "l'Allegro."

At that time we played at Bruntsfield every Saturday, the hour of meeting being two o'clock. At Musselburgh the day was Tuesday, the hour varying with the season

¹ T. S. Aitchison.

of the year, being as early as per 11.20 train from Waverley Bridge in the winter months, while in the long days of summer we did not go down until after four o'clock, but neither at the one green nor the other was it permissible for members to make private arrangements as to play. All matches were made up by the captain, or, in his absence, by the senior office-bearer, and with our limited numbers—the membership was limited to fifty-five in 1866, but increased by fifteen a few years later—the system in general worked capitally. It led to our being better acquainted with one another, and gave to each of us an intimate knowledge of the play of his brother members. There was never any fear of not getting a match in those days. How long this system of making up the matches might have lasted I do not know, but it came to an end very much owing to the introduction into the Club of two very worthy members of society who, in their latter years, had been told by their medical advisers to take more exercise. One of these began his acquaintance with the game when considerably over sixty years of age, and handicapped with at least three stone more weight than there was any occasion for. He was very solemn and dignified, never perpetrated a joke in his life, and played seriously for the sake of exercise much the same way as if he had been prescribed exercise in a bath chair. The other was a very old man, a very

keen golfer when he joined the Club, and for his age not a bad player. If the day was fine, he never missed a Tuesday at Musselburgh, and it was his delight to get into a foursome where he would have a long driver for his partner. He then thoroughly enjoyed his game, but it is doubtful if his partner did, as he always overestimated his powers of driving, and would risk anything in the way of bunkers; in fact, a prominent member with whom he was very frequently associated, hailing from Australia, the late William Elder, one of the longest drivers and steadiest players the Club has ever had, was on the point of throwing up his membership on account of the sufferings he endured in this way, when relief was obtained in the form of a motion brought forward by the late Andrew Usher and agreed to, that in future members going down to Musselburgh should make up their own matches. As the Club shortly afterwards gave up Bruntsfield altogether, there was soon a complete end to the system.

Then, as now, the affairs of the Club were managed by a council, and a great deal of chaff used to go on as to the benefit enjoyed by members of council in the matter of free drinks at council meetings; indeed, it was treated as a matter of courtesy to assume that we were all terrible fellows at those meetings, as will be seen by the picture drawn in verse by Dr. Sidey of a

council meeting, which is given below, but according to my recollection the meetings were not very frequent, and we were all very temperate at them.

MINUTES of a Meeting of Council of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club, held on the 20th day of April 1869.

Dr. SIDEY.

To ye wise men in council the captain thus spoke :
 "Ere the business begins, come, let's have a smoke,
 But as it's important, pray listen to me,
 To the members of council the drink is quite free.

Then fill up each cup and fill up each can,
 And drain it, my boys, for that is my plan."
 So the councillors three and the secretaire
 Soon followed the advice of bold Captain C.

Of the councillors two were of medical fame,
 And in came a stranger of bi-lordly name,
 When the captain, he said, "Ere sweet council we seek
 'Twere better by far that we each have an 'eke.'
 Then fill up each cup, etc.

Now the sec. sat him down to think what on earth
 He'd say to the clubs of the "Thistle" and "Perth,"
 When the captain, he said, "I think we should try
 A 'cropper' this time, for I feel very dry."
 Then fill up each cup, etc.

Our captain then said, having beat a tattoo,
On the hat that was White's (just when it was new),
"Our numbers are doubled, for now I see eight,
Let's drink 'Deoch-an-dorris,' for numbers I hate."
Then fill up each cup, etc.

Then the gas was put out, and we all sought the door,
But the door wouldn't shut as it used to before;
So, the captain, he said, as he went in to see,
"Let's finish the bottle, now that makes up three."
Then fill up each cup, etc.

Of the business that night I scarcely need speak,
But I wish we had meetings of council each week,
For I know not a law I would sooner obey
Than the order to "prime" when our captain would say,
Then fill up each cup, etc.

At these meetings, for several years in succession, Melville Russell acted as Secretary, at first singly, but latterly along with another who really did the work. Russell was a great favourite. Probably none of us, not even Clapperton, took a warmer interest in the affairs of the Club or was more closely in touch with the different members. Owing to what cause, I forget now, he became so far disabled as to be unable to play even before he became Secretary, and once in that position it seemed unkind in the circumstances to ask him to make way for others. He refused pro-

motion to the rank of Captain, and so, as a way out of the difficulty, succeeding secretaries were only styled joint-secretary, and this went on until the election of the late C. N. Cowper, S.S.C., who, as a man of affairs, had a very decided opinion that joint responsibility in such a matter as even the secretaryship of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club was undesirable. This being intimated to Russell, he at once agreed to stand aside. That this was a great mortification to him was quite evident, and though it was generally thought that his position had become more and more anomalous, it was felt that some recognition of his services should be made. This idea was promptly acted on, and not long thereafter, at a dinner specially arranged for the occasion, he was presented with a very handsome silver cup. Russell rose to make his acknowledgments in a state of great agitation. His speech was no mere offhand production, but evidently the result of careful preparation. Unfortunately he had rather overdone the thing, and between his natural excitement and a faulty memory he floundered so much that he was more than half-way through before we discovered that his reply was in rhyme. Poor soul, he was very badly treated just then! Probably very much to his amazement, the further he proceeded with his poetry, the greater the laughter of his audience. He had been doing his best to rise to the occasion, had actually

become sentimental if not emotional, and now his pearls of rhetoric were thrown away upon a set of jeering Philistines who seemed to find in this display of his feelings nothing but the purest comedy. It was not until he had actually finished and sat down that he discovered the cause of the merriment. He had a habit when speaking at our dinners of keeping on stirring his tumbler with one of the old-fashioned wooden toddy ladles we were then in the way of using. John Cunningham, the dentist, who was sitting beside him, knowing this, watched his opportunity, and Russell losing hold of the ladle for a moment his own half-smoked tobacco pipe was promptly substituted for it. The change passed unnoticed by Russell; he went on steadily stirring his toddy with his pipe till by the time he sat down he found a very curious mixture in front of him: then he understood the true reason of the boisterous applause which his speech had apparently produced. Of the speech we tried to get a copy for preservation, but he always declared that he had not put it into writing, and so a most extraordinary production was lost. The only thing afterwards remembered about it was, "But whence this honour?" The loss was all the more deplored as Russell, in a moment of confidence, had let it be known that the production was the result of a gigantic mental effort carried on during the greater part of the

previous week, under pressure of which he had nearly broken down.

The subject was a tempting one for the pen of Mr. Aitchison, who threw off the following *jeu d'esprit* in which Russell, his forebodings, and finally his dream are humorously described :—

LAY OF MELVILLE RUSSELL,
YE SECRETARY.

T. S. AITCHISON.

Mr. Croupier and golfers, it was but this morning
I called upon our friend here without warning,
I found—well I suppose it must be said—
At 10 o'clock a.m. he was in bed.
His hand was hot, and feverish was his cheek,
Feeble his voice whene'er he tried to speak.
“Hullo, old boy,” I cried, “what's up with you?
In such a plight at such a time won't do,
Come, keep in mind (you really must cheer up)
To-night you get your presentation cup.”

“The cup be——!” well, an awful oath I hear
Which strangely, harshly grates upon my ear.
“The cup has brought upon me all this evil,
It and the Bruntsfield I wish at the devil!
Prostrate you see I am, I scarce can speak,
And may not see the Bank for many a week.
What can I do then, ah me! there's the rub,
Except cry Hang the cup and Bruntsfield Club!”

Vain my attempts our friend to pacify,
It only makes him more to swear and cry;
I see at last 'tis wiser and more kind
Silence to keep—he wanders in his mind.

“For nights,” he said, “did I all vainly try,
I never slept a sleep nor winked an eye.
To gain an object far beyond my reach,
About this blessed cup to learn a speech,
I tried and tried and tried, alas, in vain!
No sooner learnt, forgotten 'twas again.
The night, the blessed night, at last arrove—
My anxious, beating heart it heaved, it hove,—
Yet still I feel relieved my trial's near;
And with these words my fainting soul I cheer:
'Think of the cup, Melville, think of it now;
'Tis as with laurels circled was your brow;
Think of the joys when on your willing ears
There falls the sound of ringing Bruntsfield cheers!’
With thoughts like these I try me to impress,
Until the hour has come when I must dress;
With best pomatum lavishly I do my hair,
New swallow-tail, pants, vest, put on with care,
Bright patent leather boots complete my gear,—
Failure in dress, I feel, I need not fear.
'Cab at the door,' announces now my slave.
'Oh, beating heart,' I say, 'be calm, be brave,'
And off I drive, and ere the Club I reach
I try, but try in vain, to learn my speech.

“I find a monster meeting there assembled,
At sight of which my shaking knees more trembled.
Soon all sit down unto a glorious spread
(Well, not for me—my speech is still unsaid),
And then Convener Clapperton stands up

And asks each one to fill a brimming cup,
Whilst he proclaims to them the evening's toast,
To one of whom old Bruntsfield well may boast.
'Needless,' he said, 'to mention here his name,
'Tis world renowned, as is the Bruntsfield's fame.
For zeal untiring, talent, probity as well,
No equal has he, but doth all excel.'
Then, as he finished, said: 'Ex Sec., to you
We beg to give this bowl, and honour due,
Believe, as from my willing hand it parts,
It carries with it grateful beating hearts.'
And then burst forth a right good Bruntsfield cheer,
And 'Rule Britannia' din'd my aching ear,
Repeated o'er again with deafening blethers,
'Tull oozed my speech right thro' my patent leathers.

"Trembling with fear, I rise unto my feet,
And drink a glass of pure Glenlivet neat;
But, notwithstanding such a potent soaker,
I gasp, and feel inclined to ease my choker.
But what this sound that breaks upon my ear?
'Sit down'—'sit down'—from every side I hear!
'But, gentlemen, I beg you—I implore'——
'Sit down,' they cry, and this time with a roar—
''Tis Croall, not you, that has the work all done;
''Tis he, not you, that has the honours won.'
I feel this is too much e'en for a jest,
And opposition rises strongly in my breast,
And my speech with it—the first time that night—
'Fore my mind's eye appears in outline bright:
I feel as I have never felt before,
In fervent flights of eloquence I'll soar.

"Hear me then, Bruntsfield, for the die is cast,
These words I'll speak, yea, tho' they be my last.

Fearful the tumult now around the table,
All in a moment is the loudest babel.
'Fore me I see a seething, surging crowd,
They look like demons raging fierce and loud.
'Gentlemen, I beg'—once more again:
Alas! I'm seized, my dress-coat torn in twain,
But still I persevered—and so did they,
And with a wrench was torn away
My spotless waistcoat, best shirt front, and pants;
Yea, all that modesty demands and wants,
And I was naked left—no, thus arrayed,
Upon my feet my patent boots displayed,
And in my hand one cuff, I'd stuck to it,
On which the headings of my speech were writ.
But these—my all, alas!—soon disappeared:
I stuck to my colours—my leaf—persevered,
When, with a rush, came mighty Bryson down—
Vanished my boots, my leaf, my all in one,
And, with a crash, I fell upon the floor!
Then for a while remembered I no more.

"When to my senses I at last came round,
No Bruntsfield Club, no tumult there I found,
But a shrill voice that breaks upon my ear,
'Oh, Melville, Melville, what's the matter, dear?
Whatever does it mean? Have you gone mad?
Or are you tipsy? That is quite as bad!'
I gasped, I clutched my aching head and gazed,
And viewed the awful scene, perplexed, amazed.
What meant this dire confusion all around?—
The curtains of the bed were torn right down,
The crockery, various, smashed in pieces small,
My nightgown wet with perspiration all:
My nose, too, bleeding made an awful sight,
As if I'd fought some sanguinary fight,—

But, thank the gods! it all was but a dream!
Tho' for a while it did so real seem.
And slowly woke I to the fact, so dread,
That it was so, and that, alas! unsaid
Remained still my speech, my great oration,
On which I'd spent long weeks in preparation!
I sighed a sigh, that might make angels weep,
Then went to bed—perhaps once more to sleep,
Perhaps to dream;—but here I draw the veil
Around my strange, my wondrous, awful tale.
Can you then wonder, after such probation,
I loudly curse the Club and Presentation?"

Altogether we were a very social body. We did not meet at Bruntsfield merely for the purpose of playing golf. Let the weather on a Saturday afternoon be never so bad, there was sure to be a fair turnout of members, some playing whist, some playing at "the jugs," others indulging in a chat over matters of common interest. "The jugs" was a very popular amusement when wet weather prevented our making use of our clubs in the usual way. Dr. A. H. Bryce made rather a good pun in regard to the game when he noticed Clapperton one very wet day standing at the window surveying the hopeless condition of things, "I'm afraid it's a case of Juggernaut."

One thing that no doubt tended to promote the feeling of good fellowship so generally prevalent was, that all reference to politics and church matters was

carefully eschewed. It would have been a good thing if our members had all been equally careful to avoid a display of their feelings at other times. One of them got into a rather amusing scrape through forgetting this. It was after the election of 1866, when Duncan M'Laren was elected for the city in room of Adam Black, who, notwithstanding the strong support of the *Scotsman*, was badly beaten. What there was in the character of Mr. M'Laren to produce such enthusiasm on the part of his friends, such tremendous antipathy on the part of his opponents, I never understood. That both existed in a very marked degree there is no doubt, and there has certainly never been an election for the city since in which so much angry feeling was displayed. One of our members, not by any means a prominent one, was a very great admirer of Mr. Black; what he thought of his opponent may be inferred from what follows. The battle had been fought and, from his point of view, lost, and a day or two later he had been seeking consolation from the usual source, and if not actually *ebrious* according to the Baron of Bradwardine's definition, he was certainly *ebriolus*, and this was so far noticeable that the friend from whom I¹ got the story, meeting him on his way home, thought it a friendly act to give him his arm. Our member was a very big man, and it was a little difficult to control his tendency to lurch now to one

¹ G. L.

side, now to another, but everything went well so far till—to give the story as I got it—“We’d got about half-way down Minto Street, when he noticed a little man with a silk hat walking a few yards in front of us, and all on a sudden he shook himself free from me, lifted up his umbrella, rushed forward, and with both hands brought it down on the little man’s hat with such force as to knock it completely over his ears. He had some difficulty in getting freed from it, but this accomplished, he indignantly demanded of his assailant the reason of the attack. “I’ll tell you what it’s for, you little villain; it’s for voting for Duncan M’Laren,” was the reply. Our friend, it soon appeared, had got himself into a nice mess. His victim was a very sturdy member of society, who carried on a flourishing educational establishment in the neighbourhood, at which—and this was the most absurd part of the business—no fewer than three of his assailant’s sons happened to be pupils. Fortunately the schoolmaster was a good sort and willing to make allowances, and so, after an ample apology had been made, he agreed to say no more about the matter.

There was no clubhouse then at Musselburgh, most of us renting boxes from John Gourlay, at that time tenant of the grand stand. Any refreshments we required we got at Mrs. Forman’s at the east end of the links. A very worthy woman was Mrs. Forman,

and a great favourite. There was no fault to be found either with her whisky or her bottled beer and stout any more than with her bread and cheese, while the freshness of her eggs was the subject of universal encomium. *Apropos* of this, an amusing story was told to three of us by the late Sir David Wedderburn—we had taken him in to make up a match, he happening to be alone—when lunching in her house one day. He and another, both old Loretto boys, had been there not very long before, and, in passing out, his partner, who by the way sat for a Scottish constituency, rather startled the old lady by a personal compliment which was quite unintentional. As all familiar with the place will remember, there was frequently hanging from the kitchen rafters some one or other article required for culinary purposes. On this occasion an immense bunch of leeks was dangling down; Mrs. Forman was standing in the kitchen as they passed out, and he had intended to say "What beautiful eggs you've got, Mrs. Forman," but just then he caught sight of the leeks, and in some mysterious way the initial letter forced its way into service, and so he came out with "What beautiful legs you've got, Mrs. Forman!"

Among our members, no doubt the most outstanding was the late Robert Chambers. He was not merely our best player—about that there was no doubt—but also, when in the humour, for sometimes he was very reserved,

he was almost equally great at our convivial meetings, and above all, we felt proud of him as the winner of the tournament at St. Andrews of 1858.

I think that he was rather lucky in regard to some of the incidents of the tournament, as I shall explain further on, but there is no doubt he was a very fine player. He was emphatically our strong man in the same way as Dr. Argyll Robertson was at this time the strong man of the Burgess. He played in a very deliberate fashion, taking only a half swing, but he was very powerful and drove a tremendous ball. He was very athletic all round. As a young man he could jump within six inches of his own height, and the farthest throw of a cricket ball I¹ have ever seen was made by him.

It is hard to say who after Chambers was our next best player, but I fancy it would be either Colin M'Cuaig or James Bryson. The former, who is still alive, left the club and joined "The Honourable Company" many years ago; the latter has like too many of our number gone over to the great majority. Bryson was a very good golfer, but he was not very popular. He took life too seriously, he was intensely in earnest about success in play, and, I suppose, few of us learned that we had been selected as his partner in a foursome without a certain feeling of anxiety, for a foursome at golf is

¹ G. L.

something like a hand at whist, and your partner can make it very nasty for you in a perfectly polite way if you make mistakes.

In striking contrast to him was the other Bryson, "Bob Bryson." With him it seemed a difficult matter to be serious about anything—in fact, there never was a jollier mortal. He was always laughing, and it was a big hearty laugh which, no matter the occasion, was so infectious that one felt constrained to join in it as a matter of course. Like James Bryson he was a big, powerful man, and drove a long ball. I used to think that had he been a little more in earnest about his play he might have taken a higher place, but his want of success or otherwise never affected him. He was very popular; indeed, I think, there was only one member who did not like him, and that was James Carmichael, of the Edinburgh Academy, perhaps with some reason. Most of us, whatever our shop may be, like to forget shop when at our amusements, but Bryson quite forgot this and usually addressed Carmichael as "dominie," with a kind of chuckle as if he were saying something amusing. Carmichael did not like it. As I have mentioned this, let me tell another thing to show of what a real good sort he was. Some years before this there was appointed to a position of trust in the service of a corporation, in the management of which Bryson had a considerable say, a tall, swarthy old gentleman, with beautifully

curly white hair, who went by the name of the "Black Prince." Some may still remember him, although it is fully thirty years since he went to his rest. He had not been very successful in life, and the snug berth in question, with its easy duties and its £150 a year or thereby, suited him exactly. For several years everything went well, then old age began to tell, but he had nothing else to live on, so he sat tight to his post long after he was quite unfit for it, and thus it came about that when at last the poor old "Black Prince" took his departure, he left affairs in a very bad way. He had been a great favourite, and the anxiety of those officially cognisant of the matter was to hush up the fact of his deficiency, if at all possible, so that his good name might not suffer. Then it was that Bryson stepped into the breach, and for the next year or two performed all the duties of the office without fee, the salary, at the usual rate, being applied to wipe off the deficit. Very few knew what had happened, and I¹ only heard of it owing to the fact of my father having been one of his original cautioners. I did not hear of it from Bryson.

A much more prominent member than any of the three last named was the late David Croall. At that time he lived in Greenhill Gardens close to the green, and took a very lively interest in everything connected

¹ G. L.

with the Club. His case was an illustration of the fact that a man may take to the game comparatively late in life, at least in middle age, and yet achieve great proficiency, for if he was not quite a scratch player he was not far short of it. Croall was a master in the art of giving chaff, and there was always sure to be some fun going on in his neighbourhood, but it was kindly chaff, while his courtesy to younger members in particular was most marked. In the way of his amusements he had a sublime indifference to mere pecuniary matters. I¹ remember the late John Purdie telling me of a visit to St. Andrews he made along with Croall and another of our members, Archibald Somervile. They stayed — counting the day they arrived — four days. They were all pretty well known men, and met a considerable number of acquaintances. For the nonce Croall's motto was that of Mr. Jingle, "Friend of my friend, friend of mine," and he pressed men to lunch or dine all the more warmly if he did not know them just because one or other of his companions did. Champagne flowed freely, and as the bill was handed in before they rose to go, Somervile remarked "We'll have an awful bill to pay." "What are you making a work about?" said Croall, who was looking over it; "it's only £43, 10s.—I'll toss you who pays the whole thing." He formed a most admirable pre-

¹ G. L.

sident at our meetings, and on one occasion set us all a very good example. During his term of office a particular friend of his own was proposed for membership along with two others—how it happened that there were three vacancies at the time I cannot remember. The other two men were elected, but Croall's man was not. This gave rise to a considerable display of angry feeling on the part of Croall's friends—far more on his account than on account of the rejected one,—who, by the way, was duly elected a member later on, but in this Croall took no part; and at the dinner which took place the same evening, speaking from the chair, he assured us that the incident, so far as he was concerned, would be treated as though it had never occurred, and he was true to his word. In December 1866, a year or two before he was captain, he presented a silver cup for competition, to become the property of the first who succeeded in winning it three times. It was a handicap prize, and was keenly competed for; indeed, before the late Alexander White carried it off, nearly every prominent player in the Club had his name engraved upon it once or twice.

The two Ushers—Tom and Andrew—were great favourites, especially the former, who at the time of my joining in 1866 was a very good player, rather better than his brother, which latterly he was not. Taken all round he was probably the most popular

man in the Club. He could say the most impudent things in the coolest manner possible, but never a word that left a sting behind; he was too kindly natured for that. There was a spirit of jaunty self-assertion about him which was very captivating. He was always the same. Many years after this, in a company in which we were all very good friends, it fell to be my duty to propose his health. On getting up, I¹ protested against the toast, and gave a series of reasons why it should not have had a place in the list; but the crowning offence I charged him with was this, that he never got a day older—he was about seventy then—that in this way he was a standing reproach to the whole of us, and to almost every man above middle age. With this there was very general concurrence, and his health was drunk with great enthusiasm. On another occasion—it happened to be in the same company—Mr. Aitchison told me that it had been arranged that he should propose Usher's health; but he resolved to play a trick on him, and when the time arrived he was not to be found—had in fact slipped below the table, where, snugly concealed, he had the pleasure of hearing Usher, who was in the chair, and was dimly conscious of what was going on, get up and, after bestowing a few objurgations upon the absent Aitchison, propose his own health in very happy terms; Aitchison emerging in time to applaud the speech vociferously,

¹ G. L.

and to do justice to the toast. Socially he was a great acquisition, always ready to oblige with a song. He rarely, at least latterly, sang but one, "The Bonnie Wood o' Craigielea"; and this he rendered very beautifully.

Andrew Usher was also very popular, but he took life more seriously than Tom, and so was not quite so great a favourite, which indeed was hardly possible. He was very much in earnest about his golf at this time; indeed, he took a lease of a house at the east end of Musselburgh Links, and lived there a good deal during the next five years, by which time he had improved very much; and, if not the best, was certainly the steadiest player we had. I do not think that the very great prosperity which in later life he enjoyed made any difference in him; and I fancy that this could not be said of most men in similar circumstances. A very good story is current—it must have come from him originally—which shows this, and shows also that he could tell a story at his own expense. Some years after he had purchased the estate of Coldingham he happened to be at the station waiting for a train to take him up to town. Walking up and down the platform, he noticed that he was an object of attention to another passenger who was also waiting for the train. His face seemed familiar, but who he was he could not remember. This individual, seeing

Mr. Usher looking at him, nodded in a friendly way, and, coming forward, entered into conversation, discussing the weather, the crops, etc. The train for which they were both waiting at last drew up beside the platform, when Mr. Usher, bowing to his unknown friend, proceeded to take his seat. He was, however, only in the act of stepping into the carriage when he was pulled back: "Ye're wrang man, that's first-cless ye're going intil." "Do you know who I am, sir?" asked the proprietor of Coldingham with great dignity. "Ou ay, I ken fine wha ye are—ye're the gatekeeper at Usher's o' St. Leonards."

It would be wearisome were I to take notice of all the more prominent players; but certainly no account of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club in those days would be complete without some reference to the late Mr. T. S. Aitchison and Mr. W. R. Clapperton, the latter still with us, but unfortunately no longer a golfer. Mr. Aitchison, of course, speaks for himself in these pages, so that I need only briefly refer to him. He was captain of the Club when I joined it, and a better head we never had. He was so ready that he could make a speech or sing a song, or, for that matter, compose one, with equal facility; while he was so full of good-humoured fun that he was the friend of everyone.

The same might be said of Clapperton—sorely did

we feel the absence of either one or other at our dinners—and to him we were under a very special obligation, for was it not he who first of all, by his “Box’s Appeal,” and, shortly after, by his “Lay of an Ancient Golfer,” set flowing that small rill of Helicon which, during the next few years, was to afford us so much interest and amusement? To him also we are indebted for the volume in which the lays of the Club are preserved—a volume presented to us along with the following lines:—

DEDICATION.

W. R. CLAPPERTON.

Dear cronies a', this buik for lays,
In which to sing Auld Bruntsfield's praise,
Accept: ye've had fu' mony days
 O' happy sport;
Gae crown yoursel's wi' laurel sprays
 O' different sort.

Some say that “mind is man's dominion”
(The green is ours, in my opinion);
Still bauldly each—no like a green ane—
 Gae woo the Musè;
She'll meet ye like a blithe and bein ane,
And no refuse.

REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD

Sae as ye in your matches shine,
 Let ilk ane try and pen a line,
 And e'en sing how ye drink and dine
 Wi' muckle glee;
 Yet prudence aye keep in your mind,
 Nor ower deep spree.

Tell's what a golfer guid can dae,
 Write doun whate'er ye hae to say
 On a' the jokes, the mirth, and play
 Upon the green;
 Ye'll fill the page wi' mony a lay,
 As will be seen.

And when mayhap a brither fa's,
 As a' maun fa' by nature's laws,
 Ye'll sound his praise as ye hae cause,
 In gentle strain,
 While mem'ry frae lang syne reca's
 His name again.

And tak' ye my advice, I say;
 "Wire up" in baith your rhyme and play,
 Faint heart ne'er yet has won the day
 At rhymes or golfin';
 Just dae your best, haud on your way,
 Ne'er heed folks' chaffin.

And sae ance mair, accept this buik,
 Gae get it filled by hook or crook,
 Wi' chronicles that weel shall look,
 And dae ye honour;
 Best wishes to ilk ingle neuk
 Frae me—

THE DONOR.

Besides our regular days at Bruntsfield and Musselburgh, not a summer passed without our making excursions to other greens, usually either Gullane or Luffness, to which we drove down in an omnibus with four horses. The fun going and coming was generally great. I¹ remember on one occasion Robert Chambers took the reins and insisted on tooling us back to Edinburgh, but he failed to circumnavigate a bad corner in the street of Prestonpans, and though no accident happened, we insisted on Chambers taking a back seat, very much to his disgust. At the end of the play on these two greens, there was always a match of first into the hotel door. At Gullane there was no clubhouse then, but a field of turnips or potatoes—the play was to clear that if you could. The field hazard was otherwise a fatal one; some, however, more pawky, trusted to the chapter of accidents and went round by the road. Sometimes they were successful, but not often; and some of the long drives occasionally cleared Steven's Hotel and got into the garden behind, which was as fatal as the field. We often wondered how the windows of the inn escaped, but they generally did. At Luffness, only the long drivers tried to play into the Aberlady Hotel, and that only when the tide was out; for they went straight from the first hole, or rather clubhouse, right across sand, burn, and ditches, into the middle

¹ T. S. A.

of the little town, much to the amusement of the natives.

I¹ have mentioned the name of Mr. Archibald Somerville in connection with that of Croall. *Apropos* of him, it is worth while recalling an incident which happened at one of our excursions to Gullane, on account of its connection with the tragedy of the City of Glasgow Bank, which happened a few years later. Somerville and I¹ had been drawn to play together, and were proceeding to the starting hole, when a carriage and pair filled with golfers—members of our own Club who were late in arriving—drove up. There was rather a scarcity of caddies that day, and Somerville's boy, whether from seeing in the carriage some one whom he had formerly been in the habit of carrying for, or imagining that men who drove down in a carriage were more likely to be liberal than those who came by 'bus, threw down Somerville's clubs and rushed after the carriage. Somerville gave chase, and arrived on the scene just as the boy had engaged himself to carry for another of our members, who shall be nameless. To this gentleman the position of matters was explained, but there was no other caddy procurable, and he, no doubt most improperly, declined to give him up, his mistake being aggravated by the fact that he was a man at least twenty years younger than Somerville, and much more

¹ G. L.

able to carry his clubs. He, when he returned, was very indignant. "I said to him," said he to me, "Well, sir, you're the only man in the Club that would have acted in that way." But he soon cooled down, and, refusing all offers of assistance, carried his clubs, and played his game as if he enjoyed it; dismissing the subject from his mind at the conclusion of the first hole with the remark—"He was an awful clever laddie that; he kent fine the difference between a Bank director and a Bank inspector." This was, of course, in sarcasm, his caddie's new employer filling the less important position. Poor Somervile at the time had a seat on the Edinburgh board of the City of Glasgow Bank. His behaviour at the trial of the directors afterwards was, I have always thought, most magnanimous. As everyone knows, the Edinburgh directors were kept in complete ignorance of the Bank's actual position, although ostensibly made conversant with the more important matters discussed in Glasgow through the presence of Mr. Henry Inglis, who sat on both boards. When in the witness-box at the trial, after being examined in regard to other matters, Somervile was asked, "What is your opinion, looking back upon what has happened, of Mr. Inglis's performance as a director towards yourself?" "He was highly honourable in every respect; I could not believe that Mr. Inglis would do anything unbecoming a gentleman." "That is your opinion, after all that has happened?"

"Yes, I think so." In a pecuniary sense Somerville was a ruined man; he was one of the largest shareholders, holding £11,000 stock, and disaster had not only overtaken him, but his brother and other relatives and friends whom he had induced to take an interest in the concern. It might be said all this had befallen very much through Inglis's failure to fulfil the end for which he was made a director on both boards; but Somerville refused to see things in that light, and went out of his way to try and do a good turn to his old friend and fellow-director. I think that his conduct was generous and noble in the extreme, though in justice to Inglis it may be admitted that few gave him credit for knowing what was going on. Indeed, it is recorded that as the position of affairs was being brought out in Court, he whispered in amazement to the brother unfortunate sitting next him, "Good God, what a state that Bank must have been in!"

CHAPTER III

*The St. Andrews Tournament of 1857 and 1858—Pat Alexander—
George Glennie.*

THERE is no doubt that, strictly speaking, any account of the tournament held in St. Andrews in the year 1858 is out of place in a volume which professes to deal merely with the affairs of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club. My excuse for referring to it is this: that the late Robert Chambers was at the time certainly the most outstanding man in the Club, and his reputation as a golfer arose, in no small degree, from the fact of his having achieved the honour of championship on that occasion.

It is a far cry back to the tournament of 1858. I¹ was present at it; I wonder how many golfers non-resident in St. Andrews, now alive, can say the same. What gave it special prominence was, that it was not like the amateur championship meetings of to-day, a thing of annual recurrence. It was something quite

¹ G. L.

new and untried before, and not for nearly thirty years did amateurs meet again in the same way, the next tournament taking place only in 1885, when Mr. Macfie, at Hoylake, carried off first honours.

Throughout the time of the meeting, the weather was perfect; the old university town was crowded with visitors, and everything looked its best. There had been a strong easterly wind blowing, and a heavy swell broke on the sands, which, in the intense heat that prevailed, was a delicious thing to behold. Though Chambers was the ultimate victor, there is no doubt but that Mr. Patrick, commonly called "Pat" Alexander, was looked upon as the real hero of the fight. He was a well-known figure in Edinburgh latterly, but those who saw him in these days, lounging about in his cloak and soft felt hat, would not have recognised him in the active, eager figure he then presented. I remember that he was dressed in a longish loose black coat and straw hat. His brother Hugh, with Glennie and one or two more, wore their scarlet coats, but most of the players were in tweeds—knickerbockers were then unknown. No doubt the two outstanding figures were those of Captain Maitland Dougal and George Glennie. The former was generally looked upon as the most perfect amateur player of the day; and about this, at least latterly, if tested in the usual way,

viz. by the number of honours he had carried off, there could be no question. Others held that Glennie was fully his equal, and just at that time there was a good deal to be said for it. Three years previously he had, when he gained the gold medal at St. Andrews with the score of 88, beaten all previous records, and accomplished a feat which, according to some, has never been surpassed, at least by an amateur, for the green was much more difficult then, while the light lofting irons now in use, so conducive to low scoring, were then unknown. It was not this, however, so much as his exploit in the Club tournament at St. Andrews the previous year, which caused him to be dreaded as an opponent. As the memories of this most interesting meeting have in great measure fallen into oblivion, perhaps I¹ may be pardoned for referring to it in some detail. In 1857 then, to quote the words of the *Golfers' Year-Book*, "a great Golf Tournament was held at St. Andrews on 29th July being the first"—and, so far as I know, the last—"in which the golfing societies of the kingdom were pitted against one another." Never was there a more thoroughly representative meeting. Each club sent forward its two champions, those competing being Leven, Musselburgh, Prestwick, Bruntsfield, Burgess, St. Andrews, Dirleton, Montrose, Perth, North Berwick, and Blackheath. On this occasion Chambers played for Musselburgh, which

¹ G. L.

was knocked out in the first round by Leven, when Chambers met his opponent in the final in the tournament of the following year—Mr. D. Wallace. Bruntsfield was efficiently represented by Messrs. Clark and Dunn, who had tied for its gold medal not long before. They beat Prestwick notwithstanding the presence of Mr. Fairlie of Coodham, undoubtedly the finest player in the West of Scotland, halved with the Burgess, but were beaten by Blackheath. In the final, the palm of victory lay between St. Andrews, represented by Maitland Dougal and W. Thompson, gold medal holder there three years later, and Blackheath, whose champions were George Glennie and Lieutenant Stewart. These latter were the victors. The striking thing about the Blackheath men was the ease with which they demolished their opponents. They beat the Perth Club by eight holes—its representatives, Mr. Condie and Sir Thos. Moncrieff, being both in the very front rank of players,—Innerleven by eleven, Bruntsfield by eleven, and St. Andrews by seven.

In the light of their previous exploits then, Maitland Dougal and Glennie started first favourites in 1858. Chambers's name was not prominently mentioned, indeed another representative of the Bruntsfield Golf Club then competing, Mr. Robert Clark, was generally looked upon as his superior, but he, happening to be drawn against Maitland Dougal in the second round,

was beaten by 6 up and 4 to play. In the following round Maitland Dougal and Glennie were drawn against each other, but they were so equally matched that the game ended all even. It was now that Alexander came to the front, and in the afternoon of the same day beat Glennie by 1; on the following forenoon inflicting a still more severe defeat on Maitland Dougal, the match finishing at the dyke hole when he had only taken 34 strokes to his opponent's 44. When this result had been achieved but three players remained, Mr. D. Wallace of Leven, Chambers, and Alexander, and it was generally accepted as a foregone conclusion that, after what he had done, Alexander would have very little difficulty in disposing of both.

Chambers had been lucky in this, that up till then he had encountered none of those who were looked upon as being in the very front rank. Most of his matches he halved, and twice he drew a bye. He beat one man, a weak player, at the outset by four, and after that he had three halved matches in succession, and then won the deciding heat by a single hole.

At this stage of the proceedings I returned to town, and so can only report what followed from hearsay. Chambers, drawing a bye, Alexander had to play Wallace, a gentleman a good deal older than himself, and a very slow player. It was said that on

this occasion he was slower than usual, and that the length of time he took to study his puts, and to his play generally, so worried Alexander, whose style was the very opposite, that he got exasperated, lost his temper, and losing his temper lost the match. There was a great deal of sympathy felt for him, for it was generally thought that as a golfer Wallace was distinctly his inferior.

The final round proved a very close thing. On his form in the tournament Wallace should have won, for he had not merely beaten Alexander, he had beaten Fairlie of Coodham, and he had also beaten Sibbald of the Bruntsfield, with whom Chambers had only succeeded in halving; but it was not to be. The two had met twice before in the tournament, had halved the match each time, and it looked as though the same thing was going to happen again, but at the end Chambers got down a very long put, and thus won the match, Wallace taking the second prize, which consisted of a set of six very fine clubs in a case, presented at the outset by Chambers.

Alexander was a many-sided man, possessing a true vein of poetry coupled withal with a sense of humour which often enthralled his audience. One of the many amusing stories told of him—I may be pardoned for introducing it here, as it has to do with another Chambers, the late respected Lord Provost of Edin-

burgh. Those who remember his keen, intelligent face will be willing to admit that nature had not dealt kindly by him in the matter of his complexion, which was of the dirty gray hue one often sees in men of sedentary habits. To him enters one day—let us hope prior to his filling the civic chair—Pat Alexander. “Well, Chambers, have you found the woman; have you found the woman you were advertising for?” “Me advertising for a woman? Explain yourself, Mr. Alexander; I don’t like jokes of this kind.” “All right, keep cool; I’ll let you see the advertisement. There, read it for yourself,” producing at the same time a marked fragment from the *Scotsman*. What Chambers did read after adjusting his glasses was, “Wanted a woman to wash chambers,” but by the time he had got so far, Alexander had disappeared round the first corner, and no doubt kept out of his way for some time to come. As I have given a story to illustrate the humorous side of his character, it is only right that I should show the heights he was capable of rising to in the regions of poetry. The following stanza is taken from the obituary notice which appeared in the *Scotsman* :—

Come to me now! O come! benignest sleep!
And fold me up, as evening doth a flower,
From my vain self and vain things which have power
Upon my soul to make me smile or weep.

And when thou comest, oh, like death, be deep ;
No dreamy boon have I of thee to crave
More than may come to him that in his grave
Is heedless of the night winds how they sweep.
I have not in me half that cause of sorrow
Which is in thousands who must not complain ;
And yet this moment, if it could be mine
To lapse and pass in sleep, and so resign
All that must yet be borne of joy and pain,
I scarcely know if I would wake to-morrow.

Of George Glennie I have also a word to say. One of the most popular golfers who ever lived, if it were possible a greater favourite at Blackheath, where the members of the Club put up a monument to his memory, than even at St. Andrews where he was born and bred, it will surprise most of those who still remember him to learn that he was once tried on a capital charge.

Latterly he was an ironfounder, but at the beginning of his career he was for a good many years connected with railways, acting as superintendent-engineer on first one and then another line. On the 20th June 1848 a terrible accident took place in connection with the erection of the viaduct at Roxburgh. Part of the structure just on the point of completion collapsed, eight men were killed and ten seriously injured. As might be expected, a great outcry got up. Mr. Mitchell, the contractor, and Glennie, the superintendent, were

arrested and put on trial for manslaughter. The charge against the former virtually was that he had scamped the work; against Glennie that "of culpable neglect of duty in having failed to superintend and inspect the erection of the viaduct." The matter fell under my notice in a curious way. It was in the summer of 1864 that I¹ happened to be dining at the Westminster Palace Hotel along with a very mixed company of sixteen or seventeen. We were all Scotsmen, but the real bond of union for the time was that all, with the exception of Glennie and myself, happened to be in London in the capacity of witnesses in regard to one or other bill then in committee. I sat beside Glennie, who was unusually silent. At last, after one or two had left the company, he gave a sigh of relief, and relapsing into Scotch, inquired of his next neighbour, "Did you see the little deevil?" "Who?" Glennie named him, adding, "I haven't seen him since that day in the Court at Jedburgh." Then the whole thing came out, and I learned that the individual in question had been the principal witness against him. Since that time I have had the curiosity to turn up the record of the proceedings, and learned that the trial took place at Jedburgh in October 1849. The judges were Lord Justice-Clerk Hope and Lord Wood, the case for the Crown being presented by Mr. George Young, now

¹ G. L.

Lord Young, while the prisoners were defended by Mr. John Inglis, afterwards Lord President. The Crown made no attempt to prove Glennie had *neglected* his duty in any way, and led no evidence on the subject. The contractor was blamed for not using stones of sufficient size, and, generally speaking, for inferior workmanship, and Glennie, having passed the work, was said to be equally culpable. As regarded this, the evidence led for the defence was very much stronger than that for the prosecution. The whole thing ended in a fiasco, one of the jury was taken violently ill just at the end, and the proceedings closed nominally *pro tem.*, but were never resumed. The Crown, seeing no chance of obtaining a verdict, deserted the diet.

It was thought by many that the accused had been very cruelly treated, their characters had been assailed, aspersions had been cast on them, they had been placed in the dock as criminals, and now even the satisfaction of a public acquittal was denied them. An influential committee was formed for the purpose of doing something in the way of vindication, and it was proposed that they should be entertained at a public banquet. To this neither Mitchell nor Glennie would agree, and so the idea of the dinner had to be given up. The friends of the latter were, however, determined to give some expression to their feelings. To those who knew him and the big heart that beat in his big body it

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seemed monstrous that such a charge should ever have been brought against him, and so it ended in a cheque being presented him in payment of his expenses, together with silver plate to the value of over £100.

CHAPTER IV

Matches with other Clubs—"Ye Ancient Golfer," mystery as to its authorship—"Confession"—Competitions with Burgess—"Lines on the Defeat of a famed Golfer and Cattle Dealer"—Results of matches in 1867-68-69.

ON one occasion the Club travelled across to Leven to play the King James VI. Club of Perth. We put up at the Caledonian Hotel—both teams went the night before. I¹ was Captain at the time, and although not one of the chosen Ten, I accompanied them to look after them. We all met in the dining-room at night, and I was voted into the chair. After our tumblers were charged I asked our opponents to commence the harmony by giving us a song, but not one of them could sing, or wouldn't. I remember being quite proud of my team, I began with my right hand man, and every one of the Bruntsfield without exception sang a song. We certainly had the best of them at the social board, although next day, I am sorry to say, we were not equally successful upon the green. Chambers was pitted against Wallace, their best man, whom we thought a sort of professional. He was known and

¹T. S. A.

well known as the "Warrior." Chambers found him a very hard nut to crack. They, however, came off all even.

Chambers related his attempts at conversation with his partner. The first remark was made by Chambers, "I think that hill there is known as Largo Law." The Warrior's reply was, "I'm no acquaint in thae pairts." This was not encouraging, so a good many holes were allowed to pass before another remark was ventured upon. At last, with a little hesitation, Chambers said, "How beautiful the scenery around here is!" The reply was, "We didna come here to look at scenery; we cam' here to play gowff." This was no more successful than the first attempt, and not another word was spoken during the match.

I remember David Croall introducing me to one of the players as the Poet Laureate of the Club. His reply was, "Aye, man, dae ye tell me that, but we've gotten a Poet Laurel tae." For long after that I was dubbed the "Poet Laurel."

W. R. Clapperton wrote the following very clever account in rhyme of the many incidents which occurred during our visit a second time to Leven, when we played our return match with the Perth Club:—

YE ANCIENT GOLFER.

Dedicated to our Leven Ten by the shade of S. T. Coleridge.

W. R. CLAPPERTON.

It is an ancient golfer,
He beckons two or three ;
Come haste ye in, good comrades all,
List this sad historie.

The club-room door stood open wide,
They could but enter in ;
He held them by his watery eye
By the grey beard on his chin.

The day was cold, this golfer old
He wheezed a wheezy sigh :
"Come, good old friend, we'll stand a glass"—
The ancient winked his eye.

So round the table square they're set,
Glasses before them four ;
The tear-eyed golfer's visage shone
As in his days of yore.

YE STORIE.

All on a summer noonday bright
The sun shone high in heaven ;
We hied away, a gallant band,
To fight it out at Leven.

For there before King James's men
We'd met in battle keen ;
And long and ardent was the strife
That marked that goodly green.

Full gallantly our champions fought,
Let no man them deride ;
Still Fortune, fickle queen, she gave
Our foes the favoured side.

So once again our comely Ten
Threw down the gage of battle ;
To see if these same Celtic men
Could beat our Southron mettle.

First came our noble Captain,
Loud let his praises sing ;
You ask his name ? it is the same
As Israel's minstrel king.¹

Near by our giant Hector² stood,
Calm he surveyed the scene ;
Quoth he, "This day my game I'll play,
Ne'er yet I've beaten been."

¹D. Croall.

²Jas. Bryson.

REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD

Of all that day he was the chief,
 This player bold and true;
 But dread his ire, if once a fire
 Gleams in those eyes of blue.

There, too, our wise Ulysses stood
 Great in philosophy;¹
 Adieu! ye classic halls to-day,
 He hummed "Heigh-ho, tantivy."

And next appears our clansman brave,
 All deaf to fear is he;²
 "I will hing in this day," he cries,
 "Fair Hebe smiles on me."

Hark, see our stalwart tenor comes,
 Woe to the feeble knees³
 That come against his play this day,
 And yet—he shirks his g's.

There, too, with jaunty springing step,
 With ringing voice, and clear
 And mirthful eye, say, who's this beau?
 (The Ancient whispered soft and low)
 "The man who breweth beer."⁴

Then following close behind him comes
 His steady little brother,⁵
 "St. Andrew guard my play this day,
 And o'er my spirit hover."

¹ William Lees.

² C. M'Cuaig.

³ Jas. Robertson.

⁴ T. Usher.

⁵ A. Usher.

Two doughty chiefs I trow are these,
They'd challenge all who come,
Though now and then they meet their match,
Par nobile fratrum.

But hear that loud and thund'rous voice,
God Monus' jolly son;¹
O'er time he keepeth watch, and lists
The gun each day at one.

In fulness of his heart did he
Stand nips to various boys,
He skipped and tripped, and laughed and quaffed,—
The Captain growls, "He's clean gone daft,
Confound him and his noise."

Nor yet, I pray, let me forget
The others of our crew,—
The one,² he'll soon shut up your jaw,
The other³ down earth's grizzly maw
Oft disappears from view.

But let me tell how it befell
Our three men of reserve.
Our hirsute friend⁴ from Thetis sprung,
Ye little fishes plunged among;
Another,⁵ with smart breeches on,
You catch his name, it rhymes along—
God bless them! they'd not swerve.

¹ Robert Bryson (Watchmaker).

³ John Williamson (Mining Engineer).

² J. T. Cunningham (Dentist).

⁴ A. White.

⁵ T. S. Aitchison.

REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD

And last, and least, our purser wee,¹
In joyous jubilation,
Some five feet four he stands, I ween,
Though full six feet, 'tis easily seen,
In his own estimation.

So o'er the green, and round the green,
With lithe and active motion,
Well played our crew till they looked blu —
The Celts gave them a caution.

Six of our men of all the Ten,
Were victors e'er the even;
The other four they lost the score
That Saturday at Leven.

But now this ancient golfer,
He gazed down mournfullie,
He coughed a cough, and sighed a sigh,
With his Bandanna wiped his eye,
Ere closed his historie.

Oh, had our Ajax but been there,
The leader² of our Ten,
With fierce moustache and curling lip,
We'd not been beaten men!

Our man of note we missed him too,
His name³ of verdure smells,
Though no great driver, what of that?
'Tis his short game that tells.

¹ W. R. Clapperton.

² R. Chambers.

³ J. Greenhill.

He golfest best who golfest most
O'er all links great and small,—
Deuce take that bumpy putting green,
'Tis there we got our fall!

“Another drink! Another drink!
And make it strong and hot!”
Another drink they had full sure
Ere yet they paid their shot.

But, I shay-ole-fella, what of him
You called him (hic) Ishrael's Minstrel?
In *eau de vie* he quenched his thirst
From Monus' pocket pistol.”

Ah me! our Captain bold that day,
Defeat it was his lot,
And tho' he played a right good game,
All to maintain old Bruntsfield fame,
With sad disgust, did he exclaim—
“I am a blest old teapot.”

“Adieu! Adieu!” the ancient said
(Once more—well, we won't quarrel),
But pardon these few foolish lines
Not by the Poet “Laurel.”

This ancient man he slowly rose,
His comrades him farewelled,
And o'er the links his devious way
He tortuously held.

These three were left in dubious state,
Aweary and forlorn,
And thirstier men, and wiser men,
They rose the following morn.

FINIS.

This, of course with a view to what followed, was printed and sent anonymously to all the members except myself. I¹ was in consequence at once fixed upon as the author of a production which I had never seen. I was so persistently pestered about it, that I thought the easiest way out of it was to acknowledge to being the author; but that did not end the matter, for Clapperton called upon me to apologise for my insulting remarks about him contained in the verse—

And last, and least, our purser wee,
In joyous jubilation,
Some five feet four he stands, I ween,
Tho' full six feet, 'tis easily seen,
In his own estimation.

I did not dream of his being the author, and it must have been very amusing to him the position I took up, in trying to pacify his apparent great ire. In the meantime I wrote the following lines, entitled "The Confession," animadverting upon "The Wretched Brewer" (myself) who was trying to strut in borrowed plumes.

¹ T. S. A.

CONFESSION.

By Ye Author of "Ye Ancient Golfer."

T. S. AITCHISON.

A humble bard I am, unknown to fame ;
'Twas but a passing gleam that o'er me came
That fitful jade, the Muse, with wicked torment
Caught me asleep, and so my brain did ferment,
That waking from her hot and sudden wooing,
I found these jingling lines within me brewing ;
A fierce desire to rhyme gat hold on me,
Vainly I prayed the Muse to let me be,
Vainly I burned my closely written sheets,
She only urged me on to greater feats.
At last, exhausted with the unequal fight,
I yielded, and soon were brought to light
Those humble lines, scarce worthy of the name,
But, passing strange, have gained to me a fame,
Immortal, shall I call it?—not so fast,
Effusions such as these do seldom last.
Like morning hoar-frost on the plains of time,
Which Sol dispels long ere he's reached his prime,
So shall my verses soon be on the wane
And be forgot, ne'er to be heard again.
There's just one point I'd like to put to right :
A traitor in the camp, I heard last night,
My poet's laurels he has tried to gather,
And my praised lines on his bald brains to father ;
Strutting in borrowed plumes, this insolent Jay,
His very voice proclaims 'tis not his lay.
Try not to steal from me, thou wretched Brewer,
"What not enriches thee, but makes me poor."
With one more word, dear brothers, I am gone,
Let me remain for aye your

GREAT UNKNOWN.

This proved a puzzle to Clapperton, and he tried hard and long to find out who was the author; however, the double *dénouement* came out one day when he and I were walking along Princes Street. He remarked that he would give a great deal to find out who was the author of "The Confession." I said that I would give as much to know who was the author of "Ye Ancient Golfer." "Ah," he said, "I know who wrote that!" and I told him that I knew the author of the other. We there and then confessed, very much to the surprise and amusement of each other, and so ended a very amusing episode, more amusing than it appears in this narration, for occasionally we appeared to be the bitterest enemies, and on one occasion Melville Russell, a Nathaniel, implored us to shake hands and be friends, otherwise the Club would be ruined.

For many years we had an annual competition with the Burgess Club. The prize was rather a shabby trophy, but the contest was none the less keen. I¹ cannot remember why this annual competition was stopped; I think both Clubs got just rather too keen over it, and members of other clubs were admitted for the sole purpose of playing in the contest; its discontinuance is much to be regretted, as the two Clubs are really closely allied,—in fact, as

¹T. S. A.

mentioned before, the Bruntsfield was originally an offshoot of the Burgess. Now that the Clubs have become neighbours on their new greens, let us hope that the trophy will resume its importance and be played for again annually; it is at present in the possession of the Burgess.

I¹ remember one competition shortly after the Burgess had built their new clubhouse at Musselburgh. It had been agreed that the Captain of the winning Club should take the chair at the dinner; as it turned out, the Bruntsfield won, and I, being Captain at the time, had the curious position of presiding in our opponents' clubhouse. We had a great deal of amusement over the circumstance.

After we had dined, the weather being favourable, we adjourned to the Links for our first smoke, and some way or other it resulted in a 100 yards race competition. William Macgregor of the Burgess had a son, a very good runner, and challenged any member of the Bruntsfield to run him. I accepted the challenge, and named George Ritchie, my brother-in-law, who, although he weighed 16 stone, was very fast for 100 yards. His name was received with derision, but I advised my Club to back him, and half-crowns were offered freely; curiously enough, both competitors had a preliminary canter, Macgregor ran Ferrier, a master

¹ T. S. A.

at Craigmount, who fancied himself, but he was beaten easily. Ritchie ran with Scott, of Thos. Scott & Co.; it was no match, and Ritchie ran beside him chaffing him all the time, but in a weak moment, and, I believe, quite thoughtlessly, he gave him an elbow, and Scott, losing his balance, came a cropper, tumbling heads over heels. When he got up, his language was very forcible, and Ritchie had a *mauvais quart d'heure*, and deservedly so; but it turned out an unfortunate occurrence, for it was found that poor Scott had broken one of his ribs. This fact did not come out at the time, so did not prevent the big match coming off.

Macgregor Junior, who, it was said, had been practising how to start at Powderhall, was a light, lithe, young fellow, went off with a rush, with which Ritchie's 16 stone had no chance, but, once started, the heavy weight soon showed that he had pace, and before the half way was reached he was abreast of his opponent, and in the latter half Macgregor was fairly outpaced, and Ritchie came in the winner,—the second match we won that day.

The competition for the trophy was usually played with ten a side, but on two occasions it was played for with twenty; the first match the Burgess won easily, but the next we reversed it, our first ten had lost heavily, making the match look hopeless, but the second ten did wonders, and to everyone's surprise turned the

tables completely. I¹ remember I was pitted against one of their first ten, owing to his arriving late. I ought to have had no chance with him, and kept telling him so; at the same time I managed to get two or three holes up at the start, whereupon he began to press, with the result that he only squared the game at the last hole. I was very proud at getting off so easily; it was as Croall remarked, "a horse to a hen," or should have been.

When at North Berwick, where this last match was played, I¹ may relate, a rather amusing scene which occurred between Dan Smith and James Bryson and Lambre the hotel-keeper there, and who, though a Frenchman, played a very good game at golf and was a bit of a character. When Lambre appeared upon the scene, Bryson was flourishing a cane chair round his head and crying that he was going to fight Smith. Lambre in his quaint way said, "Meester Breeson, you put my chaire down; you no combate here; and let me tell you that you have far too much speake to have very much fight." Lambre's intervention was quite successful, and so ended this little episode.

At another match with the Burgess, this time at Luffness, John Cunningham, one of our best and steadiest players, was interviewed and asked during the play how he was getting on. His reply was, "I

¹ T. S. A.

am only 5 up, but I am taking it very easy." I¹ only tell this because it became a very often quoted saying when a player was doing well. I forget whether it was on the occasion of this or of a previous competition that the lines which follow were written, but I may explain that Mr. Williamson, who was a very good player, was beaten by an opponent generally thought to be his inferior in the game, and his annoyance and chagrin at the unexpected event were all too apparent.

LINES ON THE DEFEAT OF A FAMED GOLFER AND CATTLE-DEALER.

T. S. AITCHISON.

Come, Golfers a', lament wi' me,
 Wi' saut tears tricklin' frae your e'e,
 The darkest deed that e'er ye'll see
 Was done this day;
 And Jock, the King o' Golfers, he
 Nae mair will play.

Lament, ye calves, that ken him weel,
 Ye beasts that up the hillside speil,
 Nae pleasure e'er again ye'll feel,
 Your Jockie's beat:
 He's past remeed and doctor's skill,—
 Ye weel may greet.

¹ T. S. A.

Ye sheep, wha wander ower each brae,
Come ye and listen to this lay,
This is a sad and dreary day
 For your puir Jock.
At morn sae cruise, and noo sae wae,
 Oh! what a shock.

Ye bullocks fat, this is nae jest,
Nae Pleuro this, nor Rinderpest
That heaves and breaks the manly breast
 O' your puir frien'.
Wi' greater blow he is oppressed
 Upon the green.

Ye collie dogs, the days are gone
When ye would frisk and round him run,
Haud up your heads, and whine and moan,
 Your maister's bad.
Alas! that he the day should tine,
 And near go mad.

Ye golfers, watch his stalwart frame
Shakin' wi' agony, bent wi' shame;
See him slink off in sullied fame,—
 Regret your work;
Gie ower your chaff, he's no fair game,
 Felled "like a dork."

Oh, Bruntsfield, is there no a man
Amangst ye wha, wi' friendly han'
Will cheer this face sae wae and wan,
 Wi' hearty grip.
Gae, bring him back, dae what ye can,
 But try—a nip!

To show the relative position of the Burgess and Bruntfield in those days, I¹ append a note of the scores in the matches played in 1867, 1868, and 1869, taken from the pages of the *Golfers' Annual*.

JOINT MEDAL—BURGESS v. BRUNTSFIELD.

9th March 1867.

BURGESS.		BRUNTSFIELD.	
1. D. Smith	77	A. Usher	88
2. Dr. Argyll Robertson	77	R. Chambers	80
3. John Williamson	80	James Bryson	80
4. R. B. Shaw	85	C. M'Cuaig	78
5. John T. Cunningham	82	D. Croall	85
6. Peter Lang	92	James Robertson	79
7. R. C. Wilson	82	R. Bryson	85
8. Thos. Bird	91	R. Morrison	85
9. G. B. Wilson	88	A. Young	95
<hr/>		<hr/>	
754		755	

Majority for Burgess, 1.

18th April 1868.

BURGESS.		BRUNTSFIELD.	
1. R. B. Shaw	66	R. Chambers	64
2. James Williamson	58	William Lees	61
3. John Williamson	61	C. M'Cuaig	62
4. Peter Stevenson	67	R. Bryson	70
5. Thos. Bird	69	Jas. Bryson	58
6. R. C. Wilson	68	Jas. Robertson	62
7. Peter Lang	69	Capt. Croall	65
8. G. B. Wilson	66	T. Usher	63
<hr/>		<hr/>	
524		505	

Majority for Bruntfield, 19.

¹ G. L.

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10th April 1869.

BURGESS.				BRUNTSFIELD.			
1. James Williamson	.	.	63	William Lees	.	.	62
2. R. B. Shaw	.	.	62	James Bryson	.	.	62
3. John Williamson	.	.	64	C. M'Cuaig	.	.	62
4. George Robb	.	.	65	John Cunningham	.	.	62
5. P. Stevenson	.	.	64	Andrew Usher	.	.	67
6. John Bryson	.	.	63	Thomas Usher	.	.	66
7. Charles Macarthur	.	.	62	Robert Bryson	.	.	59
8. Robert Wallace	.	.	61	James Greenhill	.	.	65
9. Thos. Bird	.	.	65	Andrew Fulton	.	.	65
10. Capt. Mann	.	.	68	Capt. Clapperton	.	.	67
<hr/> 637				<hr/> 637			

The above result shows a tie between the Clubs.

CHAPTER V

Ye Ancient Golfer—His Style of Play—"A Lay of the Ancient Golfer."

THE elderly gentleman, generally known as "Ye Ancient Golfer," was a very old member who, on account of age, had been placed on the retired list. He lived not far from the green, and, having little to do, spent no inconsiderable part of his time in looking after the interests of the Club. He was a useful man in more ways than one. To him, along with the three office-bearers, was intrusted a key of the press where the stores were kept, from which the open cupboard was replenished. It was an unheard-of event for all office-bearers to be absent on a Saturday, but occasionally some need for the key would occur prior to their arrival, and then his came in handy. In those days, it was the custom that a member, on the occasion of his marriage, should present the Club with a dozen of champagne, while the appearance of each son or daughter thereafter, involved a further contribution of half a dozen. These contributions came to be known as fines, and in looking after them the services of the

Ancient were invaluable. He studied a particular corner of the *Scotsman* very carefully, and no one was allowed to escape. I can speak from personal experience, for I¹ remember that not long after I became a member I was liable in a fine of the latter description, and owing to a mistake on the part of an older member—a bachelor be it noted—to whom I had applied for information as to the extent of my duties, I made the mistake of sending only two bottles. He then dealt so firmly with me, in pointing out the enormity of my offence, that on the next occasion I felt constrained to send a dozen instead of the usual quantity. Tom Usher made a mistake of another kind in regard to this matter. He had paid his half-dozens very regularly during many years, but at last he came to the conclusion that there would be no further occasion for any such presentations, and accordingly sent an extra case as a thankoffering. Alas, “a bodie’s never sure,” he had the laugh against him and another fine to pay the following year.

The Ancient was also very useful to the treasurer in hunting up subscriptions, and about this an amusing story is told of him. The treasurer for the time being, a busy man, gladly accepted his services, and in recognition of these used to give him a glass of fine old brandy which he kept in his office. One of the Ancient’s peculiarities was this, that he liked his spirits sweetened,

¹ G. L.

and so when he intended to call upon the treasurer he put a piece of sugar in his pocket in anticipation of good things to come. I suspect, rather to his annoyance, but still more to that of his very dignified cashier, he always addressed the treasurer as "Sonie." "Is Sonie in?" he would ask the delighted clerks at his place of business. The understanding was that he was only to call when he had subscriptions to hand over, but sometimes he came empty-handed, and then there was a fine bit of play to get his brandy. "Will it no' do the day, Sonie?" he would say. "No, no, it'll no' do the day, you've collected nothing," would be the reply. "But see, Sonie," the Ancient would continue, "I've brocht the sugar," producing the piece from his pockets, "and I've had a long trail." Needless to say his pleading was successful.

Although on account of age and infirmity he had given up attempting to play the long round, he was very fond of a round at the short holes, and was not an opponent one could take liberties with. The usual stake was sixpence, and he seldom lost. His putting was deadly in effect but objectionable in style—indeed, hardly fair. I¹ remember having him for a partner once against the late James Carmichael, of the Academy, a rather quick tempered member of society, and another whose name I forget. The match was pretty even at

¹ G. L.

first, but we eventually got a lead and were likely winners. Carmichael had been watching the Ancient's puts in silent indignation, but at last just as another hole had been achieved by one more than usually objectionable, he could contain himself no longer and broke out, "You shoved that put, sir; I claim the hole." Than this no direr accusation could be made, the Ancient's face got redder than usual with indignation, and some very strong language ensued. I suggested that the matter should be referred to Robert Paterson, the Assessor, who had been watching the game. This was agreed to, and accepting the office he gave his decision with great gravity. "I was watching the play very carefully, gentlemen, and so far as I could see Mr. — played the put in his usual style." The Ancient was satisfied, Carmichael delighted, but there was no more play. When angry he was a regular old savage and could say the most dreadful things. Most tried to keep on good terms with him,—indeed, with some he was a favourite. There was one general mode of propitiation—I don't think his whisky and water cost him anything. "Mr. —, will you have a nip?" one would say when helping himself, and the reply generally was, "Thank ye, laddie, I've just had yin frae Mr. —, but I'll gie you credit for it, and tak' it the first time I'm needin' it"; then later on in the day, or perhaps a fortnight afterwards, you would be reminded of the nip

that stood to "your" credit as he put it, and told not to forget the box.

I should be sorry to say anything in the way of suggesting that the Ancient was not in the matter of liquor one of the most temperate of men. I'm sure I never saw him otherwise; but there was a very good old story told against him in regard to a bottle of port, which I suppose had a substantial foundation, and about which Mr. Aitchison wrote the following lines, probably the most popular and best known of our lays:—

A LAY OF THE ANCIENT GOLFER.

T. S. AITCHISON.

The Ancient he sat in his corner chair;
Of sheep's head and haggis he'd dined so free,
Of Champagne he'd drunk two bottles and more
And should have been happy as man could be;
But he was not so, 'twas easily seen
He looked like a man oppressed with care,
For his thoughts were engrossed with a bottle of Port
Which was carefully stored in a cupboard near.

Chorus.—For the Ancient Golfer was fond of his drink
If the Champagne was dry the drier got he;
But the red Port wine was the drink divine
That set his old blood a-flowing so free.

That bottle of Port had been there for a month,
And daily the Ancient trudged down the hill
To open the press with a trembling hand,
Then thank the gods that there it was still;
And he'd sit down with his eyes upturned,
And worship that bottle with open door,
And wonder what vintage 'twould prove to be,
If a '48 or a '34.

Chorus.—

Now this had gone on for a month and more,
And the Bruntsfield dinner came round at last,
And the Ancient was there in his corner chair
And justice had done to the great repast.
But the captain he knew of that bottle of Port,
That bottle of Port so old and sound,
And the Ancient's face turned pale at the thought
That the captain might order the bottle round.

Chorus.—

So he stealthily rose with bated breath,
And quietly unto the press he stole,
Uncorking that bottle with careful hand,
And pouring himself out a flowing bowl.
Ah, 'tis said that it was a marvellous sight
To watch how the old boy's spirits rose,
As glass after glass of the nectar sweet
Came under the sniff of his purply nose.

Chorus.—

But the end of all good things comes at last,
And the end of that bottle at last was near,
So the Ancient arose and asked all to join
In a toast to the captain with hearty cheer.

Now the captain he saw the Ancient rise
With a glass of Port full up to the brim,
And divined at once from the fate of the Port
That the Ancient had got the better of him.

Chorus.—

So whilst the Ancient was sounding the captain's praise
The captain was brewing a strange, strange cup
Of sherry and ketchup in equal parts,
Or enough to make the right colour up.
Then with deftly hand the glasses were changed,
And the Ancient sat down midst of cheers, a roar,
And quaffed, and as he loudly cried
Such nectar could only be '34.

Chorus.—

There's many Ports that grace men's boards—
Ports that are new, Ports that are old,
Ports that are thin, Ports that are stout,
Ports made to be kept, Ports made to be sold,
Ports from Hambro', Ports from France,
Ports from Hungary, Ports from Spain,
Ports that of shillings but cost a score,
Ports that give pleasure, Ports that give pain,
Ports that are silky, Ports that are rough,
Ports of molasses and spirits proof,
Ports that give headaches, Ports that give gripes,
Ports from which connoisseurs keep aloof,
Ports, if ye drink, set on edge your teeth,—
But the Ports most famed in the Bruntfield Club
Are the Ancient's Port and the Port of Leith.

Chorus.—

There's many devils that walk this world,
Devils that devils are to eat ;
Devils for sheep's head, devils for haggis,
Devils for every kind of meat,
Hungry devils, gluttonous devils,
Devils that eat for any three,
But to see the Ancient at knife and fork
You'll swear such a devil you ne'er did see.

Chorus.—

There's many devils that walk this world,
Devils that devils are to drink,
Slow drinking devils, fast drinking devils,
More devils than I can say or think.
Devils for Sherry, for Malvoisie,
Devils for Claret, devils for Port,
Champagne devils, Brandy devils,
Drinking devils of every sort,
Sober devils, drunken devils,
Devils below their chair that fall,—
But the Ancient at drinking a bottle of Port
Was the veriest devil amongst them all.

Chorus.—For the Ancient Golfer was fond of his drink,
If the Champagne was dry the drier got he ;
But the red Port wine was the drink divine
That set his old blood a-flowing so free.

CHAPTER VI

Club Dinners—"The Auld Cleek"—Croall and Young—A. B. Walker: his ride to London—Club Matches—"The Pherson and M'Davish"—"The Fall of Hector"—"Lines read at a Golfers' Dinner—Songs in vogue—"The King of Drinks"—Robert Chambers: his versatility—Morrison and Rowatt—Dr. Findlater and Plato—Aitchison and A. S. Paxton's Stories—"Play on Paxton"—J. T. Jamieson—"Oro."

IN the days I write of the Club met four times a year to play for prize balls, a custom no doubt handed down from a much earlier period when the playing for these was one of the main ends for which the Club existed. The matches were in foursomes, and after their conclusion we dined together, those who had won balls and did not remain paying a shilling by way of penalty.

I have spoken of the room in which we met. Conceive it then on almost every occasion filled to overflowing, indeed we had to make ourselves useful in passing along viands, and the youngest members whose duty it was to collect the dinner bill often found it very difficult to get round the outside of the tables.

Our dinners were very popular; they were good but plain, the charge being four shillings and sixpence,

and there was always plenty of champagne. Any amount of chaff and fun and hard hitting went on, while jokes of all kinds were played, but woe to the member who dared to take offence. His only course was to give back a Roland for an Oliver, or grin and bear it and bide his time.

Probably the two most formidable opponents to meet at this kind of game were the two oldest men in the company, old John Miller, the Father of the Club, and A. B. Walker. Encounters with the former were generally shunned, because he really did not understand what chaff meant and would respond to any attack with a kind of subdued ferocity, and make use of any dialectic weapons to hand without much care as to their selection. He was rarely beaten, though David Croall succeeded in doing it very effectually one night. Miller's retort, "Eh, man David, I kent your faither forty years syne, he widna hae spoken to me as you've done," being a virtual admission of defeat. My own relations with Mr. Miller were always of the most friendly nature; indeed, as a mark of the esteem in which he held me,¹ he presented me with his pet cleek—a very valuable addition to my stock. Some time after this the cleek went amissing, when I¹ penned the following lines:—

¹T. S. A.

THE AULD CLEEK.

T. S. AITCHISON.

Oh were I able to rehearse
My auld cleek's praise in prose or verse,
I'd sound it out as loud and fierce
As ever piper's drone could blaw.

Chorus.—My auld cleek wi' its bonnie han'le
The grip rowed round wi' best o' flannel;
Nae cleek to it could haud the can'le
Here about or far awa.

Ye were the gift o' honest Johnnie,
And weel he lo'ed to look upon ye;
I keep'd ye lang, but now they've stown ye,
And never mair wi' ye I'll play.

Chorus.—

Nae common grief is't to me causin',
Weel it was trained to *shove* the ba's in:
Whilst envious chiels stood round applausin',
And monie a time it won the day.

Chorus.—

Oh, if I had the loun that stown it,
And in his keepin' ere I found it,
As thief before ye a' he'd own it,
And I would gie his neck a thraw."

Chorus.—

Yet if he kent how weel I loe it,
I almost think that he would rue it;
Out o' its hidin' place he'd pu it,
And watch my gratefu' tears down fa.

Chorus.—My auld cleek wi' its bonnie han'le
The grip rowed round wi' best o' flannel;
Nae cleek to it could haud the can'le
Hereabout or far awa.

The result of the song was most successful, as at the first dinner at which it was sung Chambers reminded me that he had had the loan of it and had forgotten to return it.

Croall was one of the very best fellows in the Club, but no doubt in the matter of hard hitting he went rather far sometimes. As a specimen¹ I give the following:—When he was Captain an attack was made on some of the Council's arrangements by "Quaich Young," so called because he had once won a silver quaich and to distinguish him from J. W. Young. Quaich was for many years head of the Dead-Letter Office, and was supposed, in the performance of the duties of his office, to have acquired an unrivalled knowledge of the secrets of Edinburgh society. He was a very good fellow, but without a spark of humour, and when Croall, after explaining and justifying what had been done, complained of the attack, and went on to say that he would "not have minded it so much from another; but coming—coming gentlemen from a

miserable postage stamp, the effete head of a mere dead-letter department, I declare it is too much." Of course, there were roars of laughter. Croall always looked so jolly on these occasions, in his glance fun and the spirit of mischief struggling as it were for mastery, that it was scarcely possible to take what he said seriously; but this Young unfortunately did, and there was a coolness between them for some time afterwards.

The other champion in this species of warfare, A. B. Walker, was never worsted in my recollection. His appearance was almost grotesque, his chin so smooth and sharp, his head so devoid of hair, and his eyes so brilliant. If words failed him, which they rarely did, he had a grimace ready, which was quite sufficient to turn the tables on his adversary. Chambers tried a fall with him once—he did not repeat it. Chambers had been unexpectedly called on for a speech. In trusting to the inspiration of the moment, as he usually did, he hardly ever failed to amuse, but on this occasion his ideas were more sluggish than usual; and when he stood up he hesitated in a way unusual for him, but, catching sight of Walker's comical face, he put his hand on an empty champagne bottle and said, "Mr. Walker, what does this bottle represent?" Walker, who took in the situation at a glance, without a moment's hesitation replied, "Empty Chambers." There

was a yell of laughter, and Chambers resumed his seat.

About Walker, as heir to the Walker of half a century previous, there hovered the halo of romance. The story current about the great exploit of his younger days ran something like this. To him, in his capacity of teller at one of the principal Banks in town, some time between 1830 and 1840, a cheque for a very large sum was passed across the counter. The signature was a well-known one, and the cheque was paid at once without hesitation, by a draft on the correspondent of the Bank in London, whither the owner of the cheque was on the point of proceeding. It was within an hour, or at least not long after, that the cheque, the amount of which had excited comment, fell into the hands of one of the older officials, and was at once pronounced by him to be a forgery. What was to be done? Walker, who was a capital horseman, volunteered to ride the whole way to London and get in before the mail; and this he actually accomplished. He reached the Bank at which the draft was payable an hour before the arrival of the forger, who, on presenting it, was promptly taken into custody. Truly a magnificent performance; and well did Walker merit the retiring allowance of £400 a-year which, it was said, a grateful Board of Directors allowed him when, in 1846, he finally took leave of the Bank. Sometimes it was asserted that the sum was so immense that but

for him the Bank, which was in a different position then from what it is now, would have been ruined; and all agreed in this, that he had got a pension of £400 a-year or thereby.

It seems a pity to dissipate such a romantic story, but the fact is, that I very much doubt whether Walker ever rode the whole way to London at all. The actual facts of the case I¹ have obtained from an unimpeachable authority, and they are something like this. About 1840, but whether before or after I do not know, one of the private Banks then in existence in Scotland was not in a healthy state. In payment of a very large difference due to the joint stock Bank in question, they one forenoon handed its cashier a draft on Coutts & Co., their London correspondents. Later in the same day a report was in circulation which seemed to indicate that the suspension of the Bank might take place at any moment; and it then became of vital importance that payment of the draft should be obtained at the earliest possible moment. In order to effect this, Walker travelled with all speed to London; but that he rode all the way is incredible. A century previously, no doubt, an active horseman, owing to the existing state of the roads, could travel twice or thrice as quickly as one could do in the lumbering coaches then in vogue; but in 1840 the great roads were in better order than they are to-day, and the mail coaches

¹ G. L.

capable of very rapid motion. Walker could not possibly have ridden the whole way without resting repeatedly, *ergo* he would travel more slowly, in place of more quickly, than the coach; and what he probably did was this—travel by coach until so near to London that he could ride the rest of the way on horseback without stopping. In this way he would get into London before any news of the Bank's position had reached its creditors there. Something like this he actually did; the draft was presented and duly paid, and his Bank in consequence escaped a heavy loss. Walker earned a considerable amount of credit in this way, and no doubt it was taken into account when his retiring allowance was fixed by the Directors in 1846; but although handsome as the times went, it was nothing like £400 a-year; allowances at such a rate were very uncommon in these days. Whatever it was, he lived to enjoy it for many a long year thereafter; he evidently came of patriarchal blood—his name, by the way, was Adam—for it was not until the year 1889 that the Bank had occasion to strike his name out of their books.

After the loyal toasts had been proposed and drunk, the parish business, as it was called, began—that is to say, challenges to play were given and taken amongst the members present, and duly entered in the match book. The recognised bet was a shilling, and sixpence was charged for registration. A quarter of an hour

was allowed for this, and they were then read over and backing invited. It was a poor match which did not bring out a number of backers on either side; the stakes were the same—a shilling, and sixpence for registration. In this way a not inconsiderable addition to our revenue was realised, which at least helped to keep down the amount of the dinner bill. Some of those matches produced a great deal of interest. Quite a series went on between David Croall and Quaich Young, Croall giving Young the Club odds. They played first of all the ordinary Club match, for a shilling, which Croall won; then for a hat, which Croall also won; but, nothing daunted, and feeling sure that with the Club odds he was quite a match for his opponent, Quaich insisted on a third encounter. This time it was for the cost of a suit of tweeds, which was put at £5, 5s. I¹ travelled to Musselburgh with Young the afternoon it was played, and he spoke very confidently of his prospect of winning; but, alas! the suit of tweeds went the same way as the hat and the shilling!

Perhaps the match which created most interest, however, was one between James Bryson and Croall. At one of the quarterly competitions they tied for the prize—a silver sugar-basin. Both men were very good players, and both very much in earnest when they wanted anything. The match was played at Mussel-

¹ G. L.

burgh. It would have been a very close thing but for the fact that Bryson, landing on the far side of Pandy, broke his favourite cleek against the paling. He was a great cleek player, and this quite upset him. The result was that Croall won rather easily. Bryson ascribed his defeat to the loss of his cleek ; Croall put his victory down to Bryson losing his temper. The whole episode was very humorously described by Mr. Aitchison in the two sets of verses which follow. The first of these, in which the encounter is described, found its way into the Book of Lays in a furtive fashion, and its authorship was not at first discovered. About the second, which was in Mr. Aitchison's regular style, no one ever had a moment's doubt. Mr. Bryson, it is but fair to add, took both of them very good naturedly.

THE PHERSON AND M'DAVISH.

T. S. AITCHISON.

The Pherson had a feud
All with the great M'Davish,
And swore she would him conquer,
Him plunder, and him ravish ;
She loudly swore she'd do it,
For she was not punctilious,
If but the fates were willin'
And she not over bilious.

REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD

She rose up in the mornin'
Just feelin' rather nervish,
But took a mighty caulker
To make her more impervish;
And then she strutted forth
To do M'Davish battle,
Declaring she would fell him
Like one of her nain cattle.

M'Davish was a brave boy,
Yet she could not dissemble,
And when she saw the Pherson
Her knees began to tremble;
Then she, too, tuke a tram,
Which made her more prave fellow,
And pleased was she to observe
The Pherson's face look yellow.

They shook hands with each other,
To show their pest pehaviour;
Then grasped each one a weapon,
And cockèd up her peaver;
And then pegan the fight,—
They laid about like flails;
Destroyed was all the turf
By those two mighty Gaels.

M'Davish he cried out
Unto the haughty Pherson,
"Why your face so white?
You be very angry person;
If you lose your temper,
You will lose the day."
"Hold your tongue, M'Davish!
What is that you say?

“Very soon I’ll show you
How you ought to spake;
I will beat you, sir,—
I will make you quake.”
But both had far more speak
Than courage on th’ occasion;
And so they fought like teapots,
To gain the sugar-basin.

And now we must relate,
Alas! for the poor Pherson!
And who, upon that day,
Was very angry person:
In middle of the combat,
As almost mad she grew,
Her nainsel’s favourite weapon
She fairly broke in two.

She floundered long in “Pandy,”
Bewailin’ her sad fate, sir,
For now she felt her chances
They were not over great, sir;
The great M’Davish smiled,
To hear the Pherson wail so,
She pluckit up her courage,
And cockit up her tail O.

Then soon this mighty battle
Was finished and completed;
M’Davish was victorious,
The Pherson was defeated.
Poor Pherson she went home,
Her sad fate sore bewailin’,
And swearin’ mighty oaths
Against the cursèd palin’.

REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD

For if she had not proke
 Her favourite cleek that day,
 She might have beat M'Davish,—
 She might have won the fray:
 But as for the M'Davish,
 She was in awful feather;
 She was so very proud
 She called her friends together,

And drank until the mornin',—
 Them giving her nain version,
 How boldly she did fight
 And beat the mighty Pherson.
 Before her friends did leave her
 (And here must end my story)
 On floor they laid M'Davish,
 And left her to her glory.

THE FALL OF HECTOR.

T. S. AITCHISON.

Lament in rhyme, lament in prose,
 Wi' saut tears trickling doun your nose;
 Puir Jamie's fame has got a dose
 Past a' remeed,
 Nae doctor's skill can fend the close
 O' fate sae dreed.

It isna that disastrous fire
Has been to him a funeral pyre;
He could withstand mishap sae dire,
 But no this blow,
Which has him brocht down in the mire
 And felled him low.

He had been crawin' for a while,
Eneuch a canny man to rile;
But hoo it raised King¹ David's bile
 Ye a' ken weel,
And noo misfortune's blow sae vile
 Puir James maun feel.

He was a cock upon the green,
No monie better to be seen;
He played the game baith hot and keen,
 And croose did crawl,—
Alas! a fatal dose o' spleen
 Garred him to fa'.

'Tis sad to see our great Inspector,²
Or, as he's ca'd, the mighty Hector,
Noo gaun aboot like ony spectre,
 Wi' baggit breeks;
'Twould take a pipe o' best o' Nectar
 To flush his cheeks.

His sunken face and hopeless gaze,
Whilst on him loosely hang his claes,
A chord o' pity e'en should raise
 In every breast.
Oh, that again wi' laurel bays
 We could him crest!

¹ David Croall.

² James Bryson, Inspector to the Scottish Union Insurance Co.

O Golfers, wha should gently scan
The failin's o' a brither man,
Gae try and cheer this face sae wan,
Ye've him negleckit;
His fate some day may be your ain
When least expeckit.

Another match which caused some amusement was one played between T. S. Aitchison and Schneider, teacher of French at the High School and sundry other establishments. Aitchison at the time was partially disabled, having in the course of a fall cut his left hand very badly, so that the match, which was for a dinner, was to all appearance a very one-sided affair. In reality it was, but not in the way to be expected. As a one-handed player Aitchison's ability was phenomenal. About the same time—I¹ quote from the *Goljers' Annual*—at the October meeting of the Gullane Club, he came in first with a natural score of 69. There were then but thirteen holes in the course. The only scratch player taking part in the competition, Mr. T. Begbie, took 76. The match with Schneider, Aitchison won easily. The dinner was given by the former in the Clubhouse shortly after, and in the course of the evening the following lines, composed by his opponent, were read:—

¹ G. L.

LINES READ AT A GOLFERS' DINNER
1867.

T. S. AITCHISON.

[The GOLFERS are all assembled. S-D-R, the host of the evening, is seen running about excitedly, when enter the CAPTAIN, whose invitation S-D-R has forgotten to post.]

Capt. Hilloa, my boys, what means this row ;
Tell me, what are you up to now ?
Your Captain, say, am I or not ?
That I've no invitation got.
A council meeting do I behold
Before my eyes, and I not told !
But, stay—those knives and forks for eight—
Surely there's something here not straight.
Hah ! Treasurer, is't you stands treat ?
At council meeting we've ne'er meat,
But only drink. Pray, then, explain
Those knives and forks,—I say again.

S-d-r. Mon. Capitaine, pray stay your rage,
All to explain I do engage.
It is von leetle small surprise
You now behold before your eyes.
Mon. Capitaine, you know, do you see,
This is a meeting called by me.

Capt. What ! Called by you ! What call have you
The duties of our Sec. to do ?
Too callous has he grown, I fear,
That you, not he, should call us here.

REMINISCENCES OF THE OLD

S-d-r. But, Capitaine, this is no gammon ;
 There is von famous cut of salmon
 As e'er was caught in stream of Tweed !
 Pray, stay your rage and join our feed.

Capt. Scoundrels and vagabonds, would you try
 To bribe thus my integrity ?
 Nay, silence, better that at once
 This scene illegal I denounce.

Mon. Capitaine, this will not do ;
 We all are honest men and true.
 Obedience, we know, our first law is,
 But try not thus our bile to riz ;
 And, brothers, I¹ feel that in this case
 You want a true Demosthenes—
 One who at speaking is a dab ;
 Yea, such as me, with gift of gab.
 My lad !—Mon. Capitaine I mean—
 In fewest words I would explain
 Why we are all assembled here—
 Why our friend S-d-r's in the chair.

It will not do—the Captain SWORE !
 All in a moment is uproar.
 S-d-r gets up upon his chair,
 Gnashes his teeth, and tears his hair ;
 The Duffer² mounts upon the table,
 And shouts as loud as he is able ;
 P-t-n³ leads a party too,
 With rallying words of Caller-ou ;
 Whilst lusty Bob,⁴ with cleek in hand,
 Cries he will put out all the band.

¹ J. W. Young.

² D. Croall.

³ R. Paterson.

⁴ R. Bryson.

The Dr.¹ tries, but tries in vain,
To get some order back again ;
The Brewer,² mounted on his barrel,
Views from afar this mighty quarrel ;
While Russel, under some strange spell,
Helplessly stands and rings the bell.

Meantime outside a clamorous crowd
"Fire" and "Perlice" they cry aloud ;
And Linton³ hastens to the fray,
Perchance this fearful fight to stay.
Too late, with noise of thunder's roar
S-d-r falls down upon the floor ;
Yea, and down with him in the crash
Come table, crockery, and glass.

Yes, gentlemen, but waking, poor S-d-r found,
With the exception of the last episode,
That happily it was but a dream,
However real it might seem.
And now beside him lay, poor sinner,
The invites for this famous dinner.

His wife, who tried her best to please,
Had tempted him with toasted cheese.
So, after supper, as he slept,
A frightful nightmare had him gripped,
And conjured up with such precision,
And apparent truth, this awful vision.
Slowly he raised himself on feet,
All bathed in a mighty sweat,
And swore that ne'er again he'd sup
On toasted cheese—then liquored up
And went to bed, groaning with pain,
Perhaps to fight his fight again.

¹ J. Morrison. ² T. S. Aitchison. ³ Captain of Police.

Schneider was a poor player. He was a strongly built, little man hailing from Neuchâtel, and was rather popular. He used to tell a story of how, when returning home from an evening party at a very late hour—perhaps I should say very early hour—he found that he was being followed by two suspicious looking characters, one of whom at last advancing asked him what the time was. Schneider carried a good stout cudgel with him, and, affecting to get out his watch, bided his time until the stranger got within reach, when he promptly knocked him down, and then, turning to his companion, remarked “It’s just struck one,” when the other took to his heels and fled. He was for a time rather taken up by Chambers, who managed to get a lot of fun out of him, but a coolness, how arising no one knew, ensued. Schneider thought himself ill-used, and he vowed vengeance. Accordingly at the next dinner he appeared in full evening dress, the only time I ever saw a man come to our dinners so got up. “I have prepared von speech in which I will crush him,” he whispered to the member sitting next him. Accordingly, in the course of the evening, he got up and said that he had the permission of the Captain to propose a toast. It was, he said, to the health of one of our members whose merits were not sufficiently recognised, but he was very mysterious about the matter, never mentioning his name, but always alluding to him as

the nephew of his uncle, of whom he drew a ludicrous portrait, easily recognisable as an exaggerated representation of Lord Provost Chambers. The whole thing was in doubtful taste, and when Chambers got up to reply he ignored the speech altogether, and, after thanking us for the response made to the toast, sat down.

By the time we had got thus far the atmosphere was usually so thick with tobacco smoke that the Captain and Croupier could just see each other and no more. After dinner we mostly drank whisky toddy. The effect of this after an ample allowance of champagne in such an atmosphere may be imagined. I¹ have a distinct recollection of the headaches next morning, but the evenings altogether were so delightful that, as Hans Breitman sang, "The headache of the morning seemed a portion of the bliss."

We were always a very musical Club, had a lot of good singers, and the songs were different from what are heard at dinners now. I¹ shall mention a few of the more prominent singers and their songs. Perhaps our finest was Jas. Robertson, of the National Bank—now manager of the London branch. He had a beautiful tenor voice, and his rendering of "Afton Water" was a great treat. He also sang "The Miller of Dee" and "Simon the Cellarer." Tom Usher had a large repertoire, but his favourites were "The Bonnie Wood o' Craigielea"

¹ T. S. A.

and "There was a Lad was born in Kyle." His brother Andrew always sang songs with a good chorus, such as "The Farmer's Boy," "John Peel," etc. Robert Chambers "My Heather Hills," "Tak yer Auld Cloak about ye." W. R. Clapperton was a little more sentimental; he had a beautiful voice, and gave us "Rock me to Sleep, Mother," "Fare thee well, my trim built Wherry," "Randall was a Bonny Lad when he ga'ed awa," the latter a fine ballad by the late Dr. Robert Chambers. Andrew Usher once asked him to sing his comic song, "Rock me to Sleep." It was too bad; I suppose Usher thought that the wonderful pathos which Clapperton threw into it was out of place at our meetings. The result was that we did not get "Rock me to Sleep" for a long time again. William Lees sang Hood's song of "Lieutenant Luff," "This day a Stag must die," etc.; but his best was "The Wind is blowing, fair Lady," which had a charming air and chorus. John Graham, "The Lass of Richmond Hill." Robert Paterson, the City Assessor, sang "Caller-Ou" splendidly. Dr. Sidey again gave us some of his own songs, such as "The Irish Schoolmaster," a great favourite, and "The Port of Leith." His example was followed by others, J. T. Jamieson giving us his "Oro" and "Ridiculous J. T. Jamieson." I¹ must confess that I also inflicted some songs of my own composition upon the meetings, "The Ancient

¹ T. S. A.

Golfer," "The Auld Cleek," and "The Hundred Tumblers." I have kept the best to the last, viz. our honorary member, Jos. Geoghegan, who was well known as a teacher of singing and conductor of the Old Greyfriars' choir. He had a most charming voice, at once so clear and true and melodious, and, like many good singers, he had only a few songs, of which the best were "Oft in the Stilly Night," "Molly Bawn," and "The Minstrel Boy." We never tired listening to these. We started a glee club, which gave us a great deal of amusement and added somewhat to the attractions of our dinners. When Geoghegan became one of us (he was made an honorary member) he was of great use in licking us into shape, and in taking the alto part of the glees. The favourite glees with the Club were—"On a Bank two Roses fair," "The Jolly Tinkers," "Willie brewed a Peck o' Maut," "Spring's Delights," "Mein Herr van Dunk," and the "Hardy Norseman," but we sang a great many others.

I¹ wrote a kind of parody on "The German Fatherland," the words of which here follow. We tried it as a glee on one occasion, but it was generally felt that the old words were better, and we went back to them.

¹ T. S. A.

THE KING OF DRINKS.

T. S. AITCHISON.

Tell me the King of Drinks to cheer,
Awarded us poor mortals here;
Say, comes it from the fair Bordeaux,
A vintage wine of famed château?

Away, away, away, away,
There is a greater Drink, I say.

Tell me the King of Drinks to cheer,
Beloved by all both far and near;
Say, is it Port from fruity vine,
Or can it be bright Spanish wine?

Away, away, etc.

Tell me the King of Drinks to cheer,—
'Tis surely found in England here,
Where foaming Ales supremely reign,
A worthy Drink for gods to drain.

Away, away, etc.

Tell you the King of Drinks to cheer!
Need Scotchmen dread the English Beer,
Or wine from France, or yet from Spain,
Whilst old Glenlivet they can drain?

The Barley Bree, the Barley Bree,
The King of all good Drinks shall be.

This is the King of Drinks to cheer;
'Tis known to fame both far and near:
Of man it warms the heart and soul,
Drowns care within its flowing bowl.

The Barley Bree, etc.

This is the King of Drinks to cheer,
A Drink to every Scotchman dear ;
And hearts unbend with joy unfeigned,
Where'er the glorious nectar's drained.
The Barley Bree, the Barley Bree,
The King of all good Drinks shall be.

We did not, however, depend on music entirely. Among our members were several who could entertain us in other ways. Chambers as a knife-grinder was inimitable. He would take a thinnish table knife with which, by means of some clever manipulation, he produced what seemed the natural motion and noise of the grindstone, keeping time with his foot in such a way that you could imagine you saw and heard the wheel going round, while in his capacity of grinder he proceeded to give us the supposed clash of the country side at the farm town he visited, made up of sly allusions to the foibles of the members or guests present, or to their recent experiences, either real or imaginary. This was given with true humour, sometimes pretty broad, but never offensive, and with considerable art he often broke off and stopped his supposed wheel to look at the knife, just as he had suggested to us that something irresistibly comic was going to happen. One of our members, the late John Morrison of the National Bank, was very successful in the way of imitating the more prominent public speakers of the day, hitting off their stock phrases



and tricks of attitude and voice. Dr. Guthrie was a favourite subject, and his manner of addressing an audience was treated in a very humorous, but not irreverent way. Poor Morrison, who was generally known as the Doctor, was not long with us. Some years after his death, his brother Arthur, who was in the Scottish Provident Institution, joined the Club and was a general favourite. He was no great golfer, and did nothing special in the way of singing, but he was possessed of a vein of quiet humour which he used with great effect. One or two amusing encounters took place between him and the late Bailie Rowatt. Rowatt was a very good fellow, very straight, very kindly, but a man who would stand no nonsense. It fell to Morrison on one occasion to propose the toast of the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of the City of Edinburgh, coupled with Rowatt's name, and, with a view to getting a rise out of the Bailie, he proposed the toast in such a way that Rowatt fell into the trap, lost his temper, and afforded considerable amusement to the Philistines around him, who were so lost to all sense of decorum, that they could actually laugh even at a Bailie. I¹ don't remember whether it was at the very next dinner, but certainly it was not long after, that Bailie Rowatt was again present. This time, however, when Morrison stood up

¹ T. S. A.

to propose the same toast he rather overdid his part, as may be imagined when I give the beginning of his speech, which ran something like this: "Mr. Captain and gentlemen, I need not tell you with what disgust I approach the task which has been devolved upon me, but as the dog returns to——" I suppose I need say no more. I thought it very bad form, and wondered what Rowatt would do. I fancy a good many men in his position would have resented it, and if he had taken offence and refused to acknowledge the toast, I don't see how the Captain could have refused to do penance, and then we should all have been angry with Morrison, but the Bailie behaved very well; there had been nothing wrong with the rest of the speech, and so, ignoring the beginning, he merely thanked us very briefly for the compliment done to the body of which he was a member, and sat down.

I have referred to the fact of Croall's succeeding in getting the better of Miller, and the latter's protest, "I kent your faither forty years syne," etc. It was a little unfortunate that this should have occurred on that particular evening, for in its course Dr. Findlater of W. & R. Chambers rose to propose the toast of "The Green," a toast which for some time past had been omitted, for the very good reason that no one felt inclined to say a good word about it. Dr. Findlater—Dr. Furniture as the caddies used to call him—was

sometimes compared to the Knight of La Mancha; he had the same rigid, bony figure, the same old-world kind of way of expressing himself, and the same love for the past: he was a man of great erudition. It was quite an exceptional thing his getting up to speak, and when he announced his toast there was a general feeling of curious expectation. His beginning was certainly startling: "Mr. Chairman, many years ago a great Greek philosopher called Plato"—here, alas, he paused for a moment, and a stage whisper was heard, "Miller kent his faither forty years syne." A general burst of laughter ensued, the combination of Miller and Plato was irresistible. Dr. Findlater looked about him for a moment with a dignified smile, but there was no signs of returning gravity, and so he sat down. There was no more heard about "The Green" that night. I used to wonder afterwards what possible connection Plato could have had with Bruntsfield Links, but I did not venture to ask Dr. Findlater.

In the matter of toasts, however, I¹ think the most amusing episode which ever occurred was in connection with one in which I was one of the principal actors. A. S. had at one time been a regular attender at our meetings. He played a good game; in fact, won the gold medal one year, but for some time prior to the occurrence I speak of we had seen very little of him.

¹ T. S. A.

At one of the quarterly meetings he unexpectedly made his appearance. In addition to the prize balls, W. P. Nimmo, the publisher, had presented a prize for competition in the shape of a set of Hugh Miller's works on this occasion, and of this it proved, when the cards were handed in, that S. was the winner. He was a very good fellow, one with whom in the interests of fun and amusement almost any liberties could be taken, and here I may say parenthetically, that it was an understood thing that our speeches on those occasions were never to be taken seriously. That being so, the late C. N. Cowper and I laid our heads together and made out a very fanciful calculation as to the amount of whisky toddy he must have consumed while acting in the interests of the Club. No doubt as an ordinary member of council—as secretary, treasurer, captain, and gold medal holder—he must have sat a good many years in the council, and, as mentioned before, in the words of Dr. Sidey's song, "To the members of council the drink is quite free." By assuming that he had been a member of council for practically all the many years he had been a member of the Club, that council meetings were held once a week, and that on a moderate estimate every two members accounted for at least one bottle of whisky, we arrived at a perfectly staggering total. This was put down on paper in a very business-like way, and armed with it I¹ rose to propose S.'s

¹ T. S. A.

health as winner of the prize and to hand it over to him. Needless to say, I¹ drew a very flattering portrait of him, and spoke of the delight with which we saw him once more among us, but what I dwelt on chiefly was the untiring zeal he had so long shown for the welfare of the Club and the amount of time he had spent in its service. I held him up as an example to the younger members of the Club—no doubt when I got this length he must have been in fear and trembling, wondering what was coming,—and pointed out that in his case the truth of the adage “Virtue is its own reward” was fully shown, I produced my calculation, and to the delight of my audience I told of the number of hogsheads of whisky he had consumed, and showed that the benefits he had received in the way of “free drinks” far more than exceeded his original entry-money and yearly subscriptions put together, so that he had had all his fun for nothing. The toast was drunk with tremendous enthusiasm, and then he rose to make his reply, which was famous. After thanking the members present for the compliment, he said, “I do not know where Tom Aitchison got his figures, but this I am quite sure of, that if I had drunk as much of his beer as he says I have done of whisky, I would not be here to tell the tale.” I do not require to say that he scored, and that his retort

¹ T. S. A.

personal was received with shouts of laughter. The thing was in a manner aggravated by a circumstance I was quite unaware of at the time, S.'s own particular parson happened to be his guest that evening.

When M. Dooley heard that Dr. Nansen had been paying great attention to Fauna and Flora while in the Arctic regions, in the belief that these two were well-known young ladies of these parts, he expressed a hope that the doctor might be able to make it all right with Mrs. Nansen. In the same way I hope that S. was able to clear himself to his parson's satisfaction from the equally unfounded aspersions thrown so recklessly on his character.

J. W. Young had a sermon which always took very well. It had for its text, "And Jehoram cried out," and on this he would dilate with so much force that, what between the vociferous style of delivery and the applause, there was often a crowd gathered around the club-house door, and on one occasion two policemen were discovered meditating a forcible entrance in the belief that some disturbance was going on which required their interference.

Latterly, for several years Edmonston, the publisher, commonly known as "the colonel" from his connection with the volunteers, was a regular attender at our dinners. He had a most amusing example of a Highland minister's prayer, in which he gave thanks on

behalf of himself and his people in this, that they did not live in the south, where the sun was like a fiery furnace and burnt everything up; or in the far north, where there was nothing but ice and snow; or in those islands where the cyclones and tornadoes were always plowing; but lived in the very fairest of countries, and in this peaceable and great part of it under the shadow of the great Pen Neevis, where the grass is always green, where the sun is always shining, and where the wind plows just like a zephyr—. Just arrived at this point he managed quite clearly to indicate that a frightful storm began, and the main window of the church being blown in, the service was brought to a very speedy end. The further advantages enjoyed by his congregation were left unnoticed.

We were not strong in story-telling pure and simple. The only *raconteur* we could boast of worth listening to was Paxton. He was a great favourite. He was so jolly and had so much go about him, and then he had this prime quality in a story-teller—he told his stories as though he enjoyed them. His hearty laughter was irresistibly infectious. I¹ think his best was the one in which he narrated or began to narrate, for we never heard the end of it,—it was like Corporal Trim's story of the King of Bohemia and his Seven Castles,—the circumstances connected with the death of Lachy M'Leish. It was something like this

¹ G. L.

(scene, Campbeltown; enter two fishermen greeting):—
“Man, this is a sair business about puir Lachy M’Leish.” “What about Lachy?” “Man, hae ye no heard tell—he’s drooned.” “Ay, ay, do you tell me so; that is a great peety, and how wass he drooned?” “Well, you see it was plowing very hard; he was in ta pow of ta boat, and says he to me, ‘Tonal,’ says he, ‘will you lend me ta loan of your knife.’” Here an inimitable bit of by-play occurred, the narrator first carelessly putting his hand into one pocket, then more anxiously into first one then another, meanwhile ejaculating, “He was a good man; puir Lachy, we will all miss him fery much,” finally having with ever-increasing eagerness explored all his pockets for the second time without success, “Pe tamned to him, he’s awa wi’ ma new knife.”

Paxton was a good golfer as well as a good storyteller. He used his head as well as his hands, and if not so brilliant in execution as some of the younger men he made very few mistakes, and was a very safe guide to follow on the green, as illustrated by Dr. Aitken in the following lines, which were read for the first time at one of the dinners held at Musselburgh:—

PLAY ON PAXTON.

DR. AITKEN.

I went the game o' gowf to play
Upon the links o' Gullane,
Where aft I've spent a simmer day
Wi' flowers my wallet fillin'.

I didna ken the course ava,
But had a skilly caddie;
And aye before I drove a ba'
I communed wi' the laddie.

"Now, laddie, tell me what's to do,
Show me the line o' action."
"D'ye see yon stout wee man in blue?
Weel play on him—yon's Paxton."

At every stroke it was the same,
He never budged a fraction;
When asked what was the proper game,
He answered, "Play on Paxton."

Paxton's a gowfer to the core;
And on the links of Gullane,
To play the game wi' him before
Tak's very little schoolin'.

Ye never need to be in doubt
Nor useless questions axin';
For the shortest and the safest route
Is just to "Play on Paxton."

At the time we first went down to Musselburgh there was an amusing incident in which Paxton figured. The boxes for holding clubs were balloted for, and he got a very good one. On proceeding to take possession of it he found it had been appropriated by another member, who happened just then to have rather an exaggerated idea of his own importance. Paxton left the matter to be dealt with by the clubmaster. On his pointing out to the offending member the mistake he had made, the reply was, "There are plenty more boxes; tell Mr. Paxton to take another one, I'm going to keep this." This was hardly good enough, and the clubmaster was instructed to insist upon the box being given up. Shortly thereafter the two, Paxton and the other, happened to meet on the North Bridge, when the latter began, "What's all this row you're making about a box down at Musselburgh?" "I'm not making any row, but that's the box that's been allotted to me, and I'm not entitled to take any other. You know, Mr. —, I only want to get what's my own; you must mind it's a very serious thing taking what's not your own. If you look behind you you'll see a place specially built for people who take what's not their own." The other innocently turned round to see what was behind him, and saw—the Calton Gaol. Paxton made off without waiting to hear more. The next time he was at Musselburgh he found that the box was ready for him.

J. T. Jamieson was one of the most amusing in our company, but it was very difficult to persuade him to get on his legs to speak. He preferred to give his good things to those in his immediate neighbourhood. The effect of his songs or remarks was usually heightened by the extraordinary gravity—I might say, solemnity—with which he delivered them. His song—at least partly his, for it was mainly written by the late John Robertson, another of our members—"Oro," the words of which follow, was given with a depth of feeling suitable to the "Land of the Leal," with the result that most of us were sore with laughter before it was finished:—

ORO.

JOHN ROBERTSON.

I once fell in love with a girl,
As many have done before O!
The one I sing of now was white,
And not a Blackamoor O!
She used to live with her old dad,
Far out upon the moor O!
And there at eve I used to go
For seventeen years and more O!
A doodle du, a doodle dum,
A doodle doodle-du-dum.

I used to whistle upon her,
And she'd come to the door O!
And then with arm around her waist
I'd walk upon the moor O!
And then such soft and honeyed words
Into her ear I'd pour O!
And swear that I but lived for her
While she lived on the moor O!
A doodle du, etc.

This sort of thing went on so long
It began to be a bore O!
So I thought I'd up and face her dad,
And along the road I tore O!
My tale of love I then began,
The words I did outpour O!
But the old buffer kickèd me
To the outside of the door O!
A doodle du, etc.

I placed my hand, not on my heart!
That wasn't the place that was sore O!!
Says I, My faith, you've cured my love!!!
I'll come back here no more O!!!!
My steps I sadly did retrace,
My head bowed down in sorrow;
I filled my pipe and had a smoke,
And was better on the morrow.
A doodle du, a doodle dum,
A doodle doodle-du-dum.

A very good story was told by Jamieson of a tremendous blow to his vanity which he had once received. He was then the owner of a Scotch terrier, of which he was particularly proud, and at the same time he had no small opinion of his own personal attractions. This latter I happen to know through being about this time the recipient of his confidence in a very delicate matter. What that confidence was, worlds would not induce me to reveal, but without infringing it, I think, in the least degree, I¹ may say that at the time he was very much in want of something, and sought to make his wants known through the *Scotsman*—foot of first column, on page one, was the part of the paper in which his notice appeared. For the particular purpose he had in view, but which, as I have said before, nothing would induce me to reveal, it was essential that he should say something about his personal appearance, and I remember among other interesting particulars he described his hair as being of the colour of the setting sun, a description quite true to nature at the time, if I remember aright. The purpose he had in view, I am sorry to say, he failed to effect, but that is neither here nor there. This rather lengthy digression is merely to prove the cruel violence of the shock to his feelings which, with his poetic temperament, he must then have sustained.

¹ G. L.

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Suppose, then, the time to be Saturday afternoon, the weather fine, and J. T. J., dressed for a stroll, is admiring the gambols of his dog in front of him, when enter on the scene two butchers' boys.

Butcher boy No. 1: "Hey, see Jamieson's ugly dowg."

Butcher boy No. 2: "That's no' ugly Jamieson's dowg."

Collapse of Jamieson.

CHAPTER VII

Departure from Bruntsfield — "Auld Bruntsfield Green" — Old Stein's Exploit—"The Leaving of the Green."

It now only remains to tell of the Club's final departure from Bruntsfield, and establishment at Musselburgh. This was not done all at once, in fact there were three distinct stages in the process. I have mentioned that in 1866 it was the custom of a good many of our members to rent a box from John Gourlay, the lessee of the Grand Stand, but with this arrangement there was growing dissatisfaction. The Honourable Company had recently built a clubhouse at the west end of the green, the obvious convenience of which made us feel our need of something of the same kind more than we had previously done, but the difficulty in our way was the usual one, lack of funds. For a club of seventy members—to which number our membership had by this time been increased—to maintain two clubhouses, for none of us then thought of giving up Bruntsfield, would mean such a very considerable rise in the rate of our subscription that we

were afraid to face it. It was an easy thing to get what was wanted by increasing our membership, but to this most of us were equally averse. In the end, however, we adopted this plan, an opportunity having presented itself of achieving the object in view at a more moderate cost than at first seemed possible. An Episcopal Chapel, with all its furnishings, in Millhill, Musselburgh, was for sale. It was close to the starting-point on the links. Should we raise our membership to a hundred and buy it, or not? That was the subject discussed at a very full meeting of the Club held in the early winter of 1871. Some of us thought that if a change was to be made, we should face the matter boldly and build a new house on the green beside that one of which I have just spoken, but this was generally thought too ambitious, and the proposal to buy the chapel was accordingly adopted. Of course a good deal had to be done in the way of fitting it up. A clubmaster's house and suitable lavatories were added, but everything was ready by the spring of next year when we took possession of it.

That was stage No. 1. Stage No. 2 consisted of the adoption of a motion by Mr. Andrew Usher, that in future the annual competition for the Gold Medal should be held at Musselburgh in place of Bruntsfield. This was agreed to without much opposition, but a number of members felt it was breaking with old traditions in a sad way.

The following lines, penned by Mr. Aitchison at the time, evidently indicate a foreboding that at no distant day play on Bruntsfield Links would be a thing of the past :—

AULD BRUNTSFIELD GREEN.

T. S. AITCHISON.

Come, Golfers, a' lament wi' me,
Wi' saut tears tricklin' frae your e'e,
An auld friend we've been wont to see
 Sae fresh and fair,
Is fadin' fast, and sune will be
 Ne'er heard o' mair.

Tho' monie centuries she's seen,
She still is clad in brightest green,
And willin' aye to be your frien'
 Tho' worrit sair;
And yet she's no what she has been,
 Beyond compare.

Time was when she, far frae the toun,
Garred city folks to flock aroun'
Her bonnie sward, to them a boon,
 They felt her charm;
She ever seemed their joys to croon
 Wi' welcome warm.

And then it was her pride to see,
Roamin' upon her links sae free,
Golfers wi' cunnin' hand and e'e,
 Enjoy their game,
As round they gaed wi' mickle glee,
 To win their fame.

Oft has it been her happy lot
To see the contest manly fought,
And watch the game played, sharp and hot,
 Frae morn till nicht;
And monie champions low down brought
 In unco plicht.

Alas! as years flee by she's found
On every side hemmed in around,
And sune we'll hear nae mair the sound
 O' "fore" ring clear;
Nor tread the loved and hallowed ground,
 To Golfers dear.

But still we'll toast ye, Bruntsfield Green,
And think o' happier days ye've seen,
When o' the Links ye were the Queen,
 And ruled the speil,
Surrounded by your sons sae keen,
 Wha lo'ed ye weel.

And when you're gane, we'll often feel
Fond memories around us steal,
And once again the past reveal
 And joys recall,
But aiblins you'll be spared us still,
 SO PRAY WE ALL.

How long it was, whether two or three years after this, that play on Bruntsfield Links was finally given up, I cannot at this lapse of time remember; but there is no doubt that it was quite right that play there should cease. By this time traffic on the Links had increased very much; in fact, golfing had become dangerous, and the Town Council, in the interests of the general public, felt that it was time to intervene. Circumstances had changed indeed since the days of old Stein, when golfers thought that the Links existed merely for their benefit. He flourished rather before the days I write of; but the exploit I¹ am going to relate kept his memory green for many a long day among the members of the different golf clubs who played there.

One day it pleased the Colonel in command of the Gordon Highlanders, then at the Castle, to have them paraded on the Links. It was a startling innovation, and Stein bitterly resented it. There they stood, massed right in front of him, as he teed his ball for the last hole; but he did not hesitate for a moment, and after crying "fore," drove right into them. Fortunately he fozzled his shot, so that, although the ball got in among them, no one was hurt. One of the soldiers picked it up, and threw it clear of the ground they occupied. This, to Stein, was an unpardonable offence, and, with his blood boiling, he rushed upon

¹ T. S. A.

the culprit, and broke his club across his shoulder. There was a lot of trouble after this in preventing his arrest, for the difficulty was, he would not apologise; they had no business to be there he argued, and probably he was right. As it was, he scored a victory, in its way as complete as Dargai, for never again did the Gordons trespass on our preserves.

To return, however, to the days when it began to be mooted that it was time that golfing on Bruntsfield Links should be put a stop to, a suggestion was then made that, as a substitute for the existing course, another might be laid out in the Queen's Park; and a committee was appointed, consisting of William Lees, John Cunningham, and two others, to have the eligibility of the ground there tested, and to report. They obtained permission to do this from Mr. Mathieson, of Her Majesty's Board of Works, and got Peter M'Ewan to lay out holes at the head of the valley, not far from Samson's Ribs, and proceeded to play over the newly laid out course. They were, however, interrupted, I¹ think, by Mr. Horne, advocate, who challenged their right to play golf there, and threatened them with proceedings. With Mr. Mathieson's authority they thought they could afford to laugh at his threats; but all got a summons to appear before the Sheriff, who only let them off because they had had Mr. Mathieson's permission; but he warned them not to do it again,

¹ T. S. A.

as that gentleman had no power to grant any such authority. I may say that the ground was not found very suitable for that purpose.

About 1875 the Town Council tried to get power to put a stop to golfing upon the Links. The Clubs opposed the proposal with success; and ultimately the matter was compromised by the authorities agreeing to provide another green, upon which the golfers withdrew their opposition. This promise they fulfilled by the purchase of the Braids.

So far as the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club was concerned, the interest of its members in the dispute was very languid. An ever-increasing proportion of the better players had definitely abandoned Bruntsfield, and the feeling in favour of the movement of our headquarters to Musselburgh was ever growing stronger. To bring matters to a point, a meeting, very largely attended, was held at Bruntsfield one night, and the matter fully discussed. But for a feeling that it was really a case of bowing to the inevitable, I think we would have stuck by the old clubhouse. Saturday was the day that suited most of us best; and the struggle for existence on a Saturday at Musselburgh, when twenty to thirty balls might be seen on the teeing ground at the starting-point at once, was not alluring. With all its discomforts and poor accommodation we were fond of our little house at Bruntsfield, while the

green, bad as it was, was never crowded. Our debate, however, ended as it was bound to end, in our recognising the fact that at no distant date we should have no choice in the matter, and that it would be better to yield gracefully at once; and this was accordingly done. This was the third and final stage in our change from Bruntsfield to Musselburgh.

The giving up of our old clubhouse at Bruntsfield proved the deathblow, to a great extent, of the unique and racy social life of the Club. There had been a great influx of new members, many of them, of course, strangers; and it was difficult to keep up to the old traditional form when the jokes and repartees were only understood by half the company. Gradually the older members began to feel that they were out of it, and that it was in vain to try and reproduce the glorious evenings spent in the old clubhouse. The very spaciousness of the new one seemed to make the matter all the more hopeless. Alas! there was another and a sadder cause, which was the gradual thinning of our ranks, as one after another of the old members joined the great majority. I¹ think we may be pardoned if we seek to treasure the memory of these good old days, and that of the grand old golfers and genial spirits who were then the life and soul of the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club. That is the excuse for the appearance of the present volume.

¹ T. S. A.

The verses, which are appended by way of conclusion, were written by me at the time of the passing of Mr. Usher's motion that the gold medal should be played for at Musselburgh, but never saw the light of day until sent to Mr. Aitchison along with other matter now embodied in the foregoing, at the time that he applied to me for assistance.

AULD BRUNTSFIELD'S LAMENT.

G. LORIMER.

O Brother Links, and have ye heard
The news that's going round?
No more my sons intend to play
Upon the Bruntsfield ground.
No more on medal day they'll meet
In competition keen,
No more their cry of "fore" be heard
Upon the Bruntsfield Green.

It is a hundred years and more
Since first they came to me,
And sported o'er my bonny braes
And hollows fair to see.
No other links they thought of then,
For me their love so keen,
And blythe they lifted up their clubs
Upon the Bruntsfield Green.

The whin bush then, and bonny broom,
Upon my banks were found ;
The laverocks whistled cheerily
As they played out their round.
The springs ran sparkling down my sides
To pools that lay between,
The sunbeams glinting merrily
Upon the Bruntsfield Green.

The golfers then turned out to play
In coats of scarlet hue,
A liveried caddie bore the clubs
Of the captain of the crew.
They'd Spoons, long and short, of many a sort,
But nor Iron nor Mashy was seen,
The wooden club then was the only club
That was used upon Bruntsfield Green.

After the game, around the board,
In bumpers not a few,
They drank, "The King," "Confusion to France,"
Like leal men and true :
But not in the wines of Spain or France
They pledged these toasts, I ween,
Too light such stuff for the potent heads
Of men of Bruntsfield Green.

In ancient cupboard, locked with care,
The Treasurer held the key,
A stock of old Glenlivet was
Kept in safe custody.
And when the news of victory came,
Late, late they sat at e'en,
And royally they made it flow,
Those men of Bruntsfield Green.

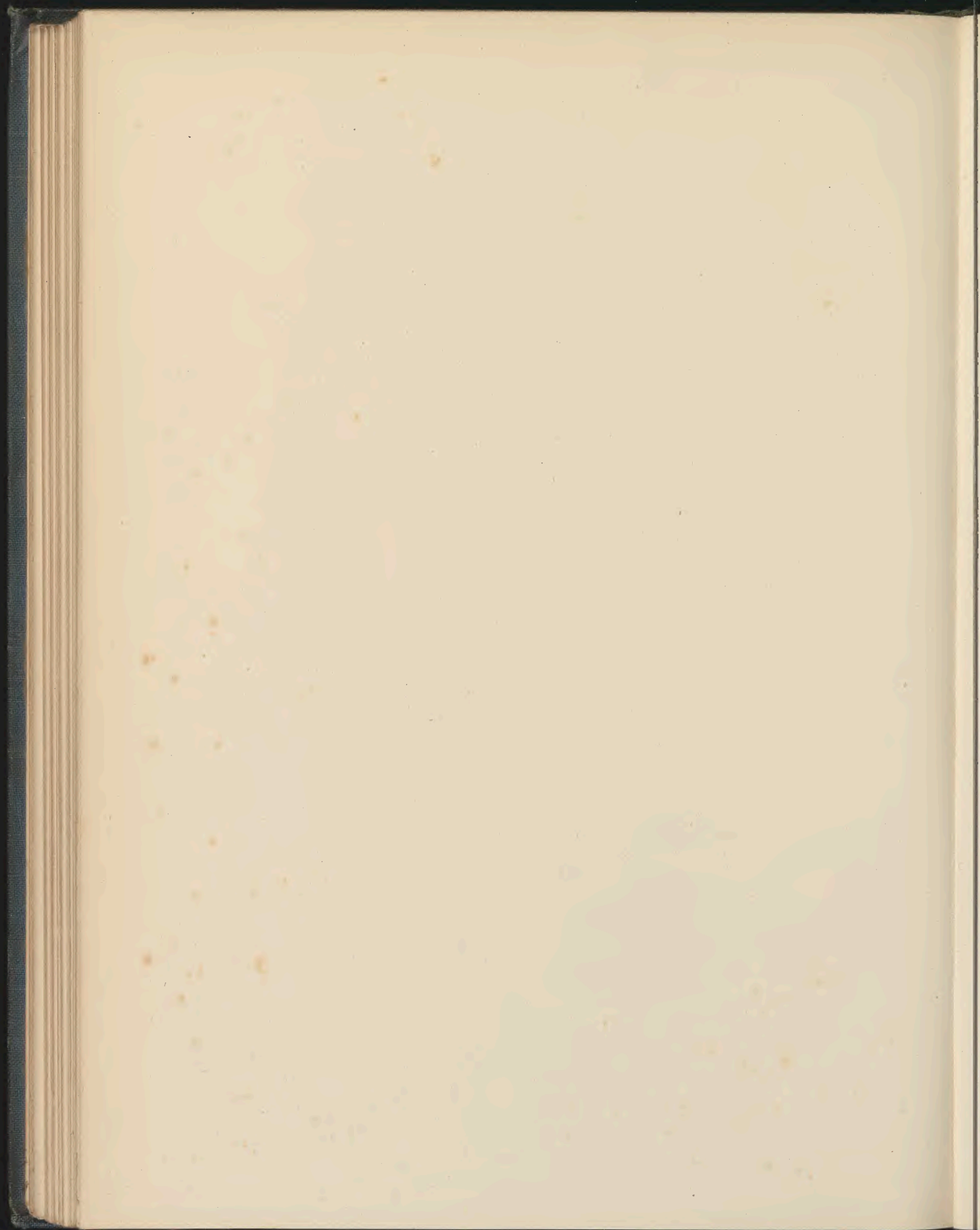
BRUNTSFIELD LINKS GOLF CLUB

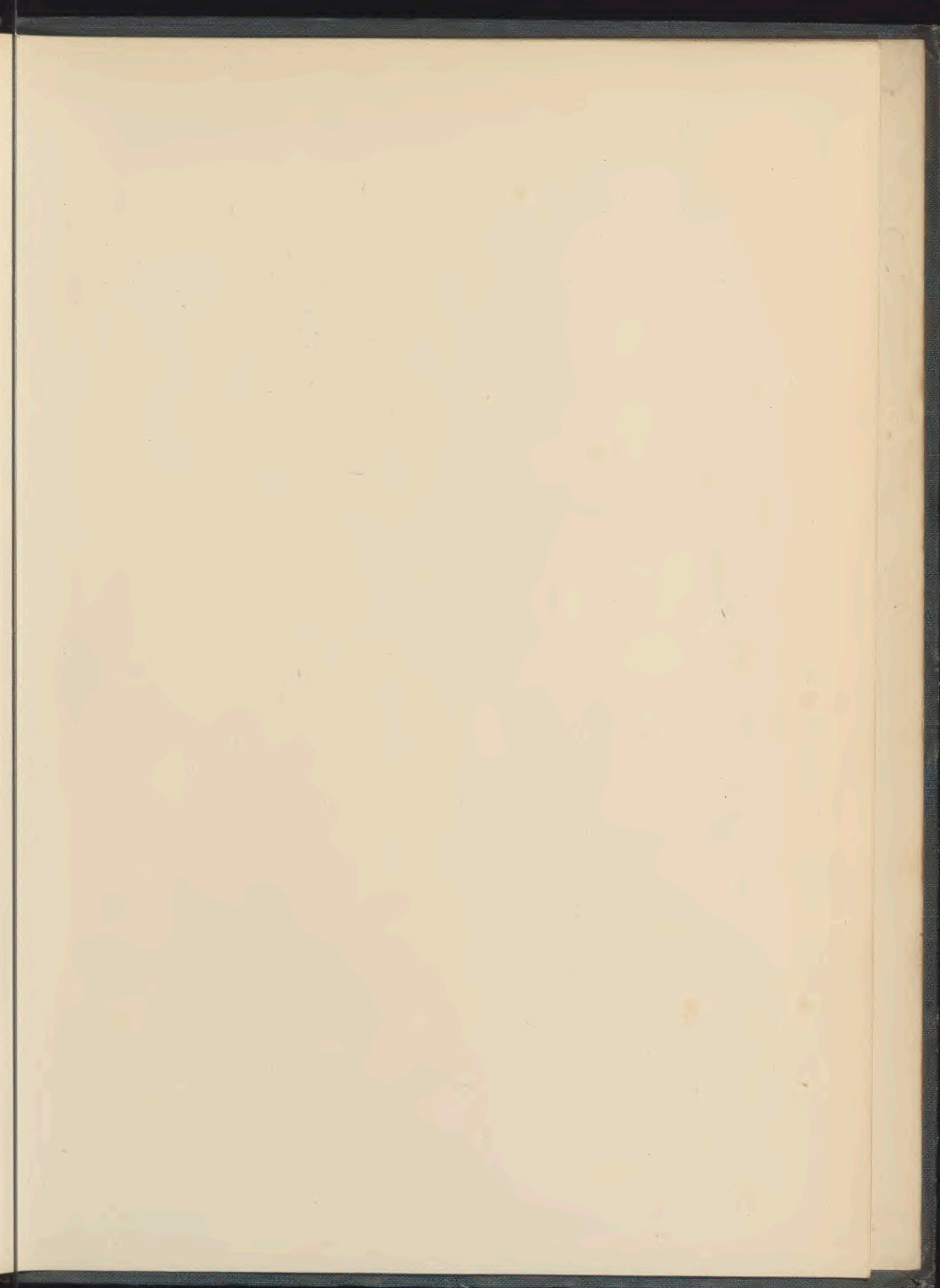
But now they say my day is past,
That, what with bairns and wives,
They dare not drive their balls so free
For fear of taking lives.

The grass, they say, is growing rank,
The lyes are seldom clean ;
I fear that they but speak the truth,
Alas ! for Bruntsfield Green !

And so, Farewell, my Golfers good !
But oh ! it's hard to say
I've served my turn, and now we part,—
Each dog has but his day.
I've just one prayer, Ne'er change your name,
'Twill show what once has been ;
A record that the king of games
Was played on Bruntsfield Green.

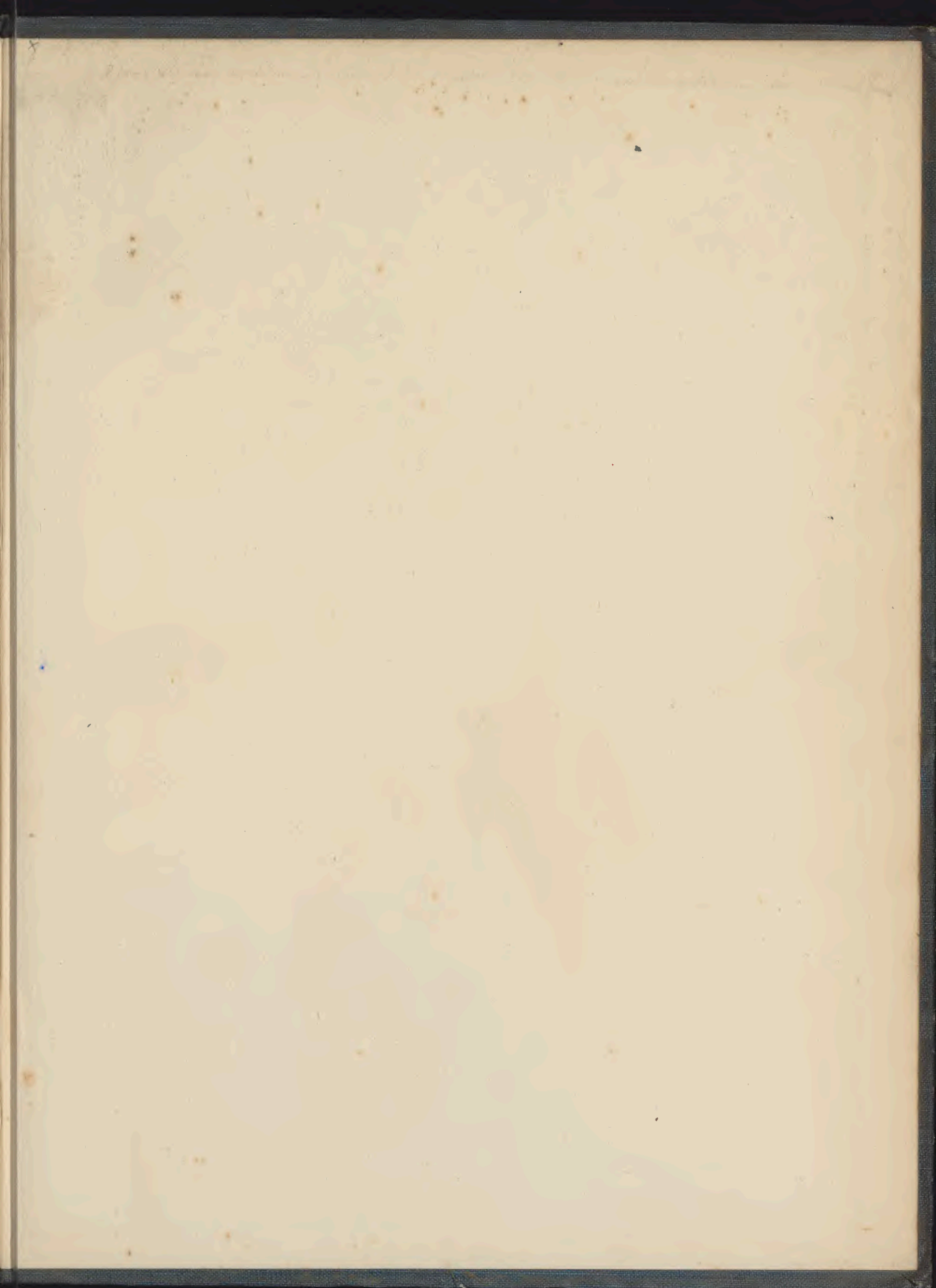


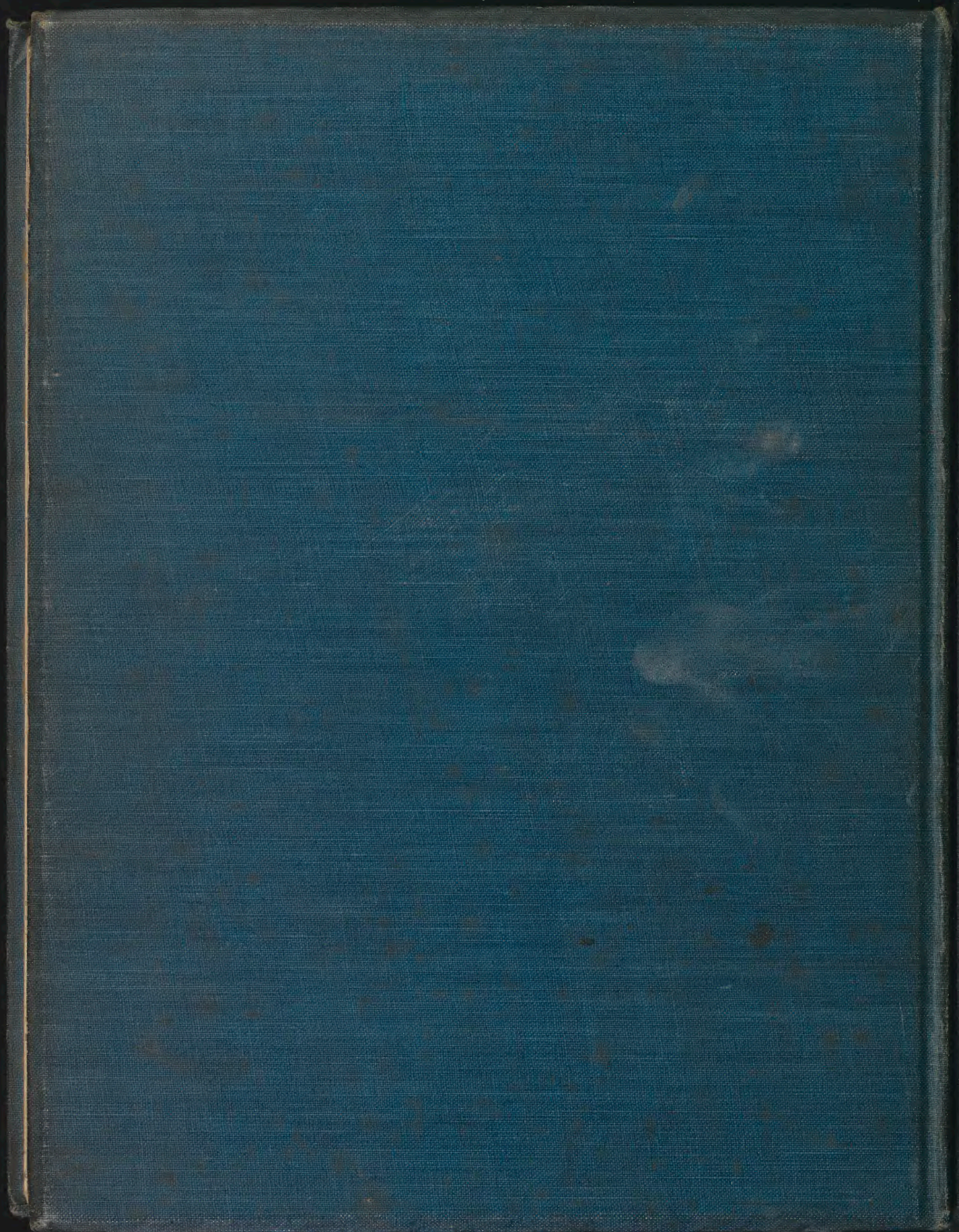


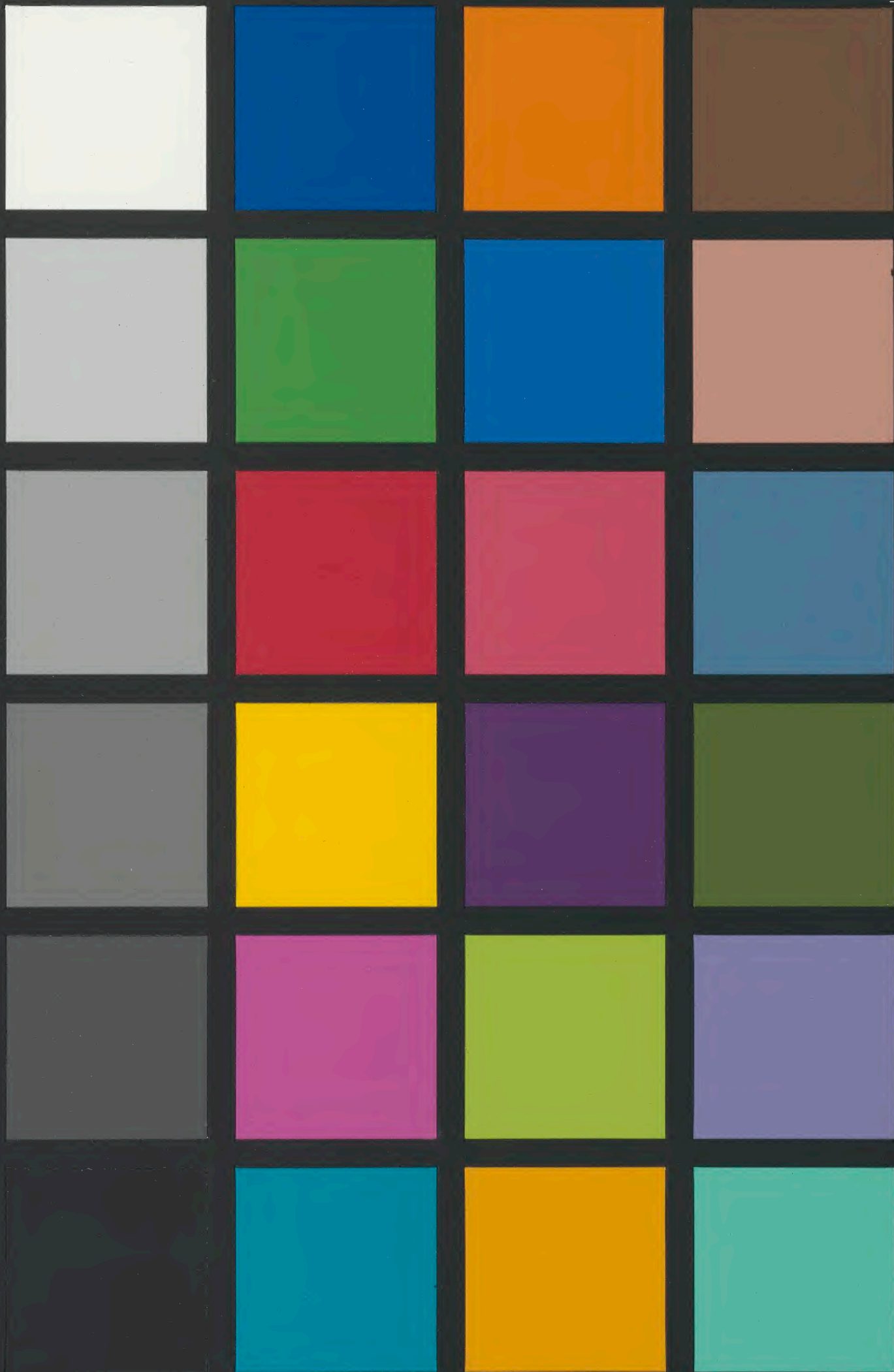


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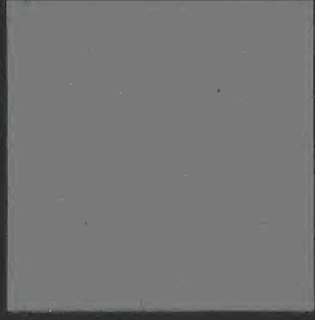
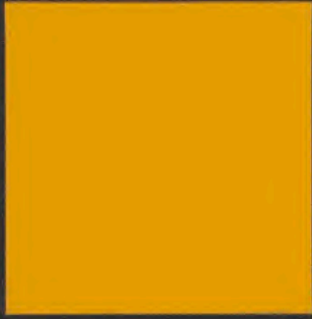






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