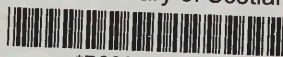


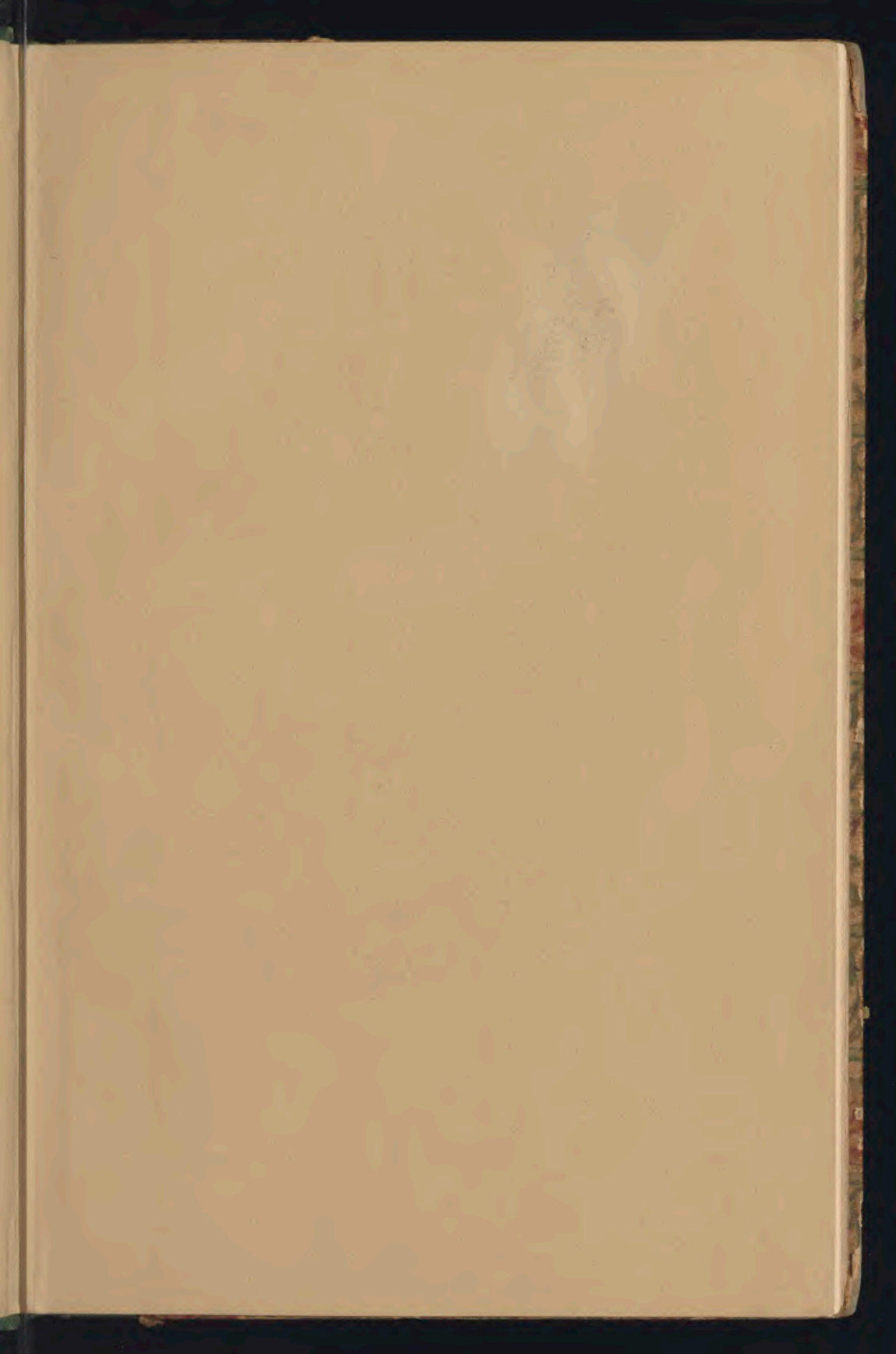


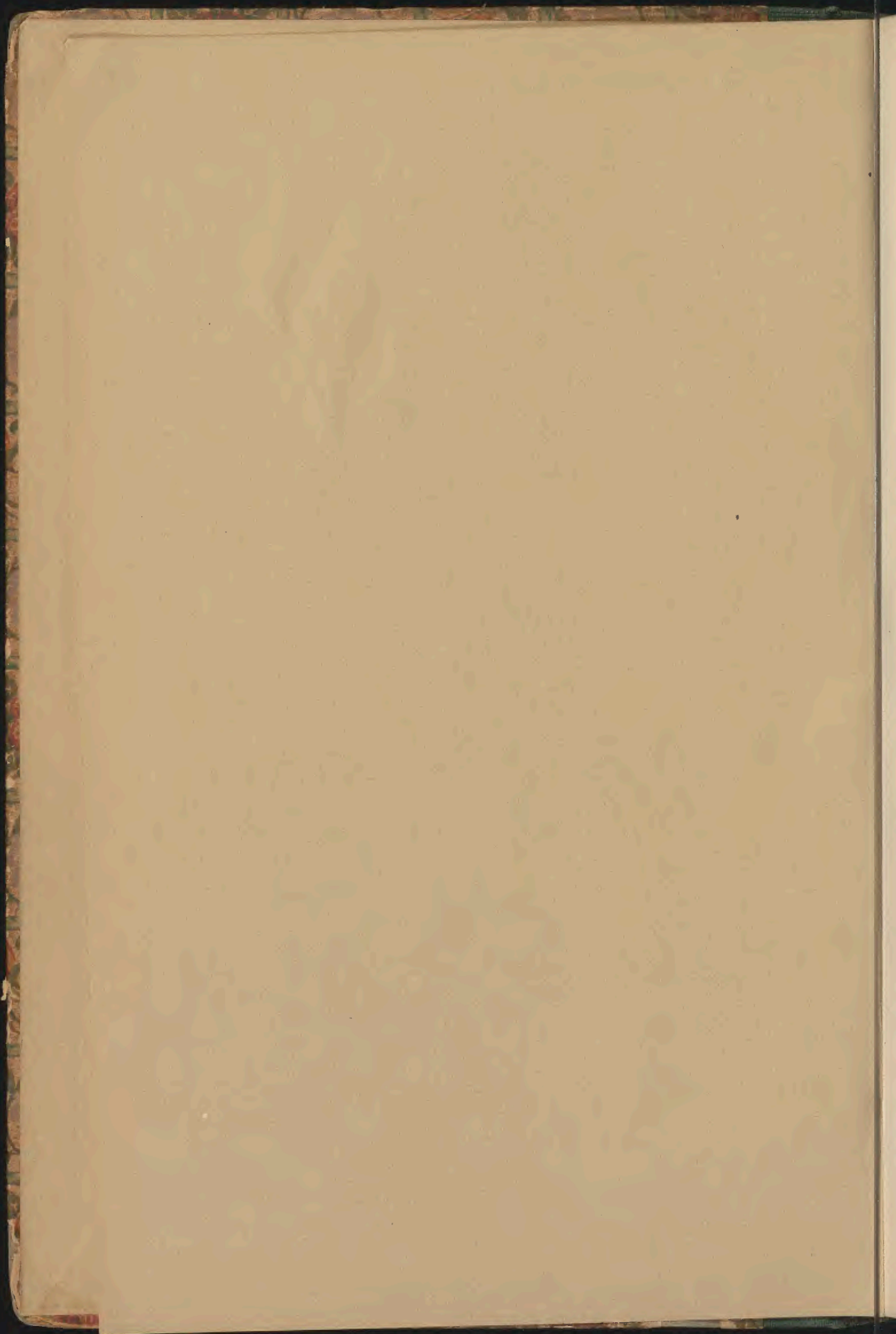
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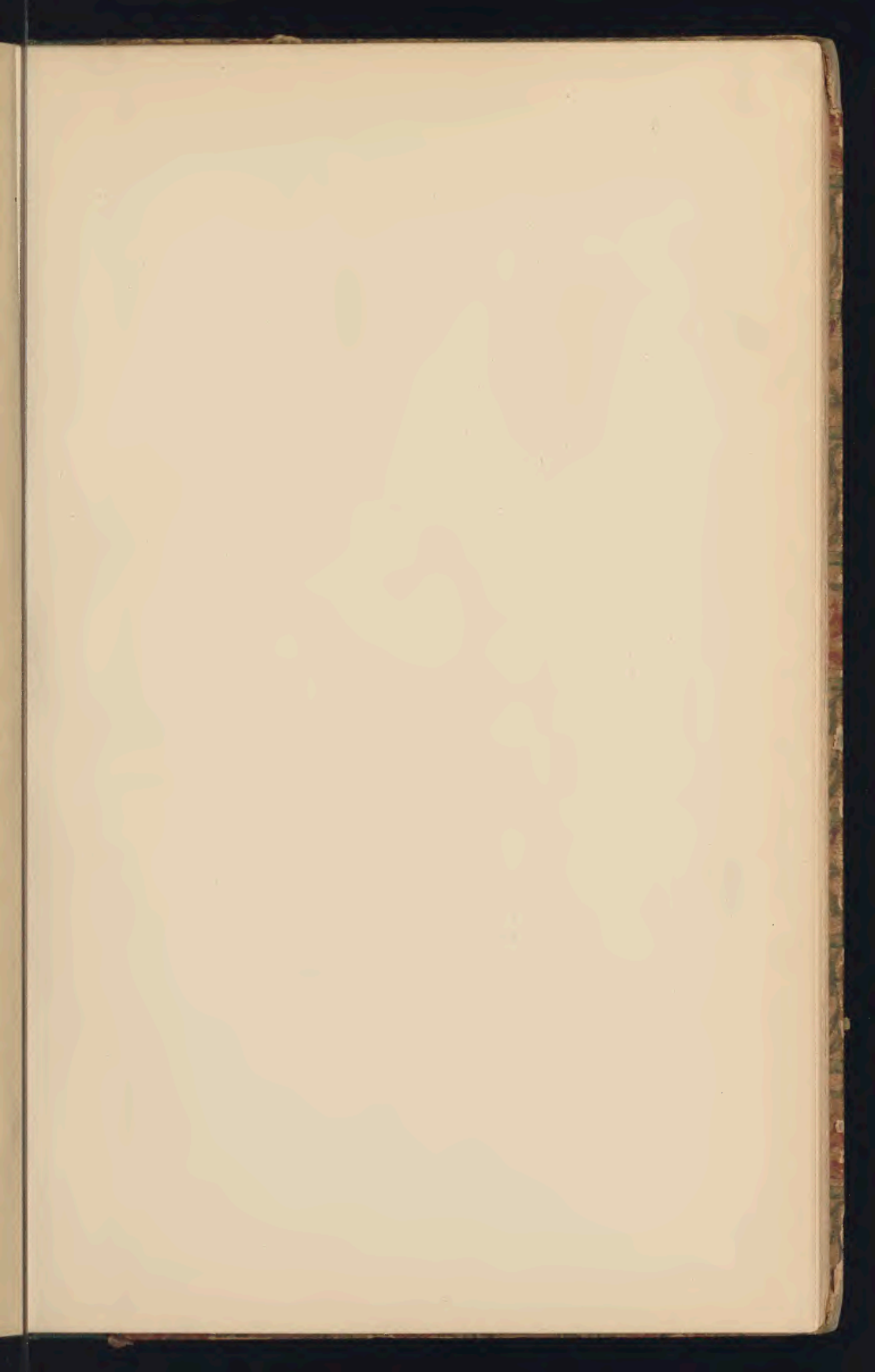
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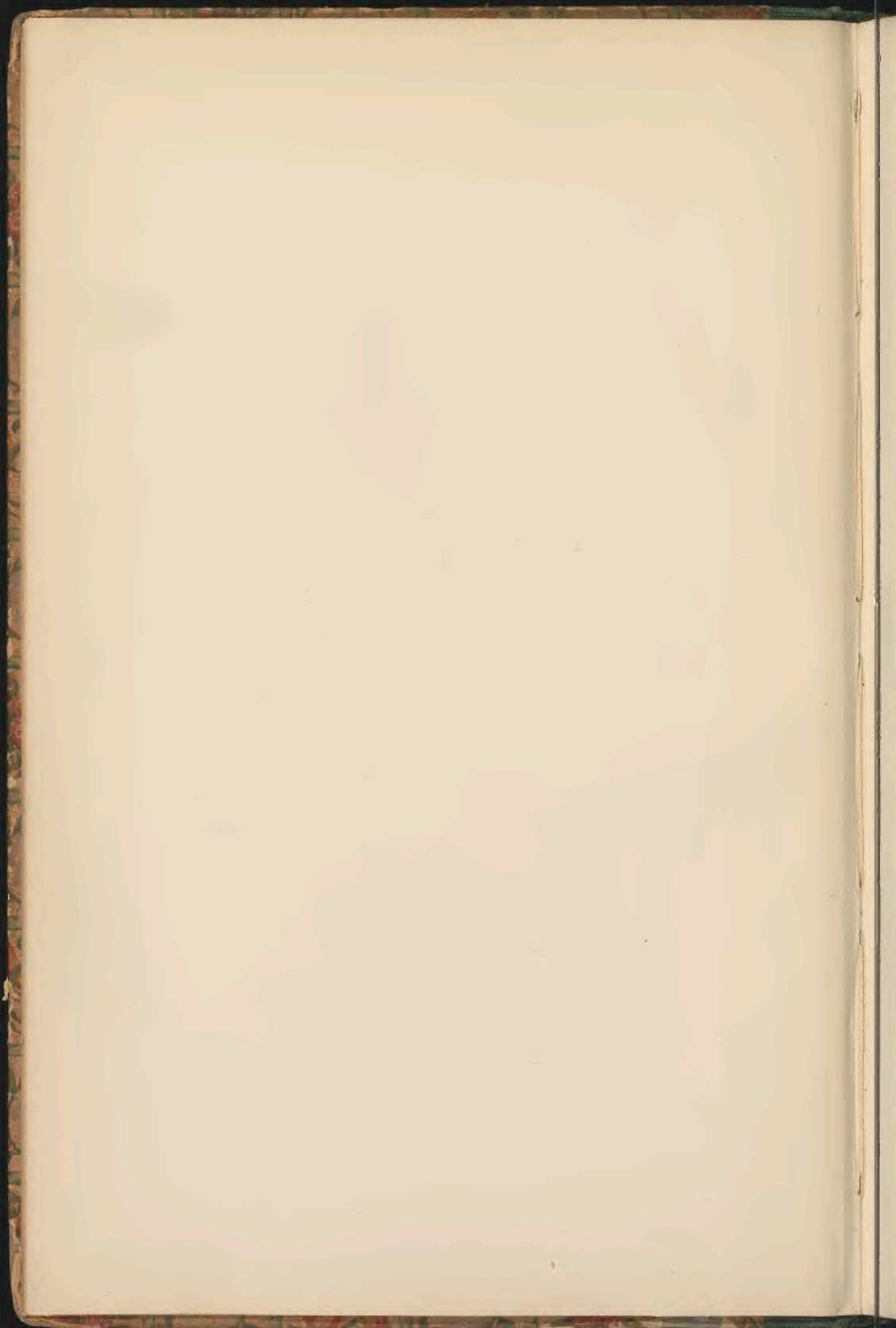


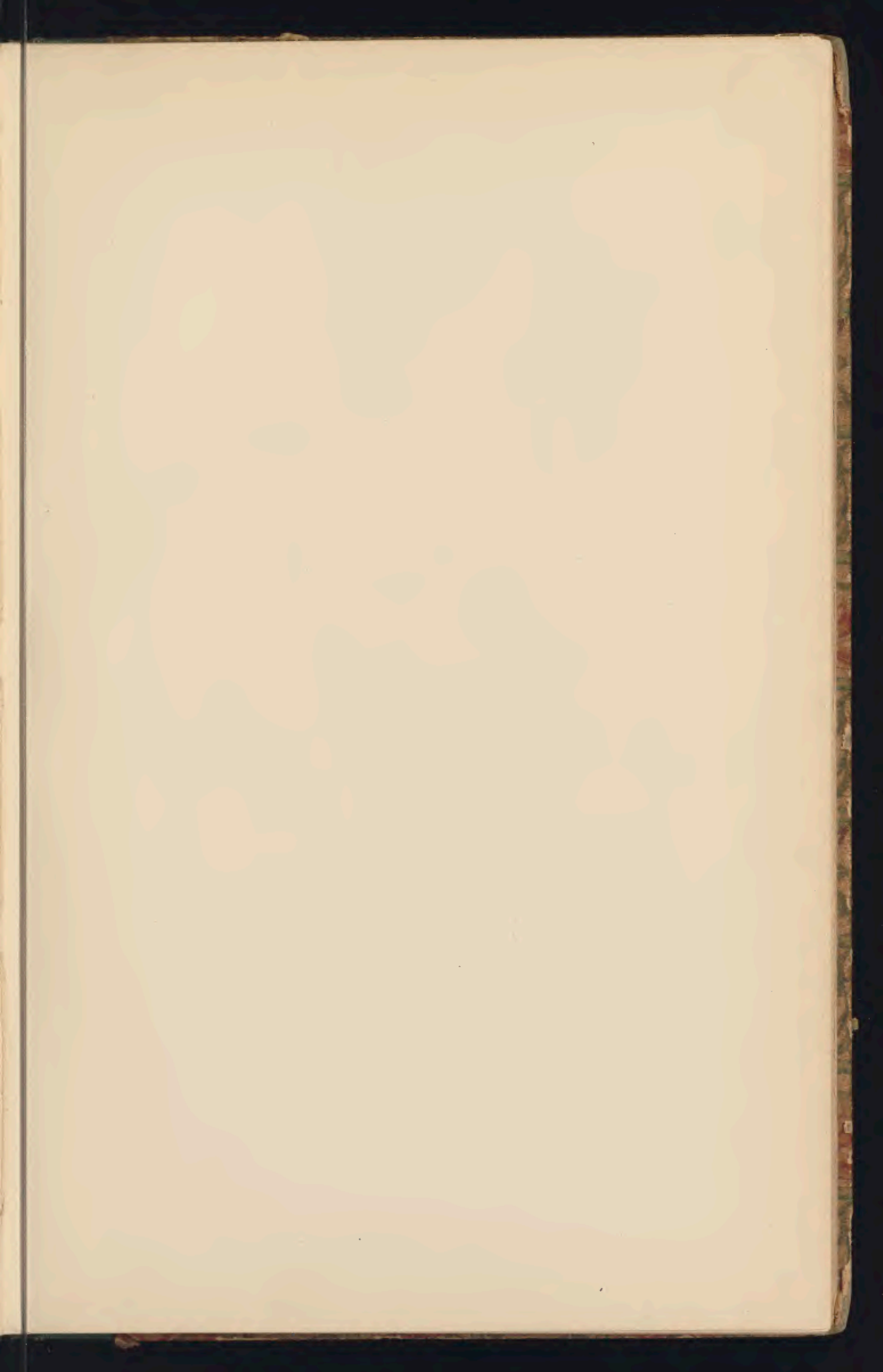
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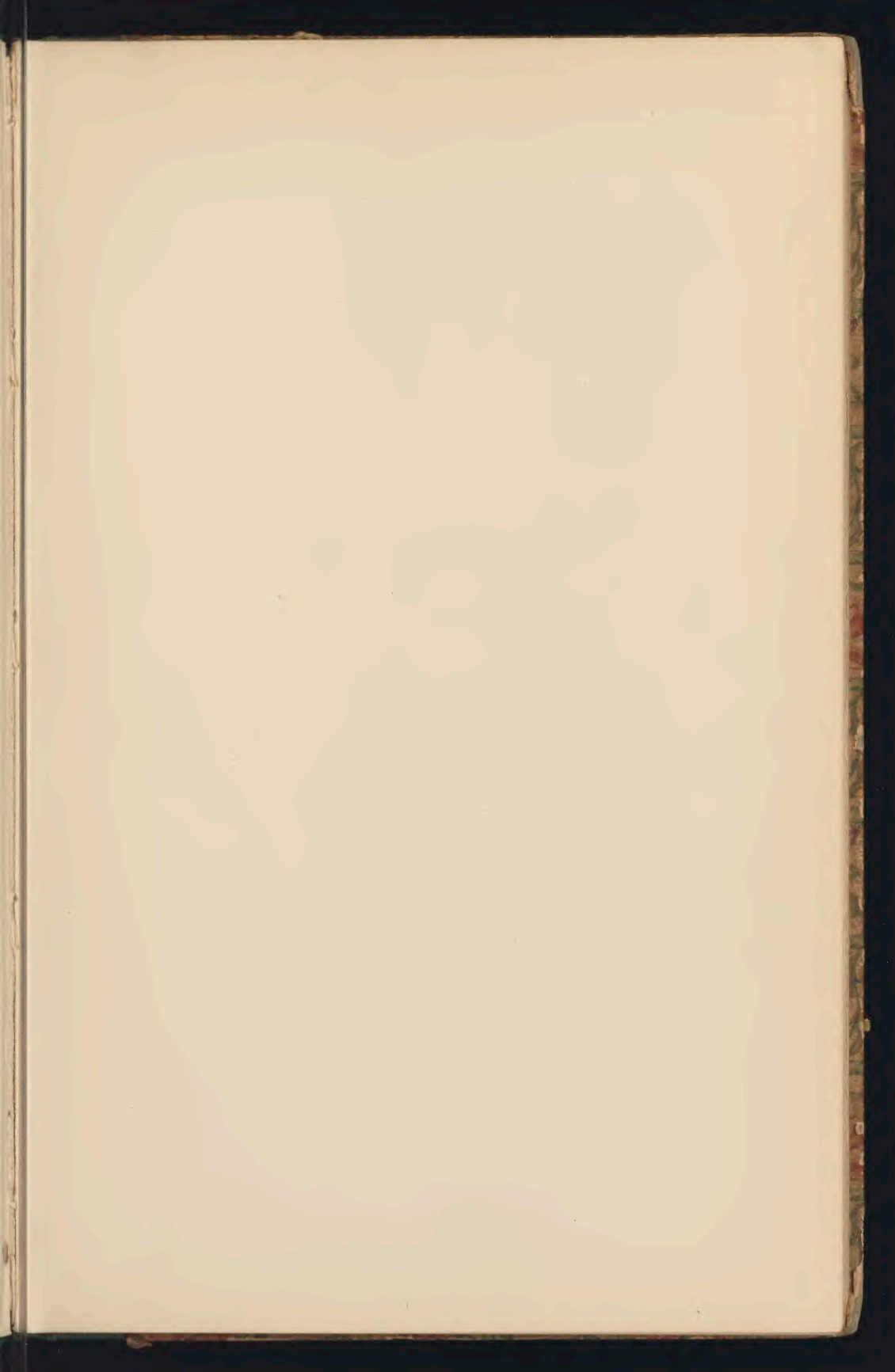














# Origines Golfianae

The Birth and Early Childhood of Golf



## THE FRONTISPIECE

### Ancient Score, from the Manuscript

This print is a reproduction of the notes of one of the numerous matches as described by old MacGregor. It was beneath these that the Latin fragments relating to the birth of golf and its early youth were discovered.

In this match MacGregor caddied for "Sir Davy", whoever he may have been. That the game was played probably in the early fifties, is indicated by the presence of a "guttie" and a "fether" ball in the same match.

According to MacGregor, Sir Davy was a "verra gleg" golfer and may have had a purpose in picking as an opponent such a "dour doylt" as Captain Nairn. Doubtless the match was for a heavy stake, as the victor gave his caddie £5 at its conclusion.

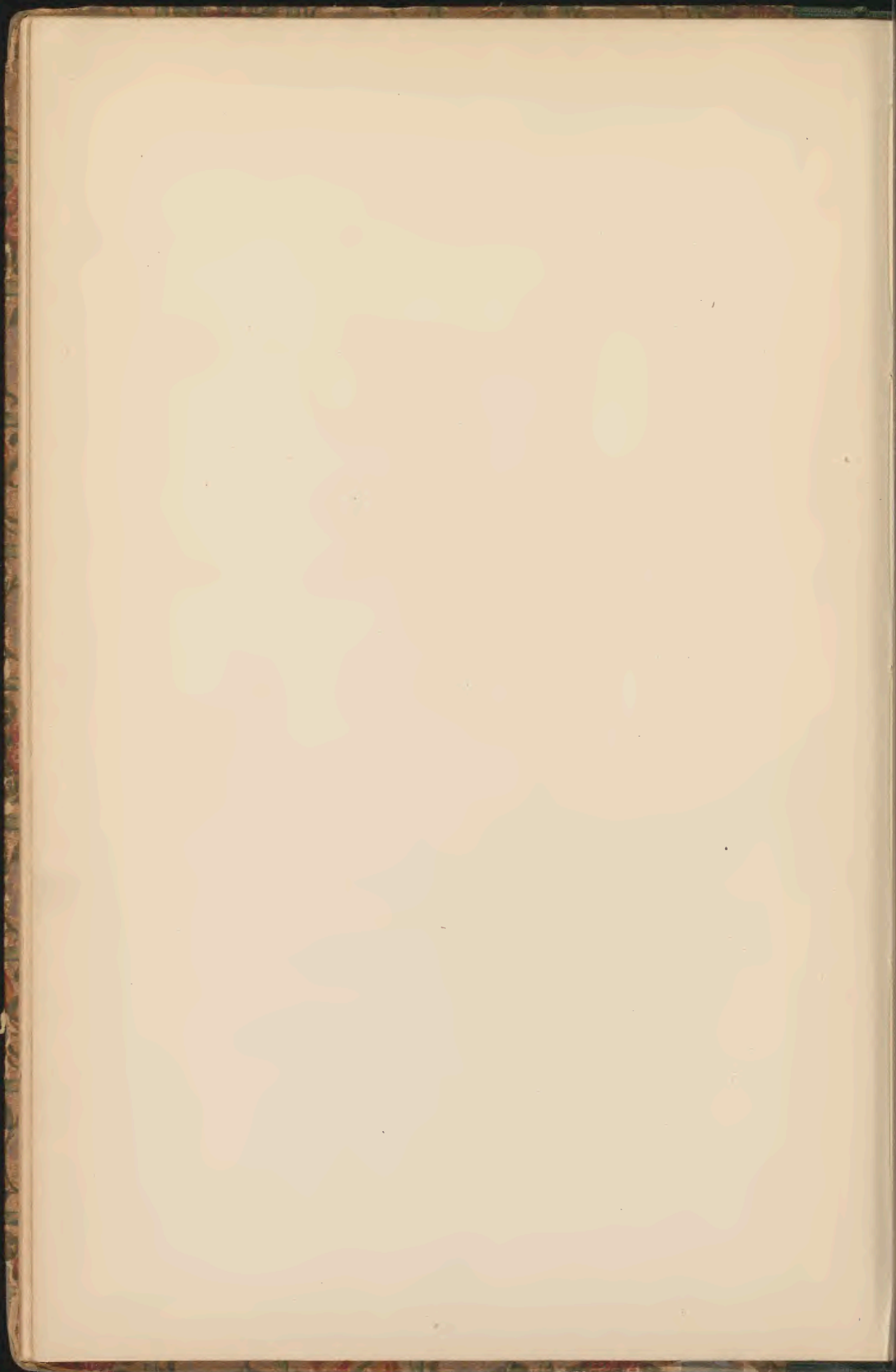
The scoring was high, indicating a match between non-experts (there are no novices in Scotland), or perhaps a contest following an argument at a bountiful dinner.

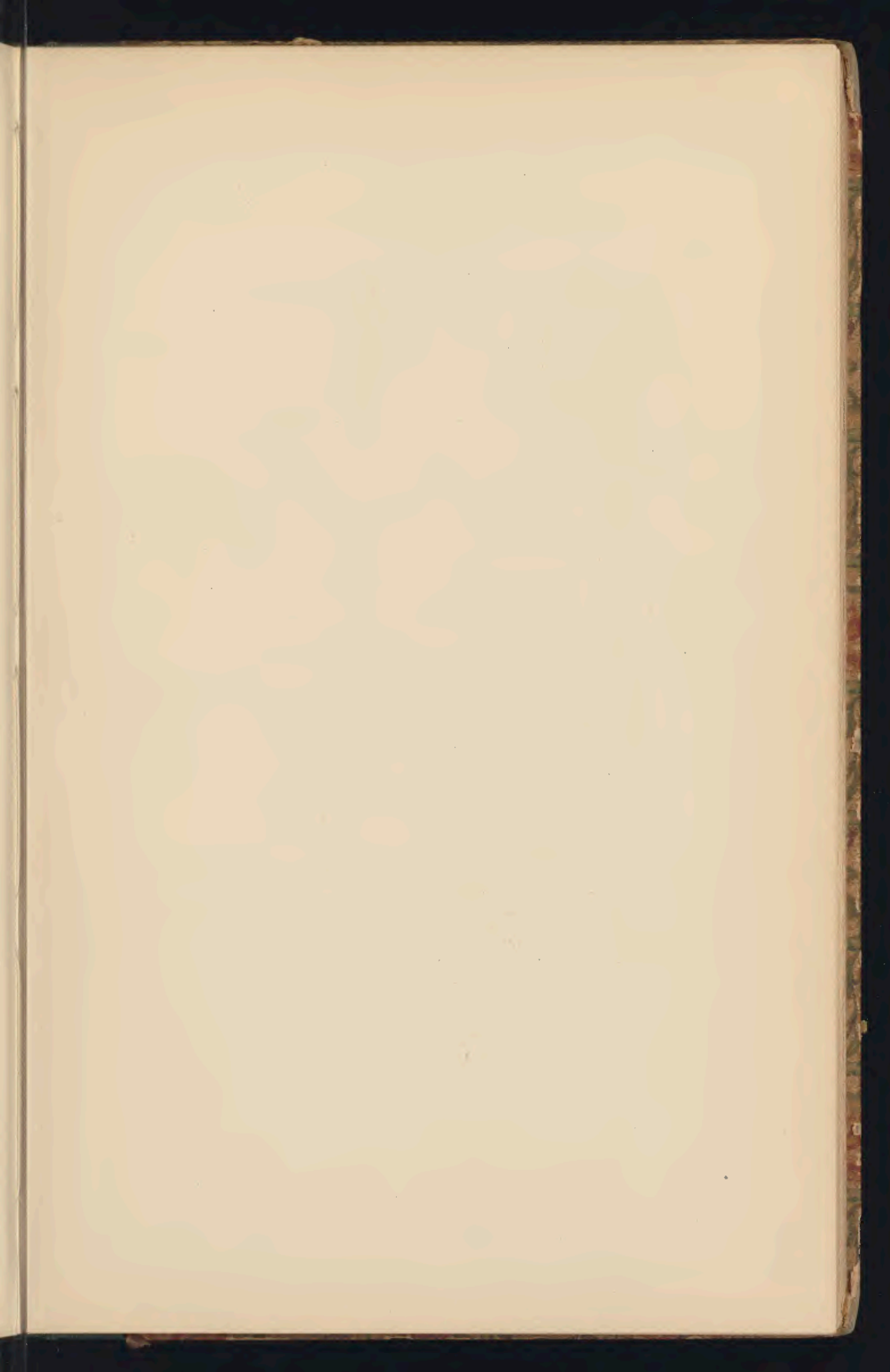
At the second hole, Sir Davy makes a terrific ("unco") drive which seems to have had its effect on the Captain, for he promptly finds the depth of "Deil's Glunch" (Devil's Frown bunker). The third hole is also disastrous to the Captain; his ball is "burstit" and the brief note indicates an atmosphere full of feathers and "awfu' cursin'". But he does better on the remaining holes going out and is three up at the turn, which makes him act "dortie an' bletherin'" — a curious mental condition under the circumstances, due perhaps to a dispute over the rules.

Sir Davy wins the short tenth in one, a "wunnerfu' bang" certainly, and follows it up by holing out a shot from Haggis Pit on the eleventh; the Captain evidently makes a horrible mess of this hole, "mixte maxtie an' waur".

The details of the rest of the match are illegible. But Sir Davy wins, two up. The Captain is a hard loser and walks off "dammin' at cadie an' ba'". Sir Davy "gied" £5 to MacGregor who admits he was "verra fu' that night".

(Laying aside non-essentials, is not the above the prototype of games that are now being played every day in all parts of the globe?)









# Origines Golfianae

*The Birth of Golf and its Early Childhood  
as revealed in a chance-discovered  
Manuscript from a Scottish  
Monastery*

Edited by Arthur V. Taylor of the  
Forest Hill Field Club  
Newark N. J.



The Elm Tree Press Woodstock Vermont  
1912

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The Elm Tree Press

Of this book there have been printed five hundred  
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No. 100

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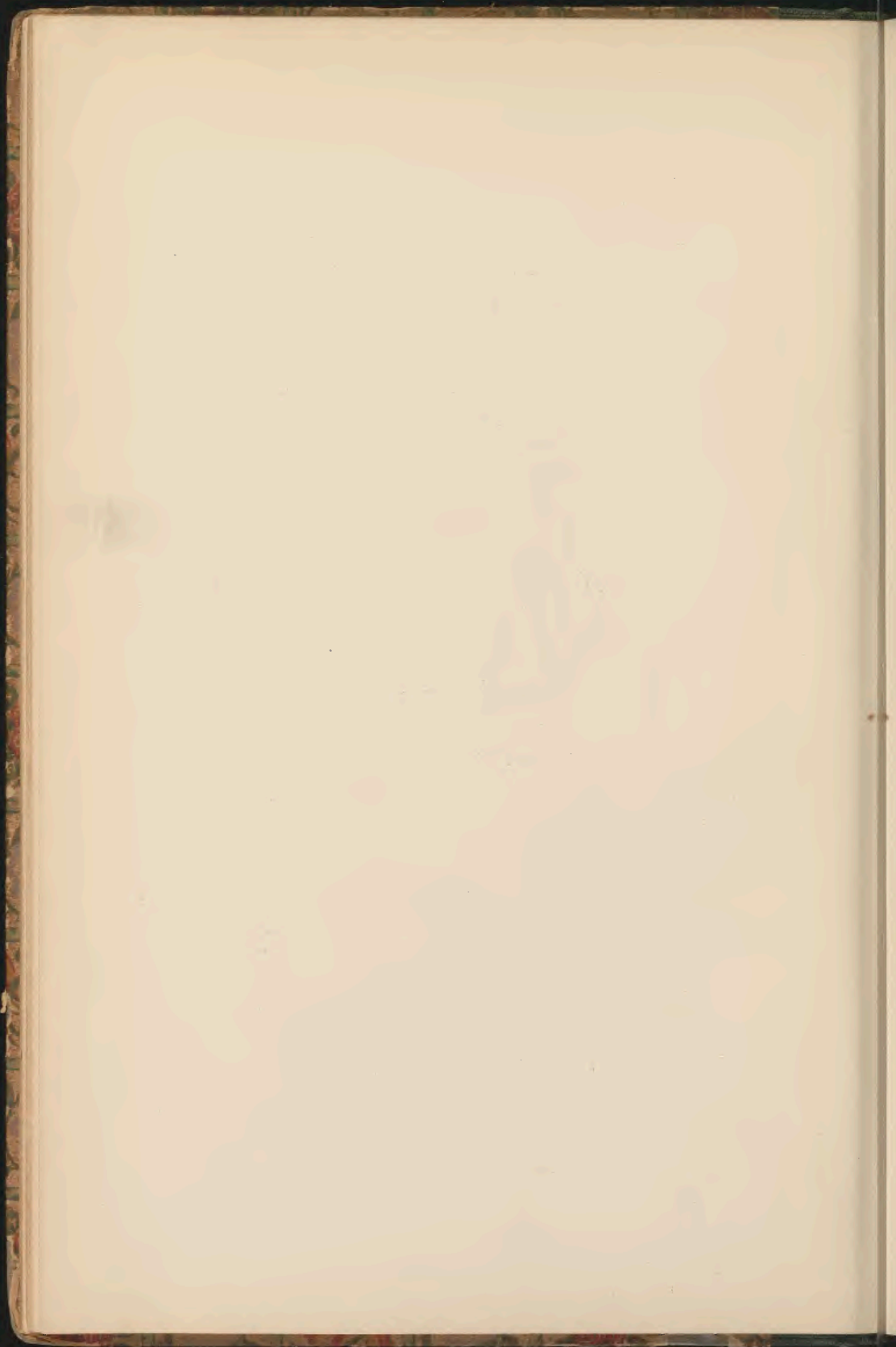


Johanni Cotton Dana  
Literarum atque Globuli  
Perito





A CADIFER



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## Origines Golfianae

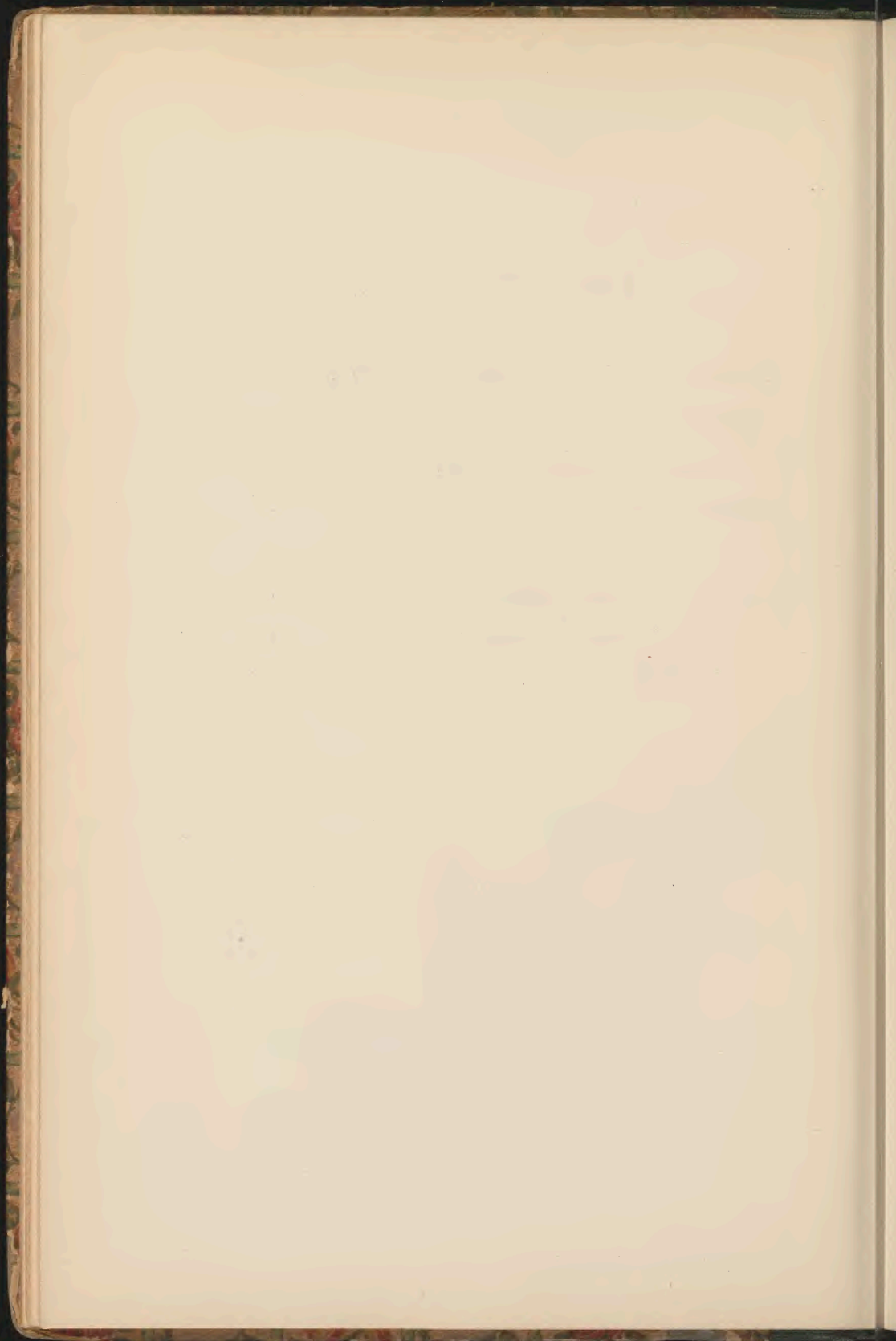
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## DESCRIPTION OF CUT WHICH FOLLOWS

### Prints direct from manuscript

These two prints are of photographs taken directly from the manuscript.

The upper one includes an altar, the ancient golfer's prayer and the imprecation against his opponent. Both are hexameter verses. The first one says:

*Adsis, mi globule, i recteque pericula vita!*

*Favor me, O my little ball, fly true and shun the hazards!*

The second one says:

*Hosti damnato facilis descensus Averno!*

*For my accursed opponent let the descent to Hades be easy!*

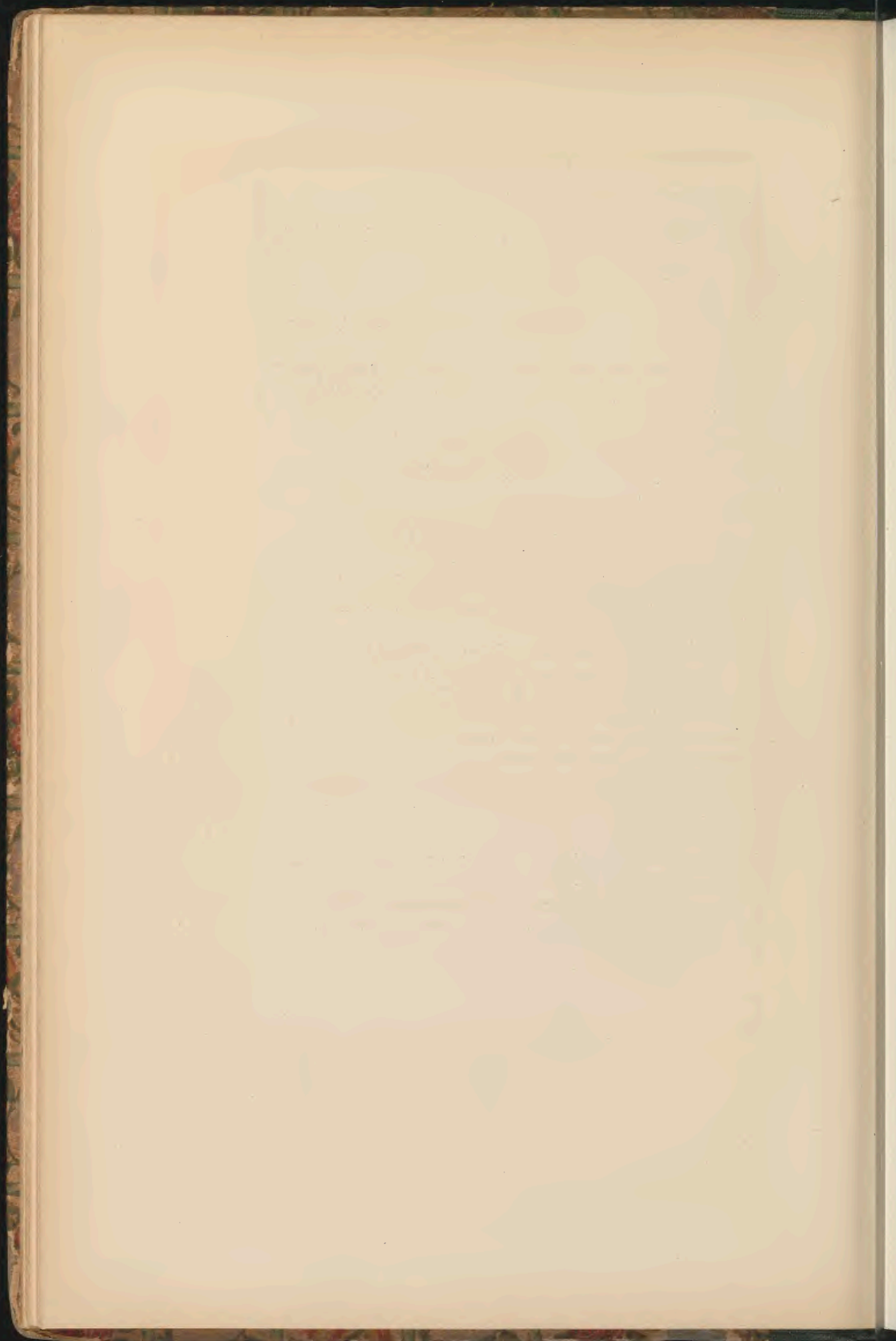
The last part of the imprecation was afterwards used in the Aeneid.

The altar represented in the print was probably placed at the first tee, possibly at the nineteenth hole. The staff is symbolic of Mercury, the patron deity of golf. The scarcely legible inscription at the base is "lente retrorsum", "slow back", the echo of which has sounded down the ages.

The down-pointed thumb denotes war to the knife. It was in later centuries the signal of death to the gladiator vanquished in the arena.

The lower print is of the portion of the manuscript containing "The Duties of the Caddie".

Across the margin is the puzzling sentiment, "Noli venator poculorum esse", comment on which is made elsewhere.







## INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1908 I visited a town in Scotland famed alike for its history and its golf links. An incidental pleasure of the trip was the carrying of greetings from one MacGregor, who had charge of a green near New York, a professional with whom I had had many a good match, to his old father. In his younger days this good man had been one of the leading playing-caddies at the historic course and was saturated with that golfic lore, tradition and myth to which we, with our made-to-order game, are strangers. I passed many pleasant hours in his little cottage listening to tales of famous matches that he had seen, in not a few of which he had caddied for the victor. His quaint narratives, given in the forceful but poetic vernacular peculiar to the Scot, can never be forgotten.

Among his most precious possessions were certain parchments, grimy with age, on which he had preserved the scores of these matches, with notes of crucial strokes and shrewd comments on the characteristics of the players. For instance, he satirized in a sentence or two a parsimonious man for whom he caddied in a match for £10 a side, who refused his advice to put down a new ball at

the last tee. The next stroke burst the cover and his man lost the match in a shower of feathers! "A vera sma' mon", was his comment.

Old MacGregor was anxious that his son should have these scrolls as an heirloom and commissioned me to deliver them. Sandy paid little attention to the gift, strange to say, though he thought the world of his father; and when he saw my interest in the venerable records he promptly gave them to me as a keepsake of my trip.

Many parts of the parchments were illegible from the grime that covered them. In the endeavor to uncover the score of a remarkable game which had resulted in the unusual victory of 10 and 8 in an 18-hole match, certain words in Latin were brought to view. Interest was aroused. A careful study of the documents, followed by treatment by a manuscript expert, proved that they were veritable palimpsests. Underlying old MacGregor's records were Latin expressions, carelessly written and of uncertain meaning, but plainly of a remote period. Sandy could throw no light on the subject; but a letter to his father developed the following:

The parchments had been in the family for at least eight generations, probably longer. There was a tradition that they had come into the hands of an ancestor at the time of the leveling of the



---

monasteries and that, in some forgotten way, they were associated with the early history of the clan; another family tradition was that a MacGregor had brought golf into Scotland from a foreign land. Beyond this he could give no help.

The writings relate to periods widely separated, though all are of mediaeval chirography; and in spite of the numerous interpolations of the compiler the earlier portions seem to antedate the later by many centuries. But whether handed down in written form or in story, one cannot say. In all probability, the compiler of the entire manuscript was Gregory, a monk and a golfer of the 15th century, that period when the call of the sport so threatened the efficiency of the army through the neglect of archery that the Scottish Parliament enacted "that the gowffe be utterly criyt downe and not usyt." It was a time of enthusiasm, when fact and fable would naturally be called to aid in tracing the game to its source. Such was the inspiration of the golfing monk who made ready use of the material at hand.

The portions that are capable of being deciphered and set in rational order and that form the basis of this little book are, first, Friar Gregory's Salutation to the Clan of Golfers; second, *Casus Caprili*, the Downfall of Caprius, the legendary inventor of golf, by some unknown author; third, extracts from a

treatise on the game, attributed to Caprilius; fourth, proverbs and aphorisms, by Gregory, the monk, with a collection of somewhat fanciful etymological derivations of vernacular golf words in use in his time.

Then follow certain addenda, not taken from the MSS.; but interesting to all golfers and particularly so to those who have had pleasure in not remembering their Latin.

The editor has endeavored, by notes and vocabulary, to offer such assistance as will enable even the rusty Latinist to make out the meaning of all that is in the original.

Critics may point to many seeming cases of anachronism, such as the "nineteenth hole", the "refreshment booth", medal play and the Nassau system of playing for a wager, which have, hitherto, been supposed to be of modern invention. In the absence of historic evidence against their very early origin, such origin may fairly be insisted on.

The keeping of his medal score is the only instinctive act performed by the novice; in the olden times each hole was played twice in a round, once "going out" and again "coming in", thus providing a perfectly natural condition for the "*certamen trivium*"; refreshments cannot, certainly, be limited to any special era; the "nineteenth hole" may or may not indicate a game of eighteen holes, perhaps

---

corresponding to the impossible "19" count in cribbage. On the other hand, the mention of goats, the "mille" in the event of a lost ball, the jug-bearing caddie and the origin of the stimie are a few of the peculiarities that point to an ancient source.

To the critical Latinist an apology is due from Gregory. While reflections cannot be cast on his golfic enthusiasm, the manuscript arouses grave doubts as to his scholarship. The editor has tried to make correction of such gross errors as might too severely offend the classic ear. Beyond that he has not pretended to go.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to my friend, John Cotton Dana, for his advice and help in the selection of the material from the manuscript. His keen perception of comparative values in matters relating to golf literature is excelled only by the enthusiasm with which he follows "the little ball" from tee to cup. To him is due the credit of rescuing the scroll from its hiding place in a private library.

A. V. T.

Newark N. J.

April 1912



## The Chronology of Origines Golfianae

De Globulo is the earliest of the writings. It is attributed by Friar Gregory to Caprilius, the goat-herd inventor of the game. The only evidence as to the period in which he lived is the reference in Casus Caprili to Gregorius, the captive gamekeeper from Scotland. In a note the Friar, whose pride in the antiquity of his clan is manifest, associates the capture with the invasion of Italy by the Gauls, 390 B. C. How the ancient Scot came to be among the invaders is not stated.

Casus Caprili is, by suggestion, credited to Plautus (250-184 B. C.). Despite the numerous interpolations of later times, the spirit of the tale, dealing as it does with humble goatherds, the attitude of familiarity toward the gods and the Umbrian setting, give evidence of a remote origin and add plausibility to the claim of Plautus' authorship. Moreover, the fact that the Friar found it among scrolls containing authenticated writings of Plautus indicates that his predecessors regarded the Umbrian poet as the author.

The MacGregor (Gregorius) who served in

Agricola's army was probably captured in the campaign against the Caledonian forces in the Grampian Hills in 84 A. D.

Friar Gregory lived in the reign of King James IV of Scotland (1472-1513), as he definitely states in his Salutation to the Clan of Golfers.

The leveling of the monasteries occurred about 1560, at which time the parchments came into the hands of MacGregor's ancestors, as the family tradition goes.

The manuscript writings belong to three distinct periods :

- 1 The illiterate, carelessly written notes of Old MacGregor; these were removed to uncover the more ancient writings beneath.
- 2 Friar Gregory's Sententiae and miscellaneous notes written in the characteristic cursive hand of that period, probably about 1510.
- 3 De Globulo and Casus Caprili, compiled by some unknown writer; these are written in minuscules of the 13th century.

## Friar Gregory's Salutation to the Clan of Golfers

Friar Gregory to the Clan of Golfers of whatever place and of whatever time, hail!

The tale of the little ball as inscribed on this parchment:—

Caprius, a goatherd of Umbria, incurred the enmity of the gods, who despatched Mercury to earth to accomplish the ruin of the offender. The downfall is effected through the magic stick and balls that are placed in the way of the unsuspecting mortal. The baneful game that had its birth in the consummation of this plot spreads afield, working havoc among its victims. It is carried to Britain by the Roman legions and reaches Scotia through the capture of my forbear Gregorius.

Though the ancient curse has been removed through the downfall of the heathen gods and the ancestral blight has lost its power, a wizard charm yet pervades the pursuit of the little ball that seduces all, save the elect few who gain supremacy over it.

My own undue eagerness in the sport, woe is me! has too often brought upon my head the merited reprimands of my superiors. But how can one

combat with success what is in the blood? Forsooth, they tell me that it is not seemly for a monk to disport himself before the public gaze! But how can they understand, who know not the thrill of the soaring drive or the delicate putt. They are strangers to the Elysian joys and the Stygian torments to be found in the conquest of the little ball. I had rather meet their disdain and anger a thousandfold than not to know the triumphs and also the disasters of the Caprilian sport.

Moreover, the example of our good King James [King James IV,—*Editor*]\* condones inconsistency when the issue is the game of the little ball. For he did decree that "in na place of the realme there be usit golfe or uther sik improfitabill sportis," and did then break his own ordinance by most openly following the pursuit of the game. †

To the ancient writing I have ventured to append some of the lessons born of experience. Mayhap they will be of worth to other golfers, though, in faith, I am an indifferent follower of my own counsels.

The tale of Caprilus has come down from beyond

\* This reference gives a clue to the time in which Friar Gregory lived.

† There is further evidence of his disobedience to his own edict forbidding golf: The entries in the accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, 1503-6, reveal the King's devotion to the sport in face of his stern decree.



---

the memory of man. It was by fortunate chance that it befell me to discover the rotting scroll among parchments of Plautus in the vaults of the Monastery. ||

---

It has been my endeavor to transcribe, as far as it lay in my meager power, such portions as were yet to be read.

Honor to Caprius through whose sacrifice the game of the little ball has entered into the lives of men; and glory to the name of the Gregor who carried it to Scotia.

*Editor*

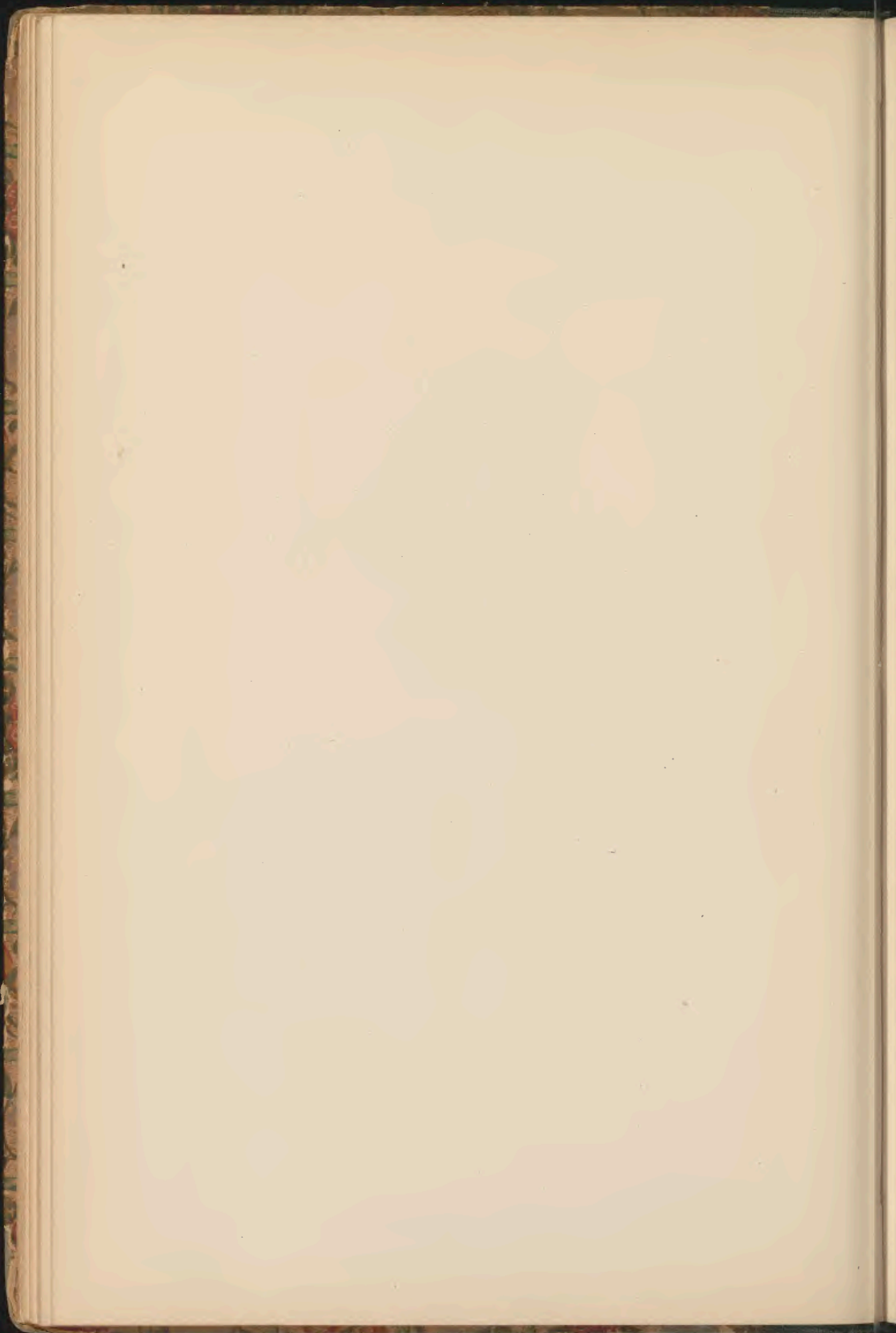
|| See prefatory note to Casus Caprii. The friar's mention of Plautus is the only hint to be found regarding the authorship of the scroll.



# Casus Caprili

The Downfall of Caprius

A Translation of an Ancient Manuscript. Once thought to be a Meaningless Myth, but here shown to give the Supernatural and Unholy Origin of Golf



## Casus Caprili

The following is a translation of a portion of the manuscript of Gregory, the monk. The basis is very old Latin, with evident interpolations of a later period. The latter are carelessly written, probably by one who was a better golfer than Latinist.

This collator hints that the story is a digest in fable form of a lost tragedy of Plautus. This is doubtless inaccurate, in view of the fact that all the extant works of Plautus are comedies. Yet it contains many marks of Plautus' style and some of his sardonic humor. Perhaps it is more than a coincidence that the scene is laid in Umbria, Plautus' birthplace.

That the story lay hidden for so many centuries is probably due to its apparently pointless plot. But when read in the light of golfing experience, it becomes a tale of deep human interest.

The prominence of the goat in the tale gives to the Brotherhood of Goats such a prestige as can come only from the happy reincarnation of an old idea.\*

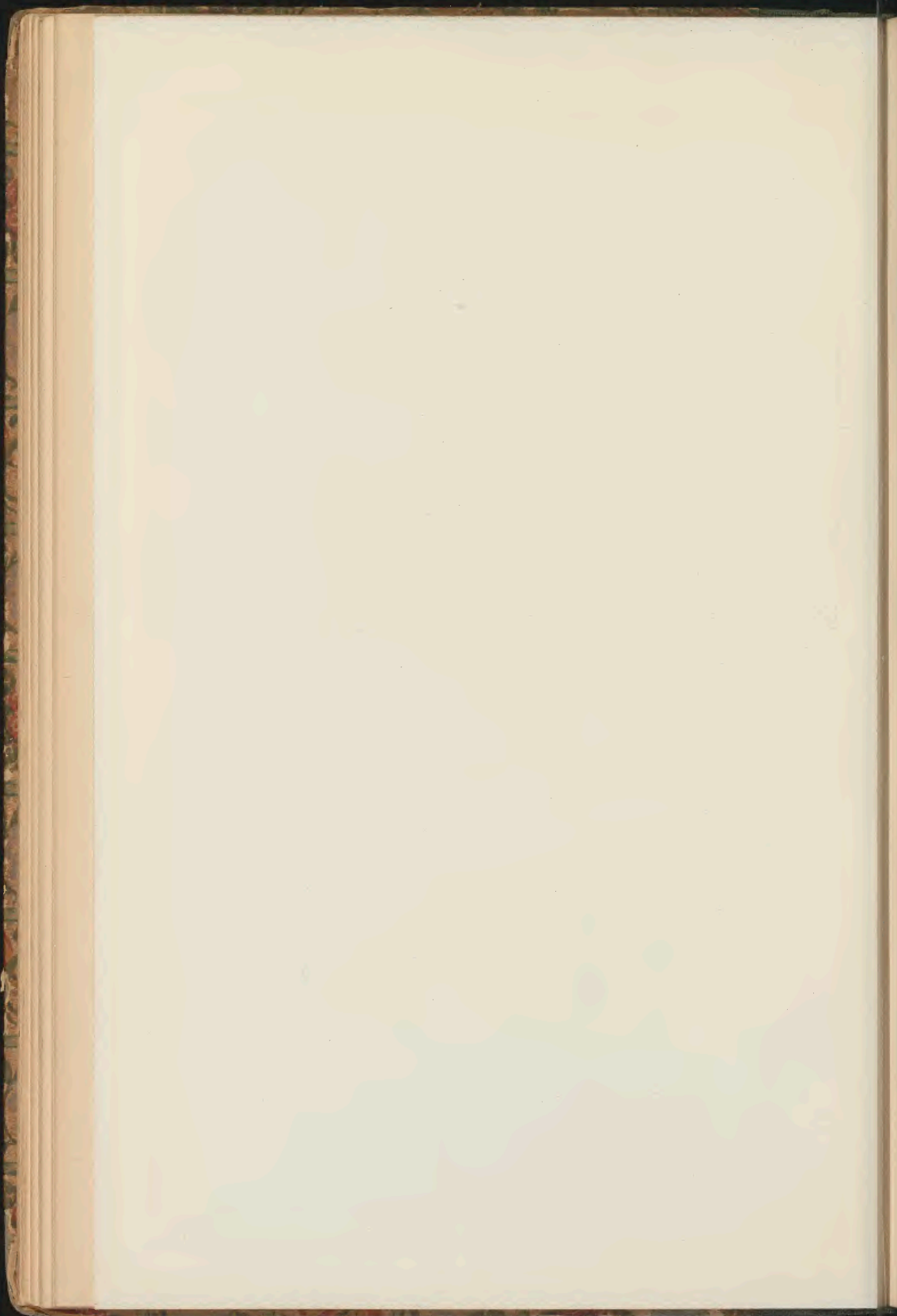
\* There is in our local club an organization of players whose enthusiasm is fully equal to their skill. They dub themselves

“The Ancient Order of Angoras.” Their emblem is the goat, a silver figure of which is carried by each member,— at the beginning of the season. In their matches with one another each wagers his own goat if he still possesses it, if not, he places a small stake, which, if lost, goes into the fraternity’s treasury. At the close of the season the player who has the largest number of goats becomes the “Chief Billy goat” for the following year. Members of other clubs are establishing branches of this order.—*Editor*



THE FIRST STIMIE

Caprius and Balbus in argument, Mercury  
in judgment and the stakes in the distance





# The Downfall of Caprius

## I

### The Virtuous Goatherd

There once lived in the Umbrian land, not far from the springs of the yellow Tiber, a goatherd, Gaius Caprius, famed far and wide for his integrity. To him no vice was alluring enough to ensnare, no virtue stern enough to repel.

Words of deception were strangers to his lips ;

\* \* \* \*

## II

### The Hostility of the Gods is Aroused

Despite the piety of Caprius and the fidelity with which he offered the fattest of his herd in sacrifice, the flawlessness of his life begat the ill will of the Olympians. For their deeds, forsooth, were often not without reproach, nor were they possessed of desire to emulate the probity of the lowly goatherd. It was unseemly that a god should be surpassed by mortal, even in virtue.

Moreover, it was becoming the wont of the goddesses to hold up the name of the good man as a reproach to the misdeeds of their lords,

[At this point the elemental frankness of the manuscript makes expurgation quite advisable.]

\* \* \* \*

It was even Jove himself who proposed the plan to the other immortals. For Juno,\* being grieved in heart that her consort was unwilling to disclose his pastimes to her,† was making unceasing protest. Nay, more, though the king of the gods might not confess it, his spouse's frequent mention of the name of Caprius was bringing jealousy to his breast; nor did she attempt to quench, but rather fed, the flame. And now she had even ventured to suggest that it might be to the advantage of Olympus, if not of the goats, if he and Gaius || should exchange places.

\* \* \* \*

\* In classic mythology Juno is depicted as being an exceedingly strong minded goddess of suffragette trend. Jupiter is long-suffering, but with an occasional inclination to assert his rights in matters involving domestic administration.

† Oblectationes suas patefacere nolebat. The recreations of the gods are often mentioned as being exceedingly unconventional.

|| Juno's use of Caprius' first name gave Jupiter deeper annoyance than he was willing to admit.

## III

## The Plot

Accordingly it seemed fitting that this paragon be placed beyond ken. To blast him with the thunderbolt were very easy; but that would be to exalt his memory to the stars. Better would it be to effect the ruin of his good name.\* Caprius must be transformed: † from industry he must be brought to shiftlessness, from sobriety to the cup of strong wines; his spirit of truthfulness must be undermined, his possessions squandered through the fickleness of chance; he must even learn to call on the gods in anger. And to posterity he must hand down the seed of his curse that in the course of revolving years || no second Caprius may arise to become a reproach to the divine weaknesses.

After many words had been spoken in the council of the gods, to Mercury, the deviser of plots, was given the task of destroying the repute of the lowly peasant.

## IV

## The Magic Stick

One morning, as Caprius was tending his herd, he

\* *Ruinam famaē efficere.*

† *Mutandus est Caprius.*

|| *Lustris labentibus*; — this reminds us of Virgil.

chanced upon a strangely fashioned stick \* which was lying on the ground near some small round stones. While examining the curious object to determine what its purpose might be, he casually tapped with it one of the stones and it glided by a wondrous path (and such was Mercury's scheme) into a small hole. He struck another and then another, with the same marvelous result. He dug a second hole, and a third, and continued the strokes: at whatever distance and however rough the ground, the little globes never failed to find their resting place.

\* \* \* \*

(Here the manuscript becomes obscure. Caprius, apparently, begins to experiment with different grips and stances; one passage seems to indicate that he tried to loft the stones into the holes. At any rate, he begins to deliberate over the strokes, a habit with which every golfer is familiar.)

\* \* \* \*

But soon, mirabile dictu! the spheres, as if inspired by infernal malevolence, refused to seek the holes however close to them he approached. † Even when near, at less than a cubit's length, ‖ exceeding

\* Mercury's caduceus, the magic wand in which was centered much of his power.

† The prototype of conditions that are constantly arising in every golfer's experience; in the short putt we find here the chronological as well as the de facto source of golfic tribulation.

‖ Eighteen inches.

care could not force the stones to reach their goal. And yet, at the distance of a decempeda \* and more, success would follow the most random endeavor. Such was the witchery of the magic stick.†

## V

## The Beginning of the Mischief

While the virtuous goatherd was intent on the mystery of this curious, self-invented game, Balbus a neighbor came up and in amazement stopped to watch the unseemly behavior of the man of propriety, as he bent to the strokes and with gleaming eyes || followed the course of the deceptive globes. Nor was he less startled to hear the words of wrath that came from lips hitherto unfamiliar with expressions of anger: "Pessume!", § "Carnifex!", ¶ "Tibi ad inferna!", ) "Parasitaster paulule!", ] and like utterances came hurtling \*\* through the air,

\* Ten feet.

† Tanta erat magica mirandae virgae potestas.

|| "Oculis arrectis."

§ "You wretch!"

¶ Literally, "hangman," "gallowsrogue;" more freely, "rascal" or—but why not leave the meaning to the imagination of the experienced reader?

) "To hades, please!"

] Untranslatable; the modern equivalent is not unknown among bunker synonyms.

\*\* "Ruebant:" came rushing forth like a torrent.

revealing a totally unsuspected acquaintance with terms of blasphemy, and all directed at the innocent little round stones.

Eheu! Ille dies primus malorum causa fuit!

\* \* \* \*

## VI

### The First Match

In conclusion, for here the manuscript is somewhat tedious, Balbus innocently asks Caprilius if his purpose be simply to send the stones to the margin of the holes and not to roll them in. Caprilius incensed at the unwitting irony urges his neighbor to make trial. Finally, the two men begin in rivalry to determine which can excel in controlling the globes.

\* \* \* \*

The dinner call sounds in vain; the wizard charm is over them. They are oblivious to everything but the lure of the game.\* From small wagers they rise to larger ones, until these two Umbrian herdsmen are staking a goat a hole on their efforts.†

\* \* \* \*

\* "Obliti omnium nisi illecebras ludi." A sample of Gregory's loose Latin.

† This is ancient evidence of the lamentable proneness of human nature to assign tangible value to one's efforts even in moments of recreation.

The afternoon shadows lengthen, with no suggestion of a pause. At last, Caprius angrily cries, "Quin malum! \* You have gained half my herd. Let us strive once more and let it be aut totum aut nihil." †

"Concionem sequor," ‖ responds Balbus readily and the strife is renewed.

\* \* \* \*

## VII

### The First Stimie

The first essay proved to be equally contested; likewise the second. At the third and final Caprius perceiving that his adversary's sphere lay exactly between his own and the hole, a disaster that had not occurred before, begged that it be lifted.

"Minime vero! Hic stet meus globus!" § declared Balbus with many a fervid appeal to the gods. With equal zeal did Caprius make protest; and perchance they had come to violence, had not Mercury appearing in the guise of a traveler presented himself as arbitrator.

\* "Plague take it!"

† A classical gaming expression: "The whole or nothing."

‖ Corresponding to the modern acceptance of a sporting proposition: "You're on!"

§ "Not on your life! My ball shall stay where it is!" As the manuscript of Candidus explains, the expression contracted to *stetmeus* came to be applied to this peculiar situation in the game; later it was corrupted to *stamium* and finally to *stimie*.

With much subtlety of reasoning he rendered a judgment against the man whose ruin he was plotting; watching until the contest was over, he seized his caduceus from the hand of Caprius and exclaiming, "I, Caprius, in malam crucem!"\* vanished into thin air.

\* \* \* \*

### VIII

#### The Debasement of Caprius

Thus Caprius lost his goats.† But worse, he abandoned his frugal manner of life and surrendered himself to the license of the new pastime: his fields went to weeds, the attenuated flock ran wild, his children were in rags. Strong words and strong drink were his familiars. So neglectful of his family did he become that his wife was no longer known as "beata", but was dubbed "Capria vidua." ‖

He devised a ball of leather with contents of pressed goat hair and a club with curving end with which a stroke of scores of paces could be made.

\* "And now, Caprius, you may go to the devil!"

† The memory of the stakes in this primitive match is resurrected in the modern formula, "To get his goat." The basic principles of the recently organized Society of Goats are derived from this classic origin.

‖ Capria was the original golf widow.

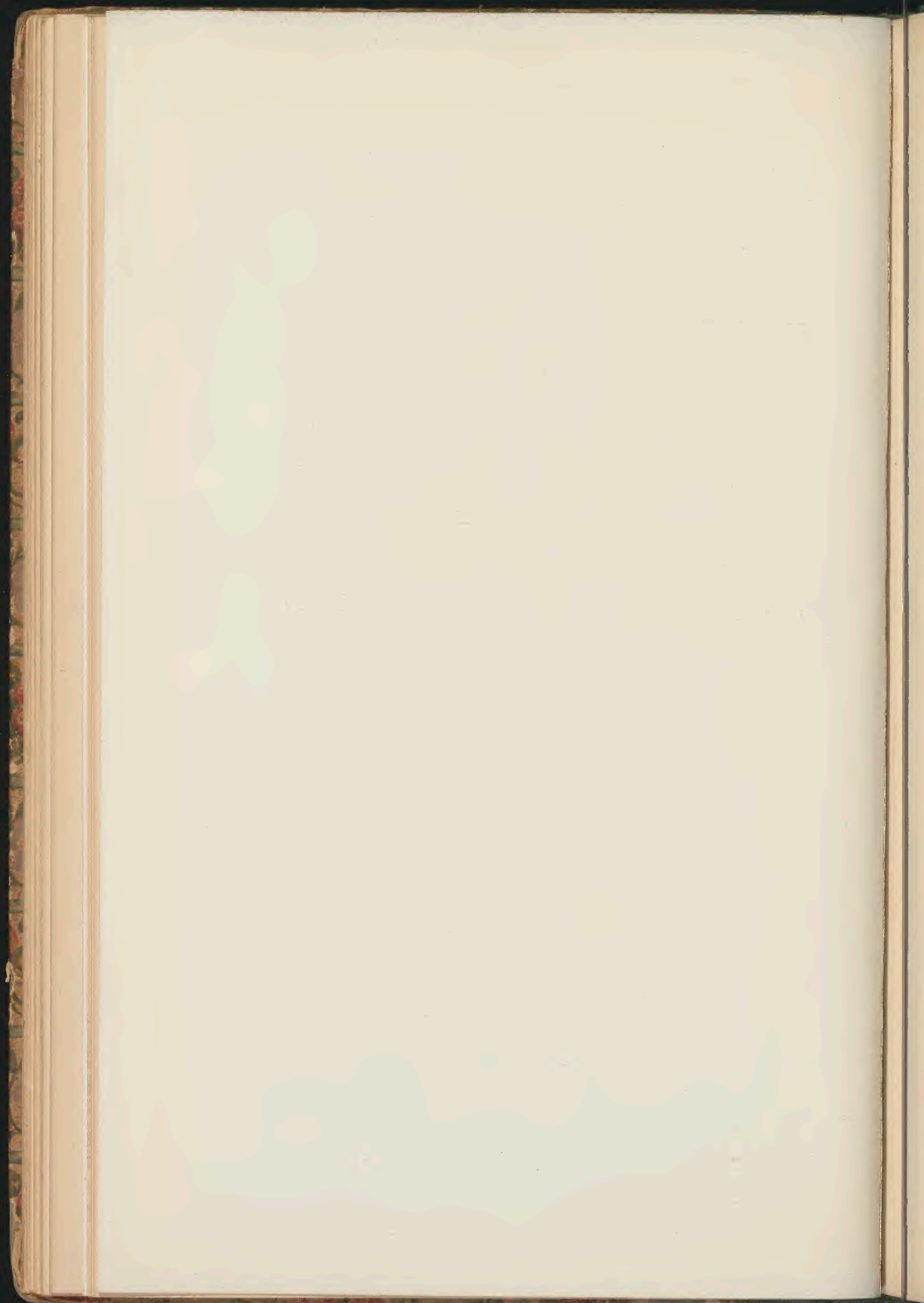




LOST BALL

"Etiamsi caper globulum consumperit,  
imperet ut concidatur."

De Regulis



He corrupted his neighbors through the enticements of the game; \* the entire municipium betook itself to the pursuit of the little balls. The culture of the fields was neglected; no longer did the smoke of sacrifice rise from the altars. Even the training of the youth ceased, for they were needed to carry the *cadifer*.† The women, both matrons and maidens, were drawn from their household duties by the spell of the *quaterna mixta*.‖ The only orderly place in the village was the meadow over which the community practised this blighting game; nor did the slave, a captive, Angus Gregorius, from distant Scotia,§ on whom the care of the field was imposed, have an easy task to meet the critical expectations of the players. Many a scourging did he receive for the errors of negligent worms near the holes¶ and even for the remissness of the clouds to send down the rain. )

\* "Vicinos corruptelis ludi inretiebat."

† *Caprius* explicitly states that the *cadifer*, ( *cadum*, jug and *fero*, to carry, whence the modern word, *caddy*,) carried the jug for his master. The later invention of the pocket flask rendered the *caddy's* services as "jugbearer" unnecessary. His duties were accordingly transferred to the care of the clubs and the oversight of the ball. This has been the most noteworthy phase in the ethical development of the game.

‖ The mixed foursome.

§ See note on the transplanting of golf to Britain.

¶ "Propter negligentiam vermium inconsideratorum."

) To this day the greenkeeper is held responsible for drought.

## IX

## The Fate of the Virtuous Goatherd

Forsitan Caprili fuerint quae fata requiras

The certainty with which he missed the short strokes through the wiles of Mercury and the incessant stamia to which he found himself doomed encouraged him to unwatered wines and enfeebled his reason. Despairing of success in the game in which he had lost his all, he devised the *cavum undevicesimum*\* where he would sit for hours in potent reverie over the scores that were never his or in listening to the tales of those who would have triumphed, had their strokes been fewer.†

He introduced the *tabula ictuum*, ‖ the *commodum ex ictibus*§ and other devices from which sprang much faking of scores ¶ and bitter thoughts.

The last days of Caprilius were passed in the writing of a libellum, "De Globulo" ) and in the preparation of balls of asbestos to withstand the clime ] to

\* The Nineteenth Hole.

† The characteristics of this hole still persist.

‖ The score card.

§ The handicap.

¶ The crude modern equivalent of "mentitio de ratione."

) The extracts from this little book that have come down to us reveal Caprilius, in his glimmers of reason, as a philosopher of high ideals.

] An interpolation: a superheated climate as a place of ultimate destination is a post-pagan idea; the ancient Romans placed no special stress on the temperature of that region.

---

which in his disorganized condition, he believed he was fated.

## X

## Joy in Olympus

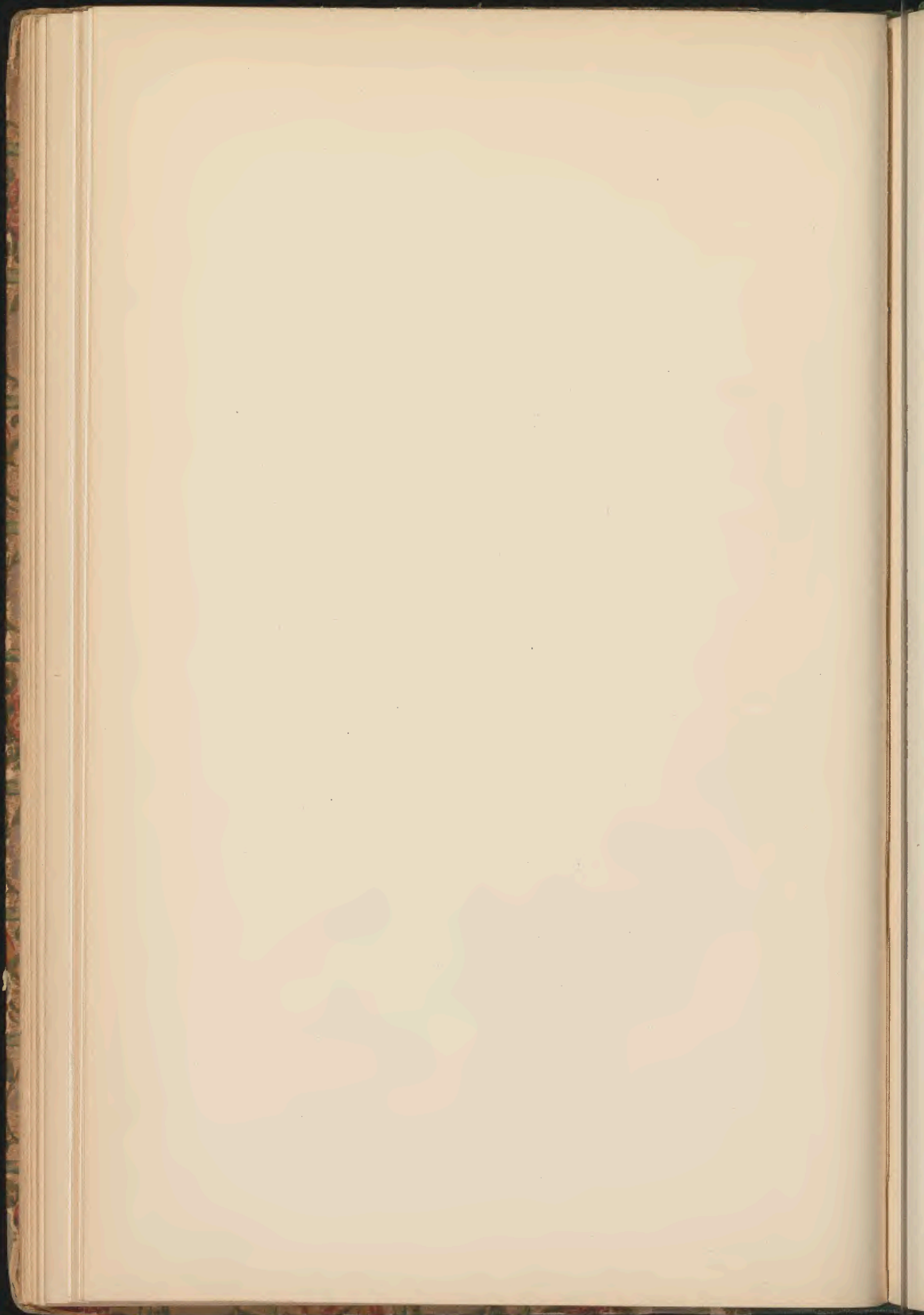
Meanwhile unholy joy reigned in Olympus. Not that there was glory in the destruction of an humble mortal; but the ideal that had arisen in that little village to threaten the peace of the immortals had been shattered. And further, an influence had entered the lives of the earth dwellers which, wherever it should spread, would avert the recurrence of such a peril.\*

The goddesses sorrowed for their idol, but the gods chortled.† Jupiter regained the supremacy of his household and passed many a night in sport with the other Olympians without rebuke. He even ventured to appear one morning at rosy-fingered dawn dragging Cerberus ‖ which he had won from Pluto, though he well knew that dogs were for an abomination to Juno.

\* The anticipations of the Olympians have not been fully consummated. It is an almost universally admitted fact that there are some followers of the ancient game who are partially uncontaminated in language, manners, morals or sanity, though not enough so to merit the attention that Caprius attracted.

† "Cachinnabant," denoting immoderate glee.

‖ The three-headed dog that guarded the entrance to the lower world.



### Note by Gregory, the Monk

A descendant of Gregorius, the greenkeeper of the course established by Caprilius, served in a legion of Umbrians in the army of Agricola during his occupation of Britain in the latter part of the first century. During their stay in the north they had leisure to practise the sport which they had learned at home.

They called it "globulus"\*, but it became known also as the "Umbrian game", after the name of the legion. The adjective persisted in that region after the departure of the Romans; the river in the vicinity of the camp was named the Umber, or Humber, and the neighboring country Humbria.† Gregorius was captured by the Scots in a skirmish during an expedition into Caledonia. It was thus that "the game of the little ball" reached Scotland: through the capture of a man whose ancestor of many centuries before had been compelled, as a Roman captive, to participate in the establishment of the sport in Italy.

\* The diminutive of *globus*, "the little ball."

† This comment on the derivation of the names of the Humber and the Northumberland country is more satisfying to the philologist than to the historian. But Gregory should not be discredited in toto because of errors in details not essential to the main narrative.





# De Globulo

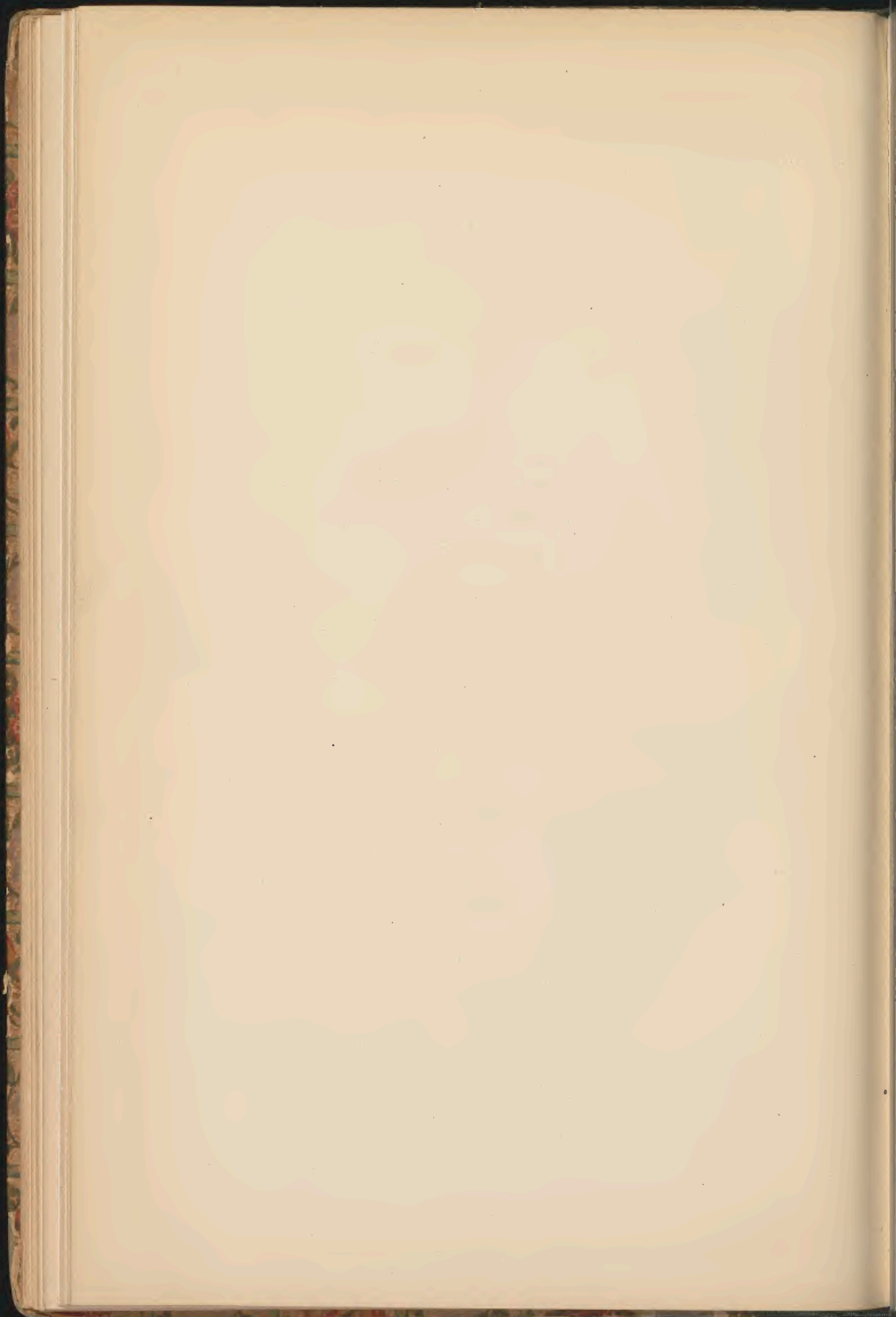
Concerning "the Little Ball."

By the Primitive Goatherd Golfer

Gaius Caprius

Extracts from the Treatise attributed by Gregory the Monk to the legendary and probable martyr-founder of Golf and treating of:

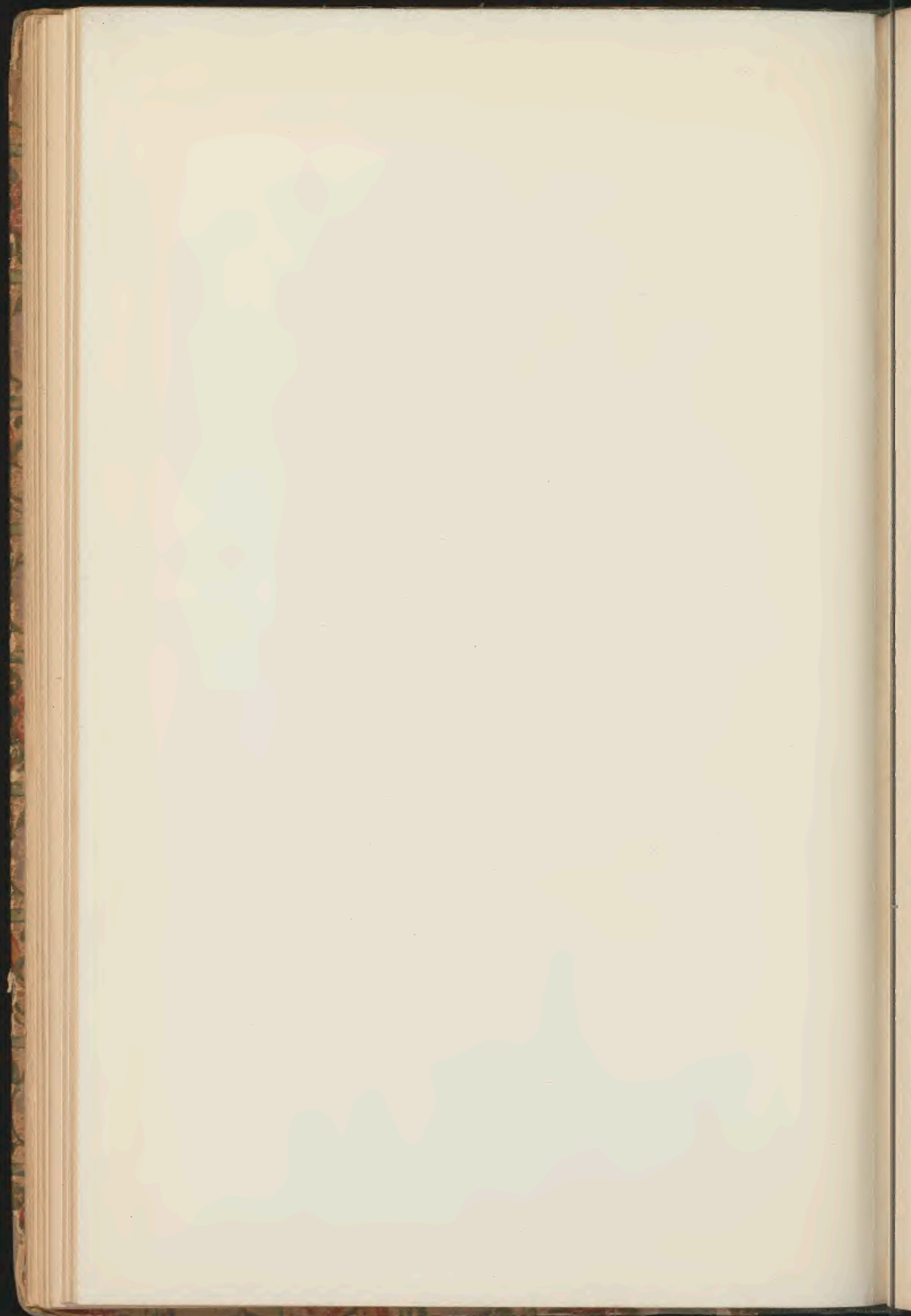
- 1 The Genius of the Game
- 2 The Rules; their Enforcement; the Lost Ball; the Divot; the Function of the Cadus
- 3 The Caddie; his Duties; when to be Chastised; when Killed
- 4 The Addressing of the Ball; the Opponent and the Caddie
- 5 Wagering; when to lay Heavy Stakes; when Light; the Unethical Side of wagering One's Wife on a Match
- 6 On Keeping the Eye on the Hole





GREGORIUS THE FIRST GREEN KEEPER

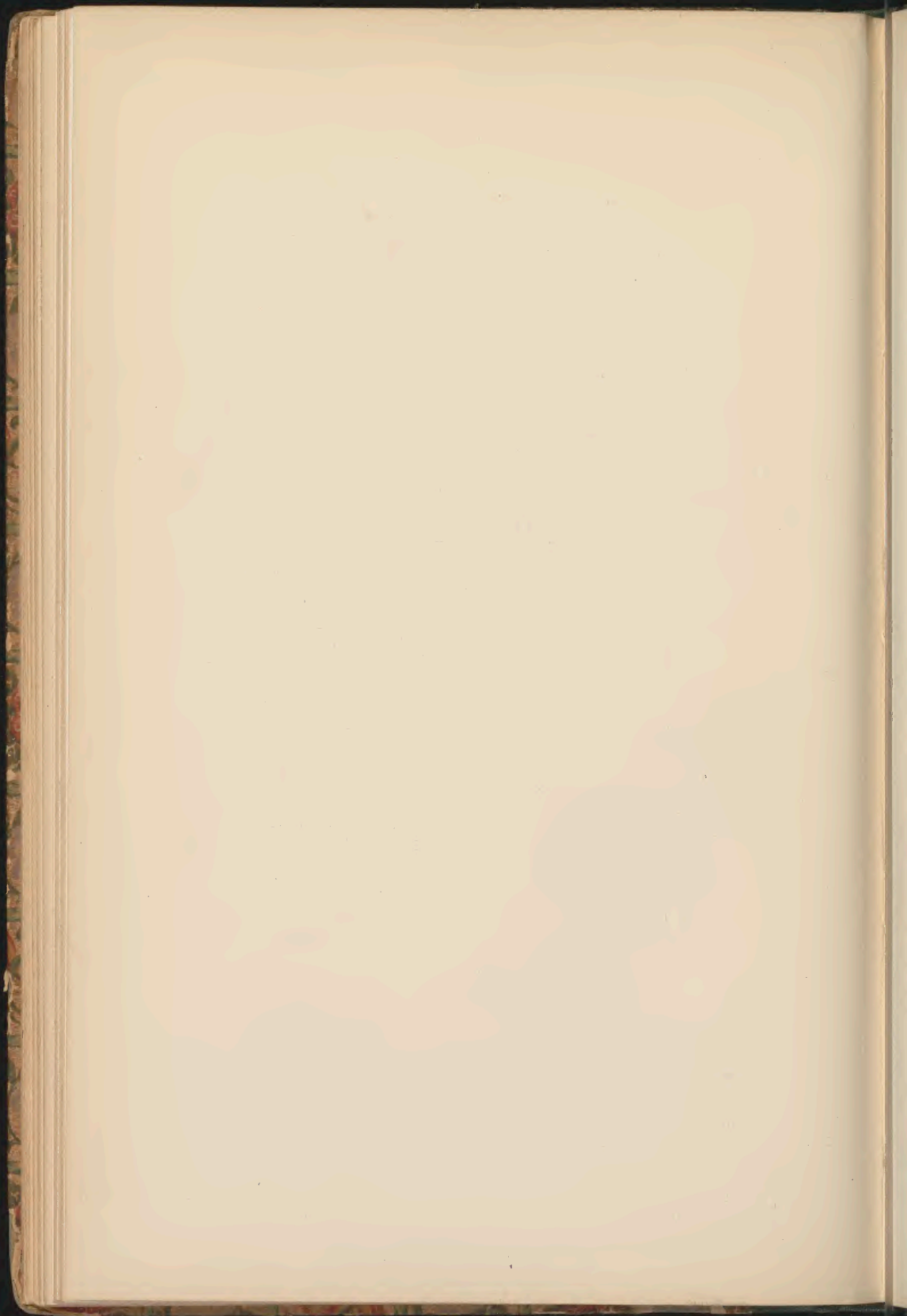
" . . . propter negligentiam vermium inconsideratorum."  
Casus Caprii



## Prefatory Note

The authenticity of the following extracts must be based entirely on internal evidence. The peculiar hiatus in time between the supposed writing and the discovery of the treatise, and its alienation from other extant literature render its identification one of difficulty. Unfortunately, the original Latin has been so rudely tampered with that the classicist can give little help. But in its content we find indubitable signs of antiquity: the "mille" to be counted in the case of the lost ball, the duties of the cadifer, the principle to be followed in the event of a goat's devouring the ball and other peculiarities point to a time antedating the earliest golf literature hitherto published. Candidus himself declares his pride in the possession of the primitive document, which evidently furnished the motive for his own "Sententiae Golfianae."

The editor offers no apology for the plentiful dilution of the Latin with translations. It is hoped that the alternation of the classic original and the English will give even the golfer who is "off his game" in Latin an insight into the sport as the forefathers saw it.



# De Globulo

## I

### Animus Ludi

#### The Genius of the Game

Mirabile, vero, est ludus globuli; qui a ludis ceteris differt hoc, quod potius *cum* quam *contra* adversarium colluditur.\*

Globo parvo qui virga nodosâ propellitur hoc proposito, ut a loco stato in cavum parvum quam paucissimis ictibus intromittatur, luditur.

This, forsooth, may seem very simple to the stranger to the game. But, by Hercules! that little ball may be anything from a beneficent angel to a vengeful demon. Nay, even the ground, the grass, the trees, the elements, one's innermost soul (to make no mention of the goats ||), are all to be

\* The lack of personal conflict in the game is a peculiarity sui generis. This must have been noted early in an age when physical prowess was a sine qua non almost for existence.

† "By a stick with a knobby end." "Virga" would indicate that the club was a very light one.

|| Whether these animals were regarded as hazards or as a "rub of the green," it is impossible to say. At any rate, it is evident that they could not be ignored.

reckoned with, as agents to help or to harm. How often it is that they conspire against us to rend our hearts and to cause us to rend our score cards;\*

Viro qui beatus esse potest, etiamsi vita sine globulo est,† dico, "Ita felix in ignoratione tua mane." Viro, qui hunc cruciatum, hoc amarum-dulce, hunc conspectum alterni Tartari et Elysi petat,‖ qui "Globulus" appellatur, haec scribuntur. Hic unus intellegere potest.

## II

### The Rules

#### De Regulis

Sapiens vir regulas ludi diligenter de se ipso, de adversario benigne conservabit. Ita amicos conciliabit atque nomen suum ornabit.§

In case his opponent's ball shall have become lost, let him search for it like a friend rather than count off the "mille" ¶ as if he were an enemy. Even if his own goat shall have devoured it, let him order the beast to be slain that the ball may be recovered;

\* "Atque faciant ut tabulam ictuum scindamus."

† A golfless life may possibly be a happy one, even if incomplete.

‖ "This bitter-sweet, this kaleidoscopic view of torment and of bliss."

§ A sentiment as true today as it was twenty centuries ago.

¶ Caprius states elsewhere in the rules that in case a ball is lost the search shall be no longer than the time required for the opponent to count a thousand (mille).



it is better to lose both goat and hole than to lose a friend.\*

Si forte virga tua caespitem effoderit, tu vel cadifer eum reponas : si aliter, poena est ictus unus.†

If thou shouldst behold thy opponent or thy opponent's caddy kicking their ball out of a bad lie,|| do not reprove them. It is better to feign not to have seen such deeds and to tell some tale concerning a dishonest golfer who does those things. Thus may he be recalled to an honorable life through shame.§

### III

#### Officia Cadiferi ¶

#### The Caddy, His Duties.

Cadifero cura cadi committatur. Licet e cado potare tantum ad regulas :

\* A most noble reflection.

† The resurrection of this ancient rule imposing a penalty-stroke for each unreplaced divot would be well worth consideration, if its enforcement were possible without excessive bloodshed. Caprius says the rule was finally abolished by a decree of the Senate (senatus consultum), owing to its sanguinary tendencies.

|| "Adversarium calcitrantem globulum a mala positione."

§ "Sic ad vitam honestam per pudorem revocetur." A proposition of doubtful validity. The idiosyncratic golfer of such tendency is either a victim of psychological obliquity, (in modern parlance, "the-man-who-knows-not-the-rules-and-does-not-wish-to"), or of innate propensity to crime. In either case, experience proves that gentle remedies are futile.

¶ The duties of the "jug-bearer" (see Golf Etymology) throw an interesting sidelight on the possibilities of the prehistoric game.

Primum, Quotiens globulus adversari in periculo \* erit.

Second, Whenever thou shalt have won a hole.†

Tertio, Quotiens adversario stamium posueris; || quod si evenerit, duplicem § potionem haurire licebit.

Fourth, Whenever at any time thou and thine opponent shall agree that it is advisable.¶

[Sed noli solus cadum exhaurire conari. Praestat adversarium ad cadum tuum liberaliter invitare; quod efficiet ut te ferventer foveat atque ludus suus ad inferna descendat. )]

Thy caddy shall, when not engaged in his official duties, keep diligent watch of the ball. If he be remiss in diligence, he may be reprov'd, even by stripes. Nay, in the event of a match having been lost through a lost ball, the guilty caddy shall be put to death by torture by the Green Committee,] except

\* "In a hazard," such an act of rejoicing in an opponent's misfortune would not be in accord with modern golf etiquette.

† "Quotiens cavum viceris."

|| "Whenever thou shalt have laid thine opponent a stimie."

§ The double draught from the jug indicates that such a stroke was regarded as one of clever sportsmanship.

¶ Such an omnibus clause in the rules could not fail to cover all general conditions as well as special emergencies.

) A technical expression, sometimes grossly rendered in English.

] "Cadifer sceleratus a comitatu herbaceo omni supplicio necator."

---

he prove that at the time he was ministering to the needs of his master.\*

## IV

## De Globulo Adeundo †

## The Addressing of the Ball

Et globulum et adversarium et cadiferum comiter, si potest, comiter adi. Sed interdum accidat ut globulus impie, cadifer copiose, adversarius nihil adeundi sint.

In as far as it lieth in thy power, address the ball gently as an ally and not as an adversary. But if thy peace of mind require the getting of strong words out of thy system,|| it is best to express thine objurgations in Greek; thus may thy cadifer acquire a new language without effort.§

\* We find nothing in the manuscript to show how this rule worked in actual practice. Doubtless, the reputations of both master and cadifer and also the amount of the wine surviving in the cadus furnished circumstantial evidence that had weight with the committee.

† "On the Addressing of the Ball." "Adeo" means both to address a person and to settle one's self to a task. The latter is the modern sense of the term; the classic golfer employed the word only in its former significance.

|| "Ut impia verba e pectore expellas."

§ This precaution for the cadifer's welfare is in marked contrast with the provision for his punishment in the case of the lost ball.

Sed, si cum sacerdote templi ludis, voces circumscribite verbis: "O tempora!" vel "Quid vero!"\* ne aures viri sancti offendantur.

## V

## De Sponsione †

## Wagering

It is lawful to play the game without a wager. But if thou findest a stake to be needful for thy contentment, do not place on fortune too much of thine estate.

Sapiens es; si tibi pecora superflua sunt, noli pretiosum servum periclitari. Si longe a ludo || sis, pignora pro ludo trivio sestertiis sint.§

But when at the top of thy game, do not be unwilling to stake a talent a hole on thy skill.¶

Imprimis, memoria tene, indecens esse, tua uxore posita pignori, libenter certamen perdere.)

\* "Well! Well!" and "Shocking!"

† "On Wagering."

|| "Off your game."

§ "i. e. Play for nickels by the Nassau system.

¶ Advice of a canny Scottish flavor of frugality.

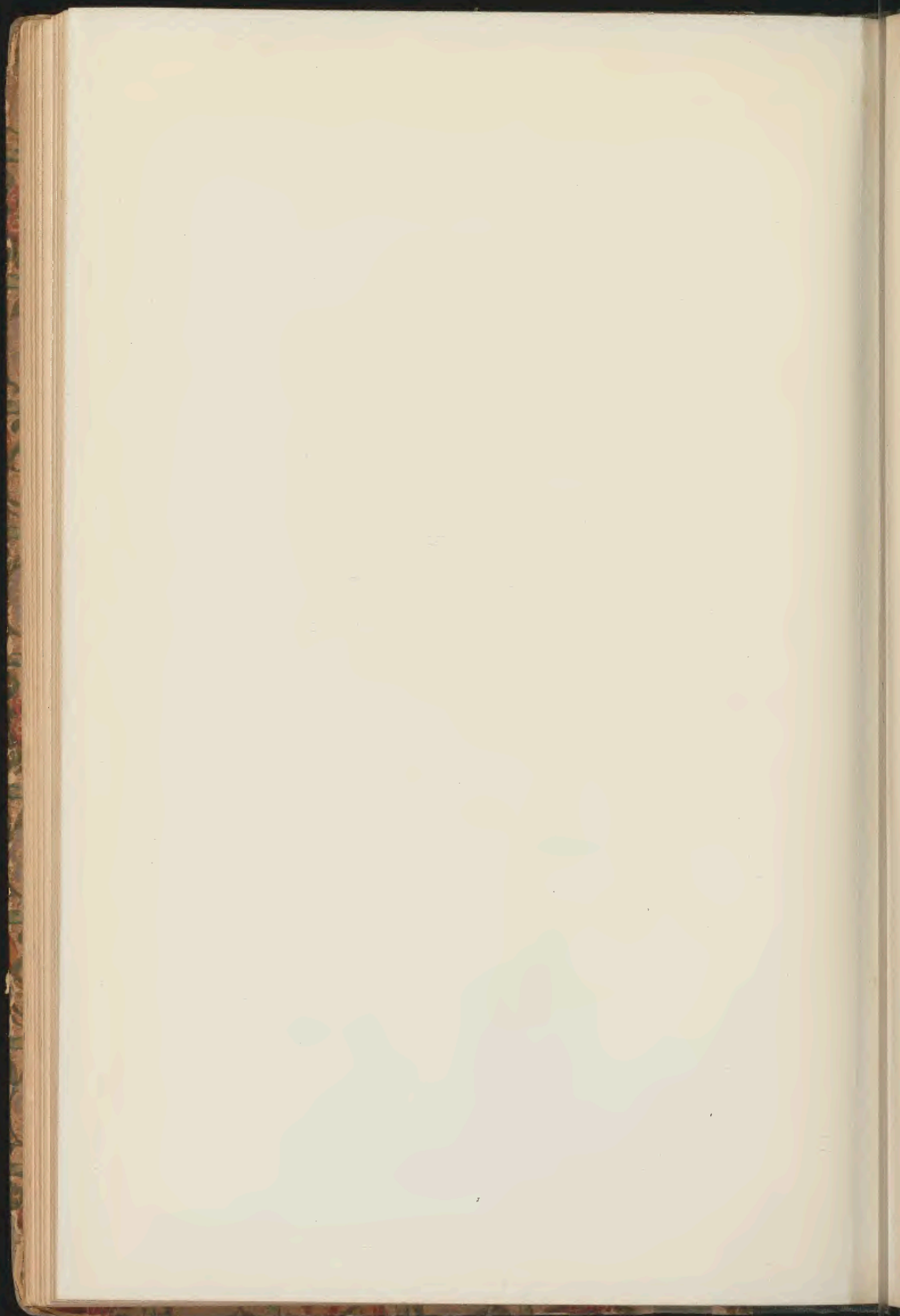
) Note that Caprius puts the emphasis, not on the wagering of one's wife, but on the intentional losing of the match; one was a mere sporting proposition, the other a matter of ethics.



CAPRILIUS ADDRESSING THE BALL

"Quod si pax animi cogat ut impia verba e pectore  
expellas."

De Globulo Adeundo



## VI

## De Oculo Figendo in Cavum

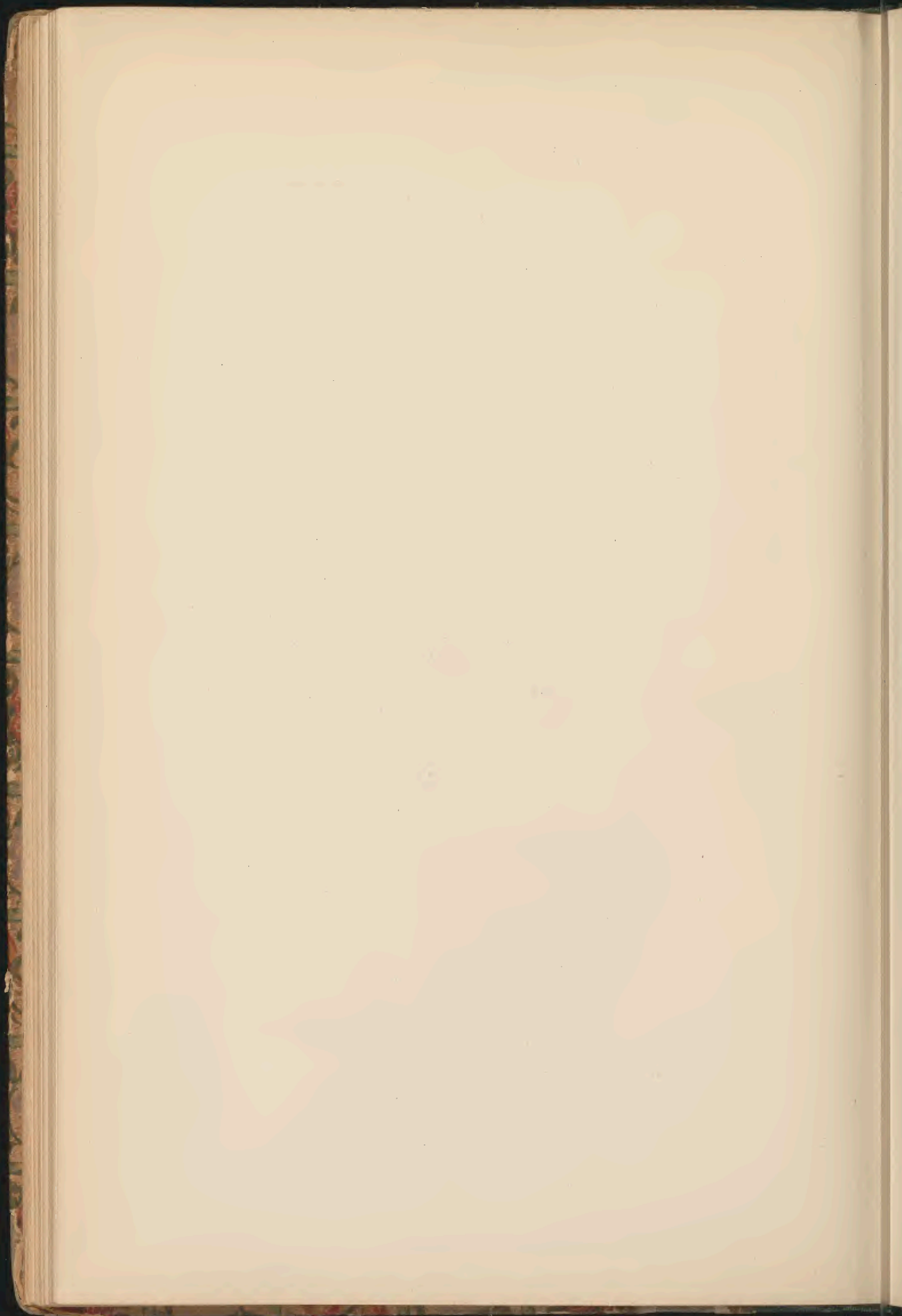
## On Keeping the Eye on the Hole \*

Ut tuum ludum, globulator carissime, magni aestimas, cum virgam ad brevem putationem faciendam † sumis, oculum, mihi crede, in cavum fige. || Complura certamina amissa sunt quod globulator oculum in globulum quam cavum figere maluit.

\* This is contrary to the fundamental principles of the modern game. And yet, would not some of us, who are obsessed by the uncontrollable impulse to shift the gaze at the critical instant, be better putters if we would cease to attempt the impossible and, harking back to first principles, frankly "keep the eye" on the cup?

† "To make a short putt." See Etymology for the derivation of "putt." The origin of the word, and the intimate relationship of the stroke to the downfall of Caprius may well point to a beginning of sinister inspiration.

|| "By all means, keep your eye on the hole."





# Sententiae Golfianae et Proverbia

By the Monk-Golfer, Gregory, the Compiler  
of the Old Story of Golf's Origin and the  
"De Globulo" of Caprilius

## Aphorisms

On "Good Form "

Keeping Score

Concerning the Unwisdom of Cheating

The Varieties of Golfers; the Hard Loser

On Hazards; the Mental Hazard

## Proverbs

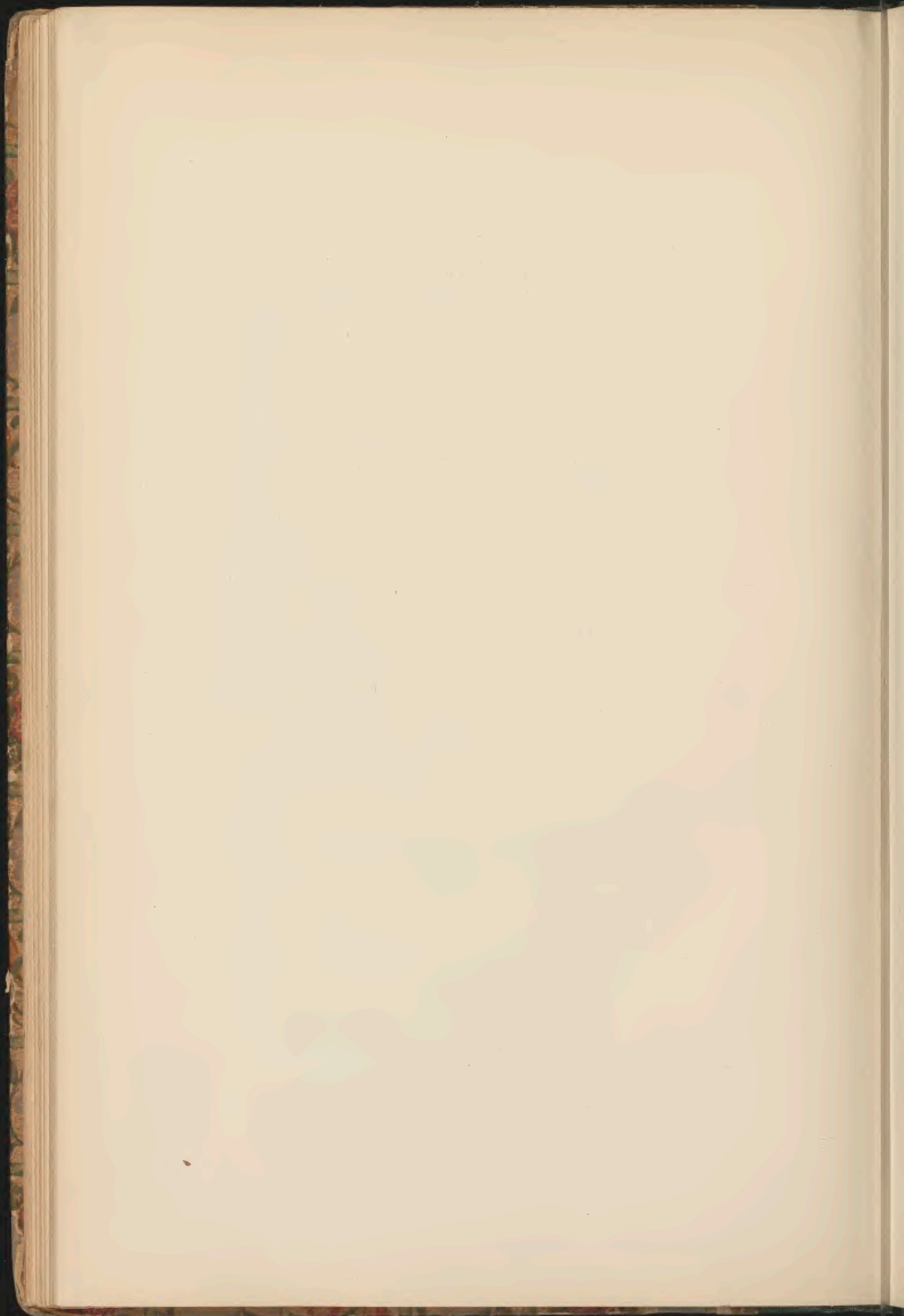
On Golfic Mentality

The "Birdie "

Concerning Premature Celebration of Victory

On the Enlisting of the Sympathy of Your Wife  
and Physician

The Mug-Hunter



## Sententiae Golfianae

Disregarding all else, be thou certain to swing in good form.\* Far better is it to have the swing and lose than to play like a duffer and win.

Si inveneris vel manum vel pedem ludum impedire, eam abscide; † praestat te truncatum agere vitam quam ordini Agrestium || semper affigi.

Even if thy caddy be preëminently worthless, do not discard him; for thou mayest receive a worse one. Hold him, but arrange to pay him at the end of the season.§

Tabulam ictuum ¶ recte nota, praesertim si metuas ne ea in manus arbitri ictuum incidat.)

\* "Faciem propriam cole."

† An heroic remedy, not to be taken literally.

|| "It is better to pass through life armless or legless than to be afflicted with chronic dufferism." For the force of "Agrestium" see the Vocabulary: "globulator agrestis."

§ "Pensurum esse pro officiis, aestate exacta." From this it would appear that the relation between caddie and player was more stable than in modern times. Probably, a caddie did not necessarily serve a given player for more than one season; the right of dismissal is implied in the above passage. The context is obscure.

¶ "Score card."

) "Lest it fall into the hands of the handicapper." Not a reason of high morality.

Sed, si prosit notas esse parvas ut premium consequaris, cadifer ictus notet\* et invita liberaliter comitem ad cadum.†

\* \* \* \*

Si globulus tuus amissus sit, ne alterum per foramen sacculi annexi bracis demiseris; || forsitan primus globulus reperiatur.§

If the ball of thine opponent should become lost and thou shouldst find it, it is not commendable or discreet to press it into the ground with thy heel,¶ lest thou be detected and branded with disgrace.

\* \* \* \*

Non decet te cadiferum tuum vel cadiferum adversari pretio corrumpere, ne mores depraventur, nisi forte cognoveris adversarium hoc fecisse.) Quo casu licet te plus polliceri; sed cadifero noli pendere, nisi ludo exacto.]

Before an important match it is the part of

\* For the caddie to mark the card in an important match would now be illegal.

† "Ad cadum." Doubtless taken from Caprius. In the time of Gregory, the caddie did not carry a jug.

|| The dropping of a ball through a hole in the pocket is an expedient that will be used as long as degenerates and pockets exist.

§ Another of the many ignoble reasons for virtuous sentiments ¶ "In humum calce premere."

) "Unless you should happen to find out that your opponent has done it." An exceedingly cynical qualification.

] Gregory was plainly a man forehanded in financial matters.

wisdom to treat thine opponent generously; \* also at the place of refreshment on the course.† But thou thyself shouldst be abstemious until the Nineteenth Hole is being contested.‖

Et quaterna mixta § et potiones mixtae vitanda sunt; nam utraque sunt plena mali.¶

\* \* \* \*

Varia sunt genera globulatorum. Sunt qui loquaces, qui taciturni; qui magna spe, qui nulla spe; qui misericordes, qui suspiciosi; qui probi, qui improbi sint. Omnibus locus in hoc miro ludo est. Sed cave "globulatorem dolorose perdentem;" ) talis est pestis et adversario et amicis et sibi.

\* \* \* \*

Multa sunt incommoda quae obsidentur cursui globulatoris: pericula aquosa, arenosa, graminosa; ]

\* "Adversario plene indulge." This expression is capable of both a generous and a sinister interpretation.

† "In taberna dimidi cursus."

‖ There is reason to believe that the Nineteenth Hole was the scene of real contests,— somewhat like the "beer-scandals" of the German students,— in which the loser of a golf match could seek satisfaction in a field in which he thought the prospects of success were more promising. One passage indicates that drawn matches were frequently decided at this hole.

§ "Mixed foursomes."

¶ Why mixed foursomes and mixed drinks should be placed in the same category is not plain. Perhaps it merely reveals an irresistible proclivity to word-play.

) "Beware of the 'hard loser.'"

] "Water hazards, sand bunkers and high grass."

atque putatio brevis,\* curvamen dextrum et sinistrum,† positio cavata.‖ Pessimus autem inimicus est "periculum imaginarium;" § quod ut eiciatur, crebra sacrificia Mercurio agenda sunt.¶

Revere "Colonel Bogey") as a power to be appeased and do not assail him as foe to be black-guarded. If thy handicap be high, be content and fill thy pockets with silver; ¶ if the handicapper reduce thy rating, give to him thanks, for he has honored thee.

\* \* \* \*

\* "The short putt."

† "The sliced and the hooked ball."

‖ "The cuppy lie."

§ "The mental hazard."

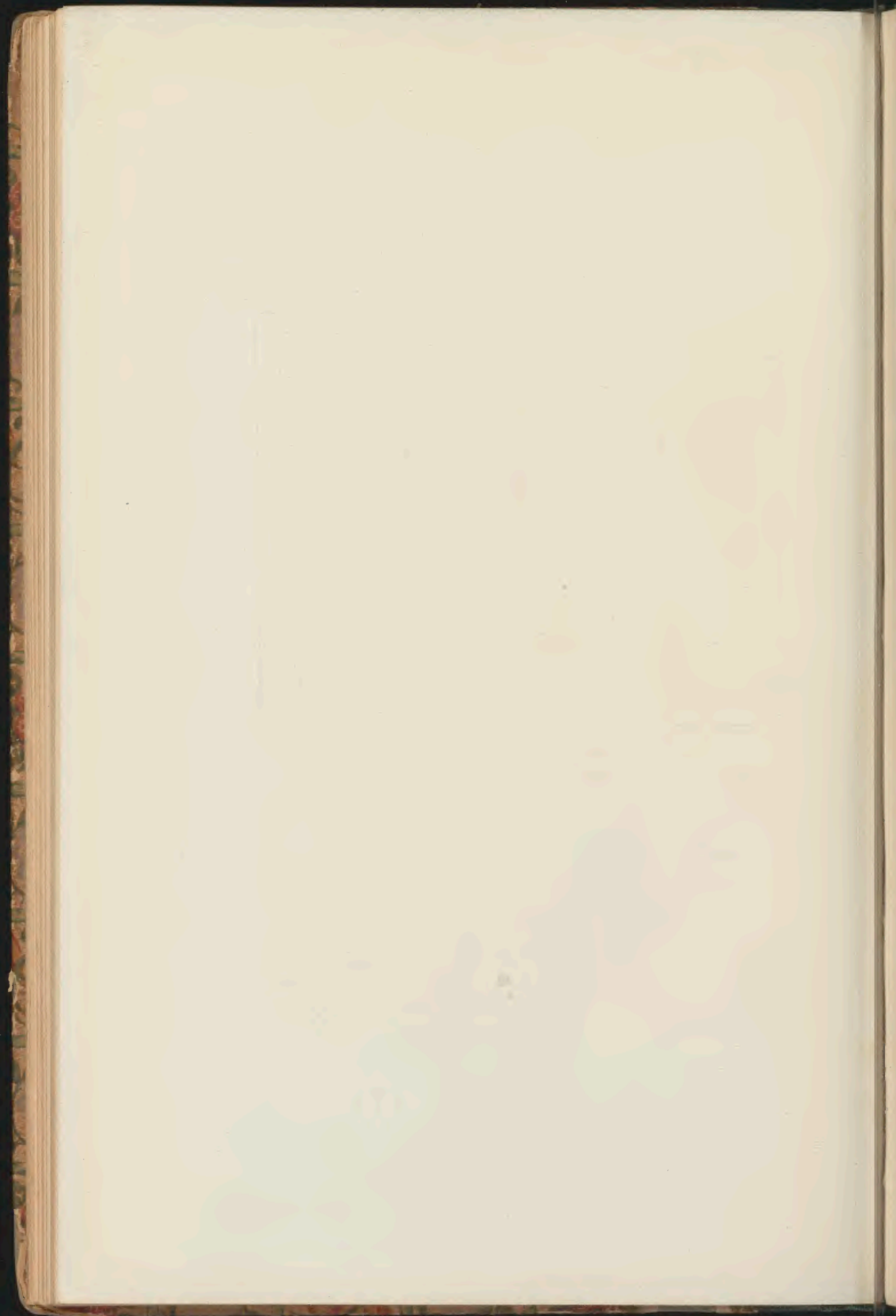
¶ At first blush, a Caprilian sentiment. Yet, even a monk who was immersed in the ancient lore of the game might well give such pagan advice. The editor once detected a worthy churchman and an estimable citizen crossing his fingers as his opponent was making a critical putt: a mute appeal to the powers of darkness.

) "Rex formidinis," literally "the king of terror."

¶ The gaming instinct seems to have been strong in both Gregory and Caprius.



CAPRILIA VIDUA  
The Primitive Golf Widow





## Proverbia Golfiana

Ludus globuli est condicio mentis;\* but thou shouldst not think that games are won by ratiocination.

Ludus globuli est probatio animi ; † but thou must not despise a neurasthenic who has the swing.

Ludus globuli non mediocrem vim corporis requirit; but a sixteen inch biceps is no guarantee against chronic fozzling. ‡

Ludum summisso cum animo § pete; but remember that confidence is the keynote to success.

\* \* \* \*

Duo genera avium sunt; but the number of "crows" is much greater than that of "eagles." ¶

\* \* \* \*

\* "A state of mind."

† "A test of nerve."

‡ Equivalent to the modern saying; "You must hit the ball hard, but don't press."

§ "In a humble spirit."

¶ The "birdie," a hole made in a stroke under bogey, has been regarded as an essentially modern institution. This proverb shows that as early as the time of Gregory, and probably earlier, there were two kinds of birdies, the eagle and the crow, the latter being associated with undesirable scoring.

Consilium quaere; But do not put too much faith in the counsel of a man simply because he is called "Willie" and talks with a burr.\*

Victoria in taberna dimidi cursus noli plenius exsultare, quod supra novem cavis sis.† The attempt to putt the hole toward the ball has been ruled to be a stroke.

\* \* \* \*

Tibi medicus globularius sit; only such a physician is qualified to prescribe the proper remedies for the man who is not ill.

Praecipue, effice ut uxor tuo ludo delectetur; but as thou valuest the peace of thy household, thou must not be averse to persuading her that there is no pleasure in the game for her.

\* \* \* \*

#### NOLI VENATOR POCULORUM ESSE ||

\*"Scotice loquitur." This is the only hint found in the manuscript that Gregory was not a Scot.

†Gregory is over-cautious. The man who is dormie-nine at the refreshment booth and refuses to develop a situation that will give his opponent a fair fighting chance lacks the instincts of a gentleman.

|| "Don't be a mug-hunter." This has caused the editor much perplexity. Cups as golf prizes are of recent date, according to the standard bibliography of the game. Yet their use as such is mentioned in this centuries-old manuscript which bears every mark of authenticity. The sentiment is given in carefully written capitals while the rest of the parchment is in a careless, cursive hand. Did some modern golfer have access to the manuscript and affix this advice to the ancient tome, or is it all a — merum ludibrium?

## Etymology

### Golf Etymology in the Light of the Manuscript of Gregory, the Monk

NOTE:—It is with reluctance that the editor includes the following chapter on the etymology of golf terms. The derivations are gathered from notes scattered through the manuscript, some hardly legible, some impossible philologically. But as a specimen of the extremes to which a would-be etymologist, and withal a devoted golfer, may go, the collection is not without interest.

\* \* \* \*

Gowffe (golf) Gregory states that the "globulus" of Agricola's legions grew into "goffulus," whence by elimination of the diminutive termination came the later word.

Cadif (caddie) From cadifer (cadum ferens), the *jugbearer*. See note, page 25, and "The Duties of the Caddie," page 37.

Putt Capriilius calls the stroke ictus putandus, *the stroke to be carefully studied*, also putatio, *a pondering*. Agricola's soldiers condensed the word to puttio.

Dormie From dormire, *to sleep, to be at ease*. Gregory apparently used the word only in the sense of "dormie up;" "dormie down" was "insom" from insomnium, *sleeplessness, anxiety*.

Stance From stare, *to stand*.

Teeb (tee) From tebula, *a little hill*. The diminutive of an archaic word.

Scalf (sclaff) From scalpere, *to scrape*.

Stamy (stimie) From stamium. See note, page 23.

Jeckur (jigger) Capriilius' favorite club. From jecur, *the liver*, the anatomical seat of anger. The emergency club, until the invention of the

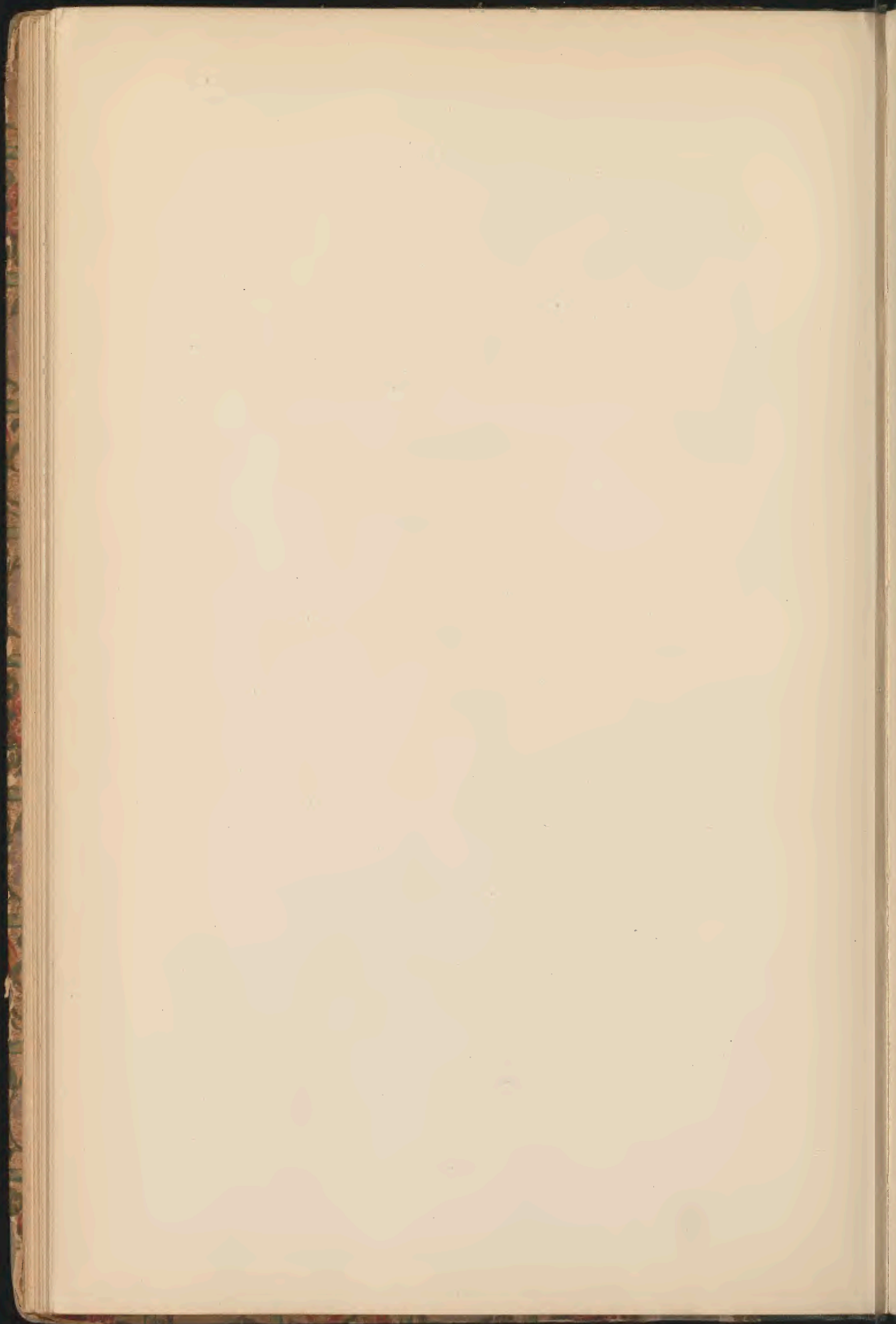
Nibilicus (niblick) From nae, an adverb of emphasis and bilis, *bile, anger*. Gregory claims that he devised this indispensable tool for difficult situations and built up a classic word to fit the mental state that accompanies its use.

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Massie (mashie) From *massa*, a *sticky lump*. The ancient implement for use over wet and rough ground.

Pungar (bunker) From *pungere*, to *afflict*.

Linx (links) From *linguax*, *talkative*. This either points to a much more social game than the present one or it is a "lucus a non lucendo" derivative.



## Vocabulary

adversarius, an opponent (in match play). See comes

arbiter ictuum, the judge of strokes, the handicapper  
cadifer, the jug-bearer. (See Etymology.) The caddie

cadus, a jug

caespes effossus, an excavated sod, a divot

cavum, a hole, the "cup." The full term is "cavum putationis," the "hole of pondering"

cavum undevicesimum, the "nineteenth hole." This may, or may not, mean that eighteen holes constituted a match; perhaps the name was applied in somewhat the same sense as the count of "nineteen" is given to the impossible cribbage hand

cavum vincere, to win a hole

cavum perdere, to lose a hole

certamen, a match

certamen trivium, a match played for a stake according to the Nassau plan

longe a ludo, off one's game

comes, a partner in medal play. Hitherto it has been thought that medal play was not a part of the original game

comitatus herbaceus, the turf, or green, committee  
commodum ex ictibus, the advantage from strokes, the handicap

curvamen dextrum, a right curve, a "slice"

curvamen sinistrum, a left curve, a "hook"

facies propria, a proper appearance, "good form"

foramen per sacculum assutum bracis, a hole in the trouser's pocket

globulus, a little ball, a golf ball

globulator, a golfer

globularius (adjective), golfing

globulator dolorose perdens, a golfer who loses with grief, the "hard loser"

globulator agrestis, a duffer, the term denoting both awkwardness and agricultural tendencies

globulus amissus, a lost ball

globulum adire, to address the ball (both ways)

ictus, a stroke

imperitia sempiterna, chronic dufferism

ludibrium merum, an unadulterated hoax

ludus globuli, the game of golf



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mentitio de ratione, deception in the reckoning,  
"faking the score"

oculum in cavum figere, to keep the eye on the  
hole (a present day heresy)

periculum, a hazard

periculum aquosum, a water hazard

periculum arenosum, a sand trap

periculum graminosum, high grass

periculum imaginarium, a "mental hazard"

pignus, a pledge or stake

positio cavata, a cuppy lie

potio, a drinking

potionem duplicem haurire, to drain a draught, and  
yet another,— especially to celebrate a stimie

potiones mixtae, mixed drinks

putatio, a pondering (over a stroke), particularly a  
putt. See Etymology

quaterna mixta, mixed foursomes

rex formidinis, the king of terror, "Colonel Bogey"

sponsio, wagering

stamium, a stimie. See Etymology

stamium ponere, to lay a stimie

summo in ludo, at the top of one's game

supra, above, "up"; supra ictibus duobus, two up

subter, down

tabula ictuum, a record of strokes, a score card

taberna cursus dimidi, the half way house, the refreshment booth

teba (a very old word), a hill, a tee; also tebula

venator poculorum, a hunter of cups, a "mug-hunter"

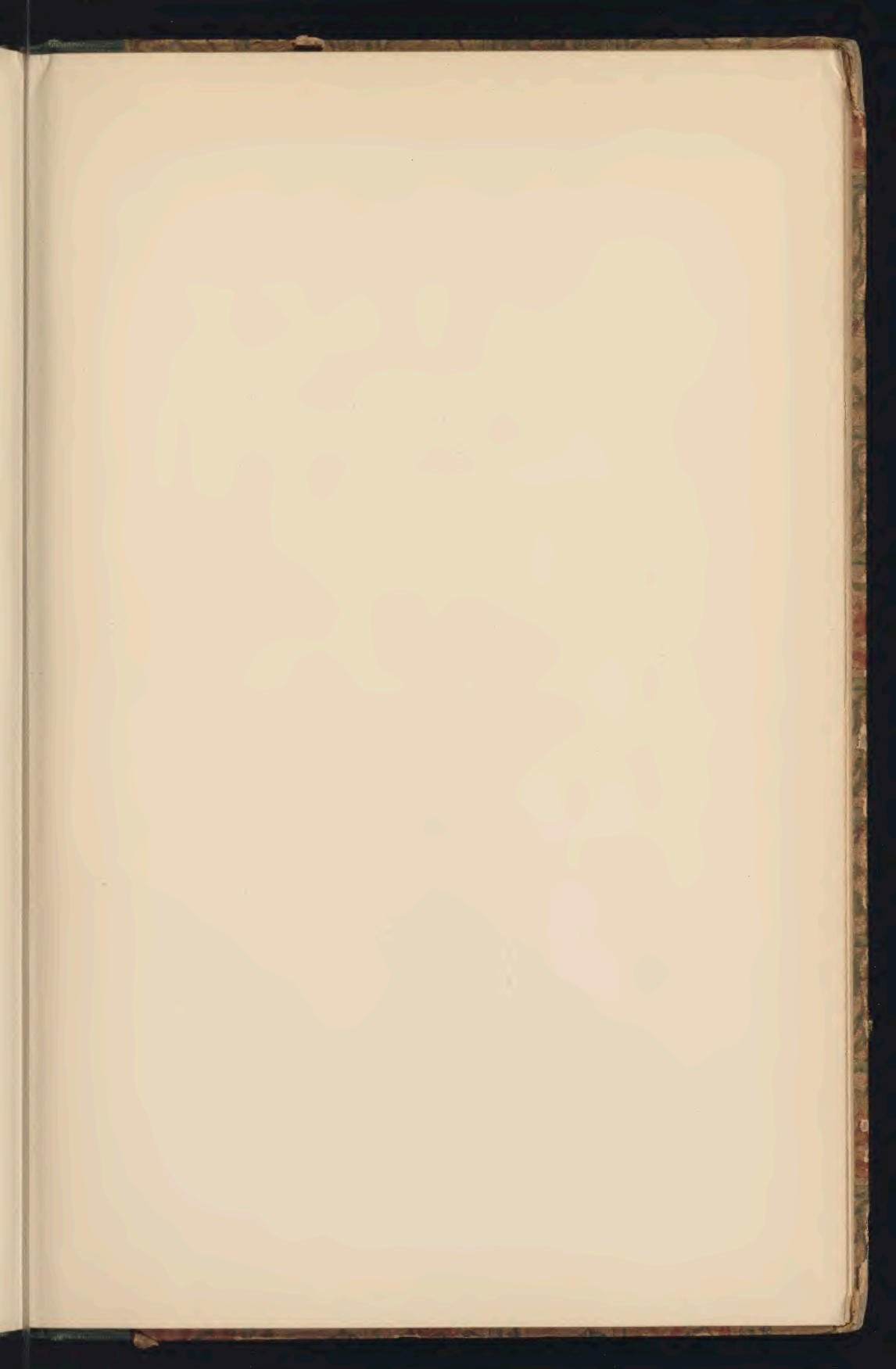
virga, a wand; Caprius applied the word to the implements that he used in the primitive game, apparently having in mind the wand with which Mercury had seduced him; a putter

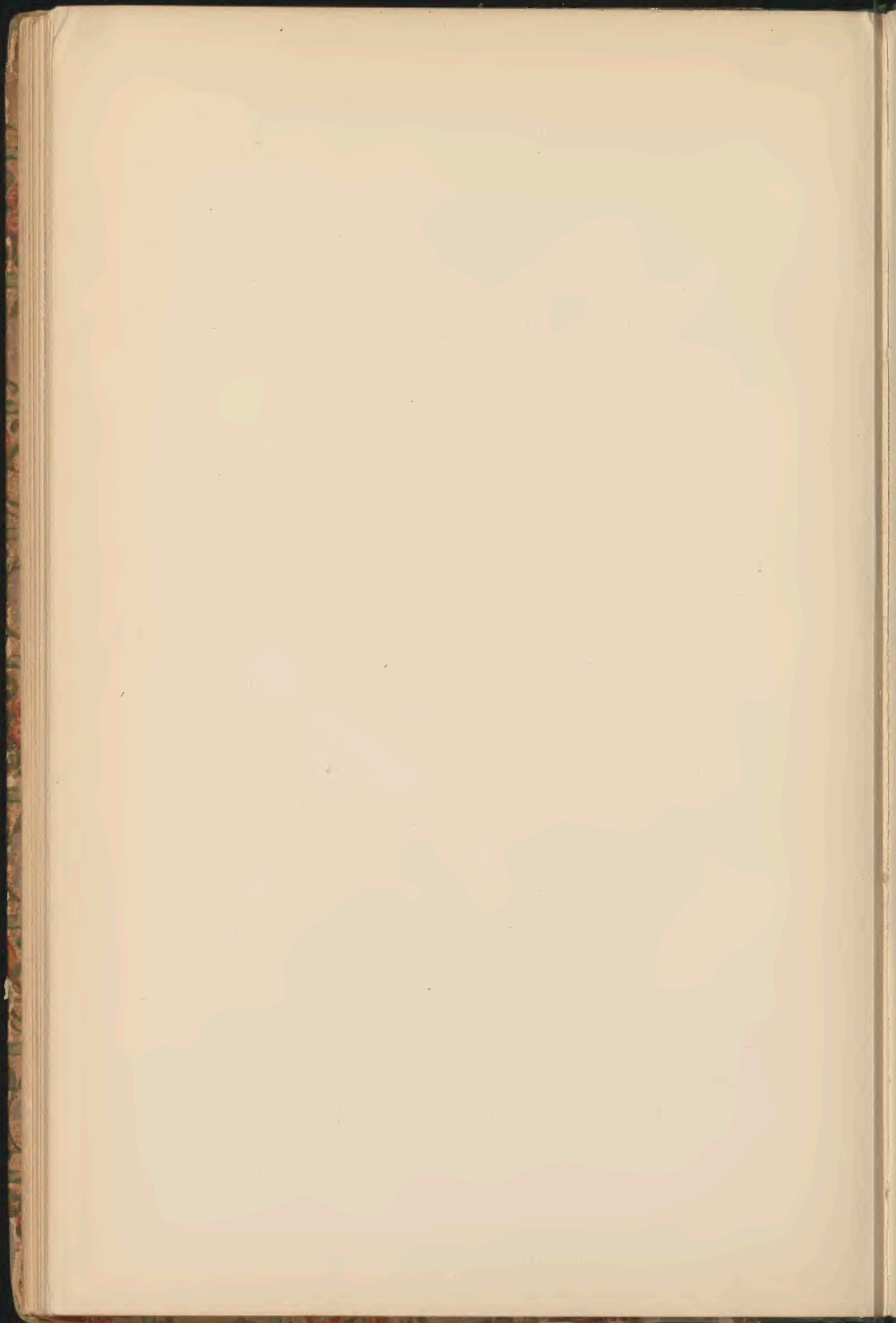
virga nodosa, a stick with a knobbed end, a club (other than a putter)

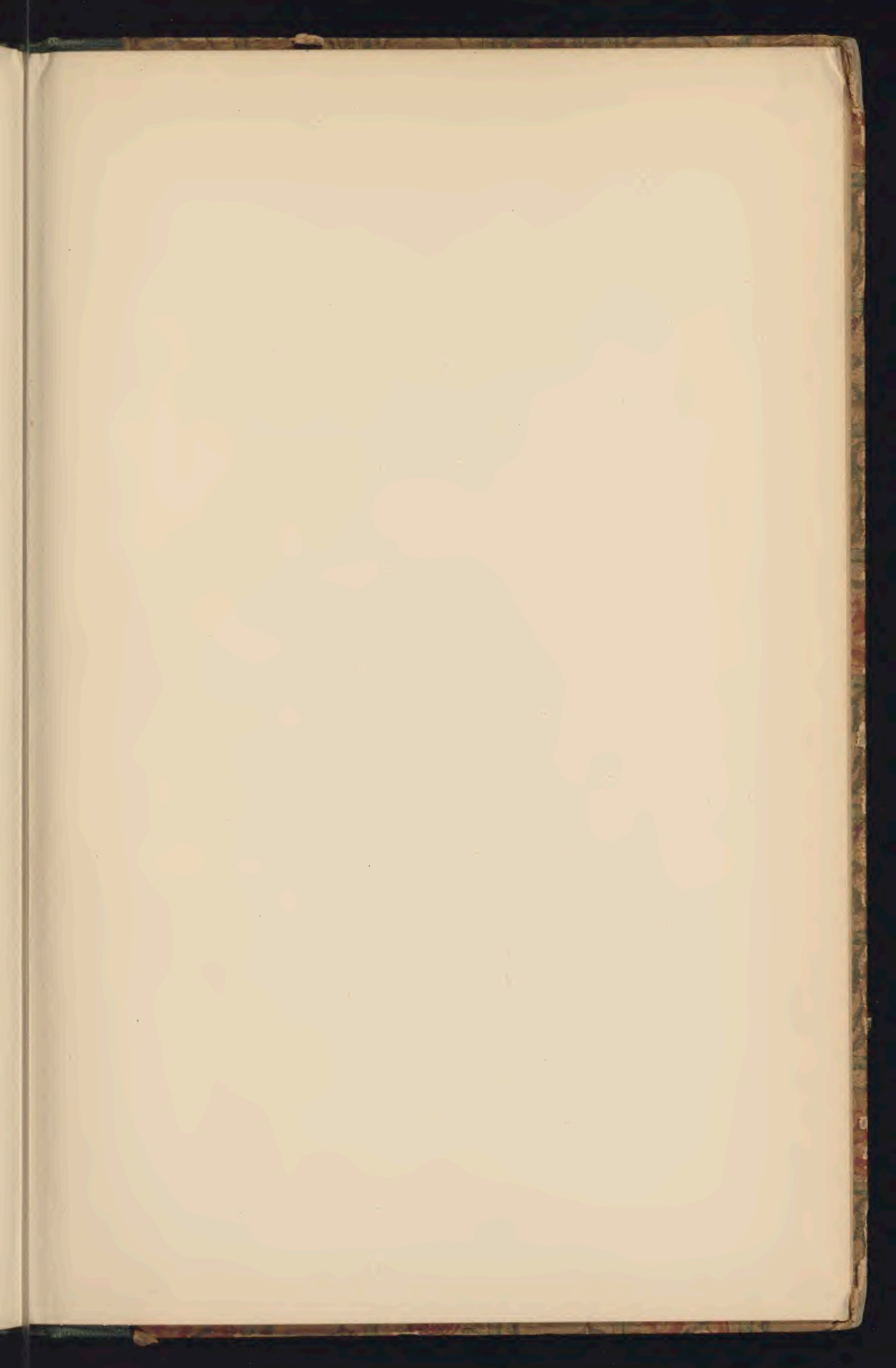
## Laus Globuli

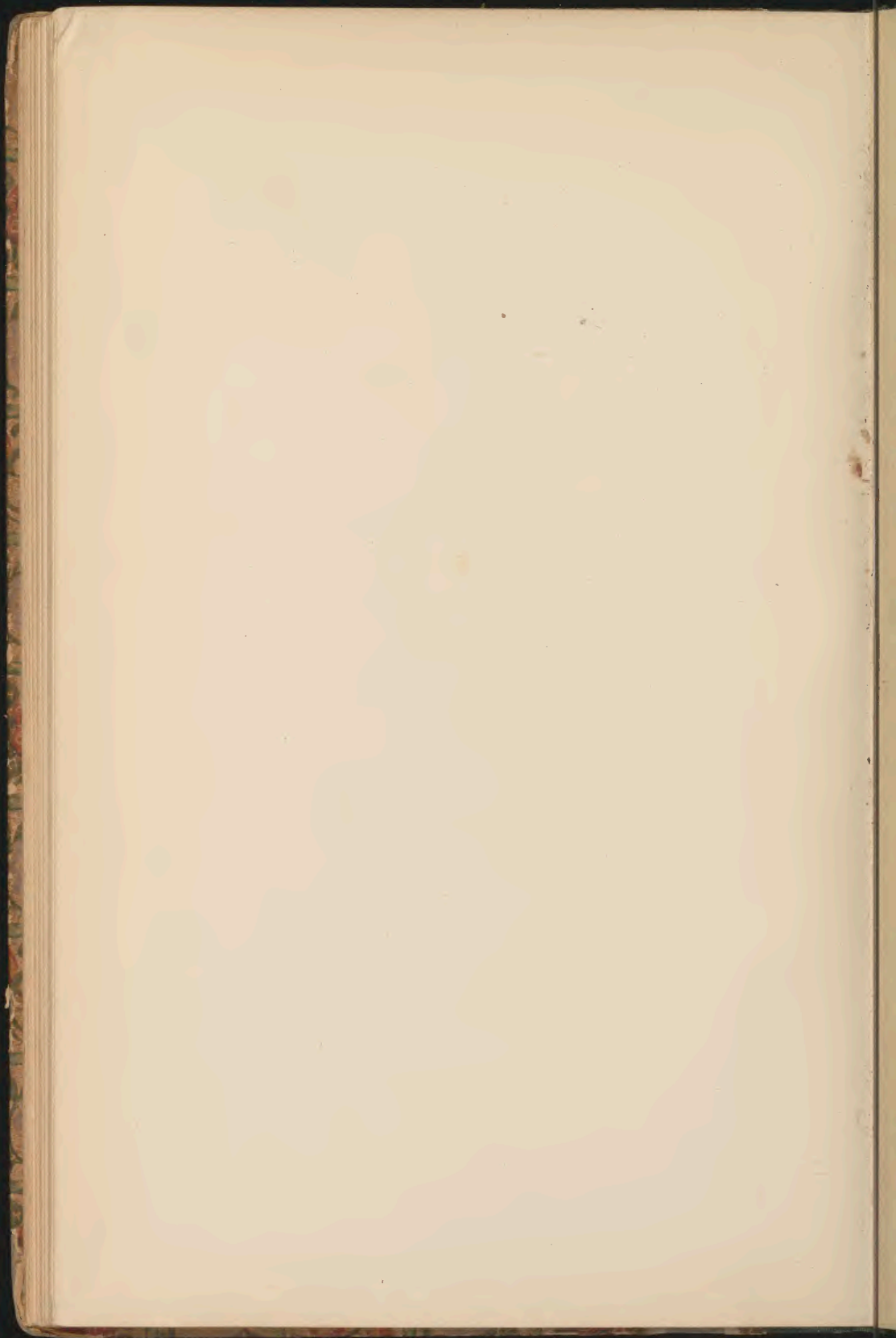
"Ceterae remissiones neque temporum sunt neque aetatum omnium neque locorum; at haec studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solacium praebent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur."



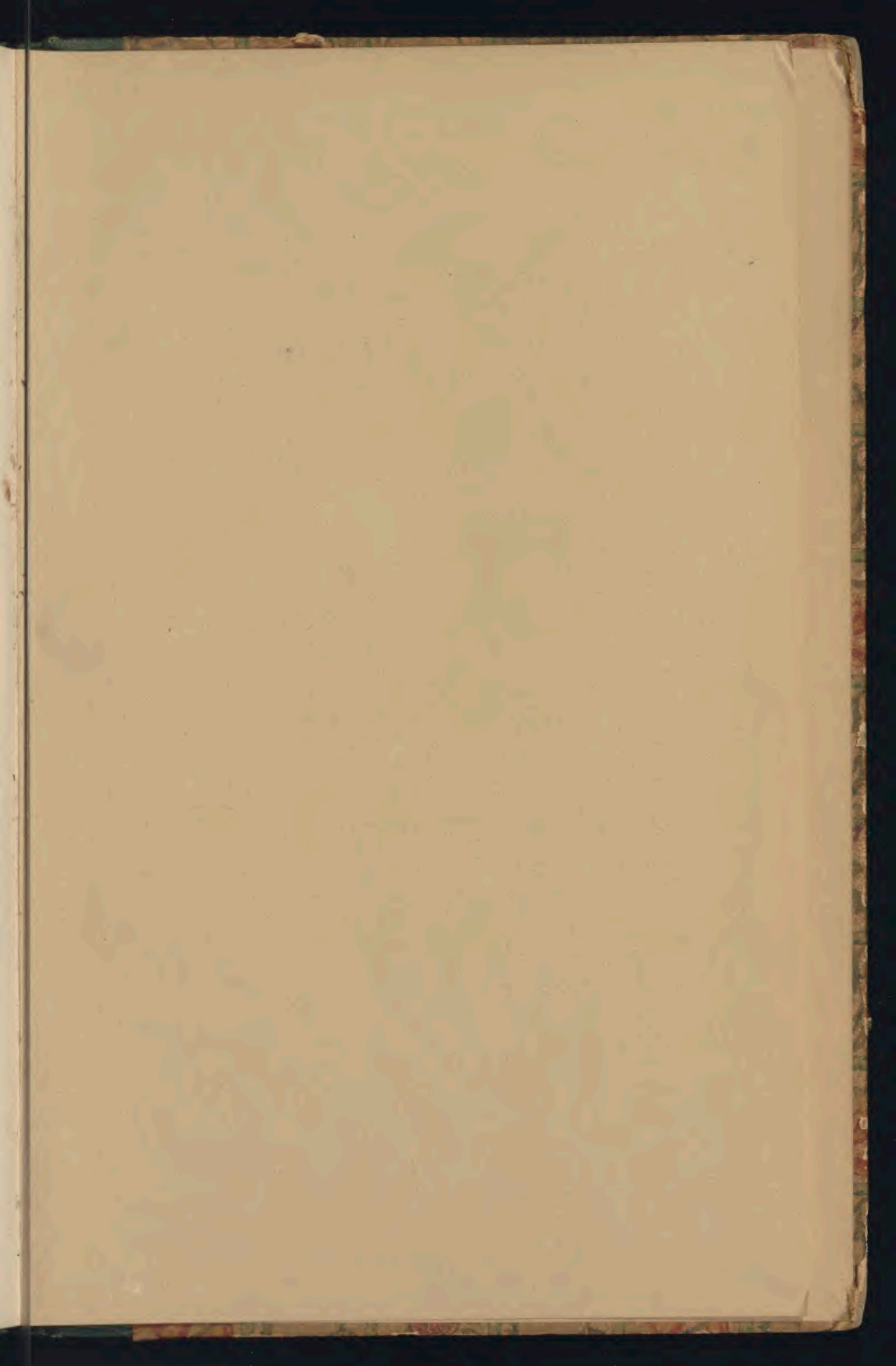


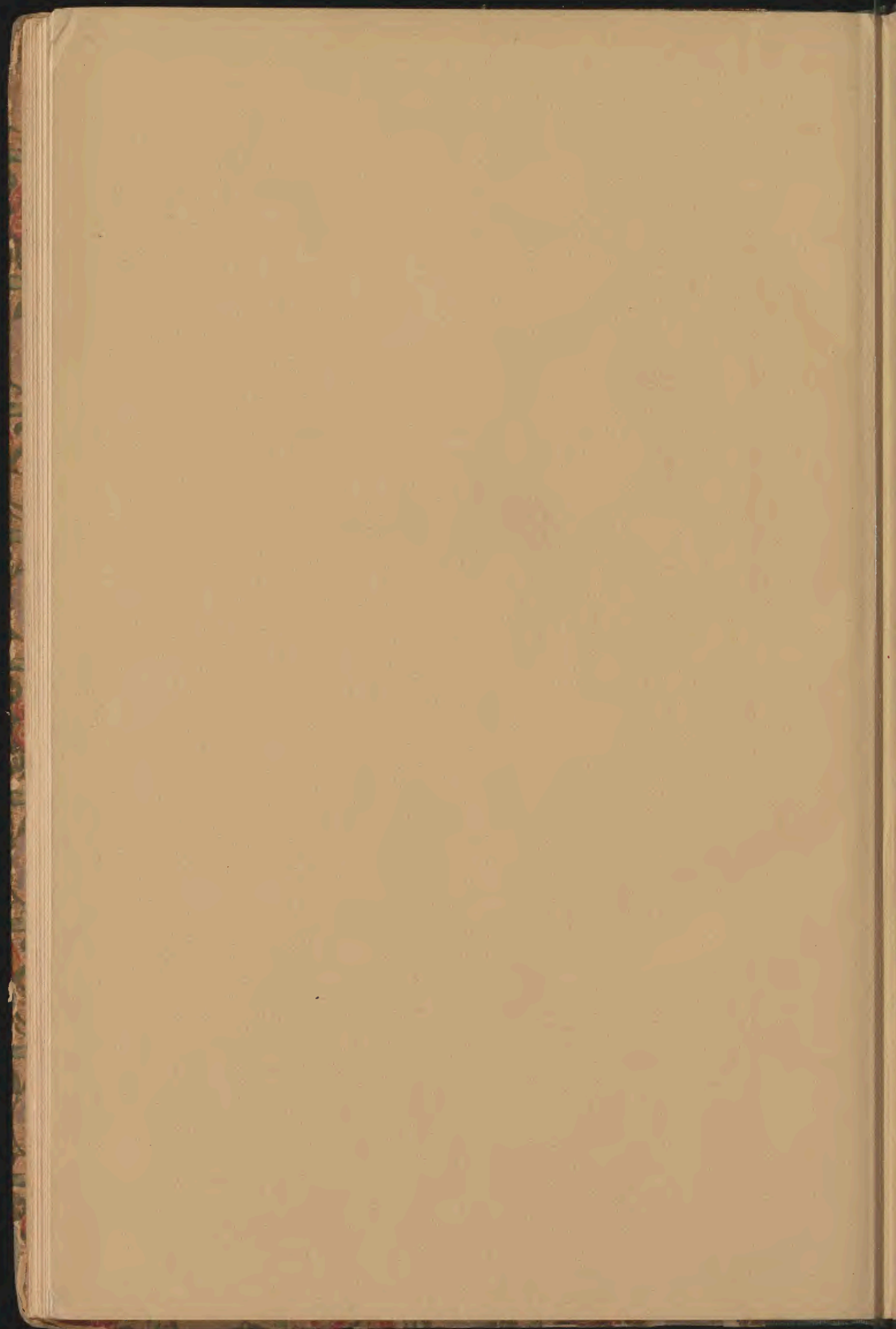




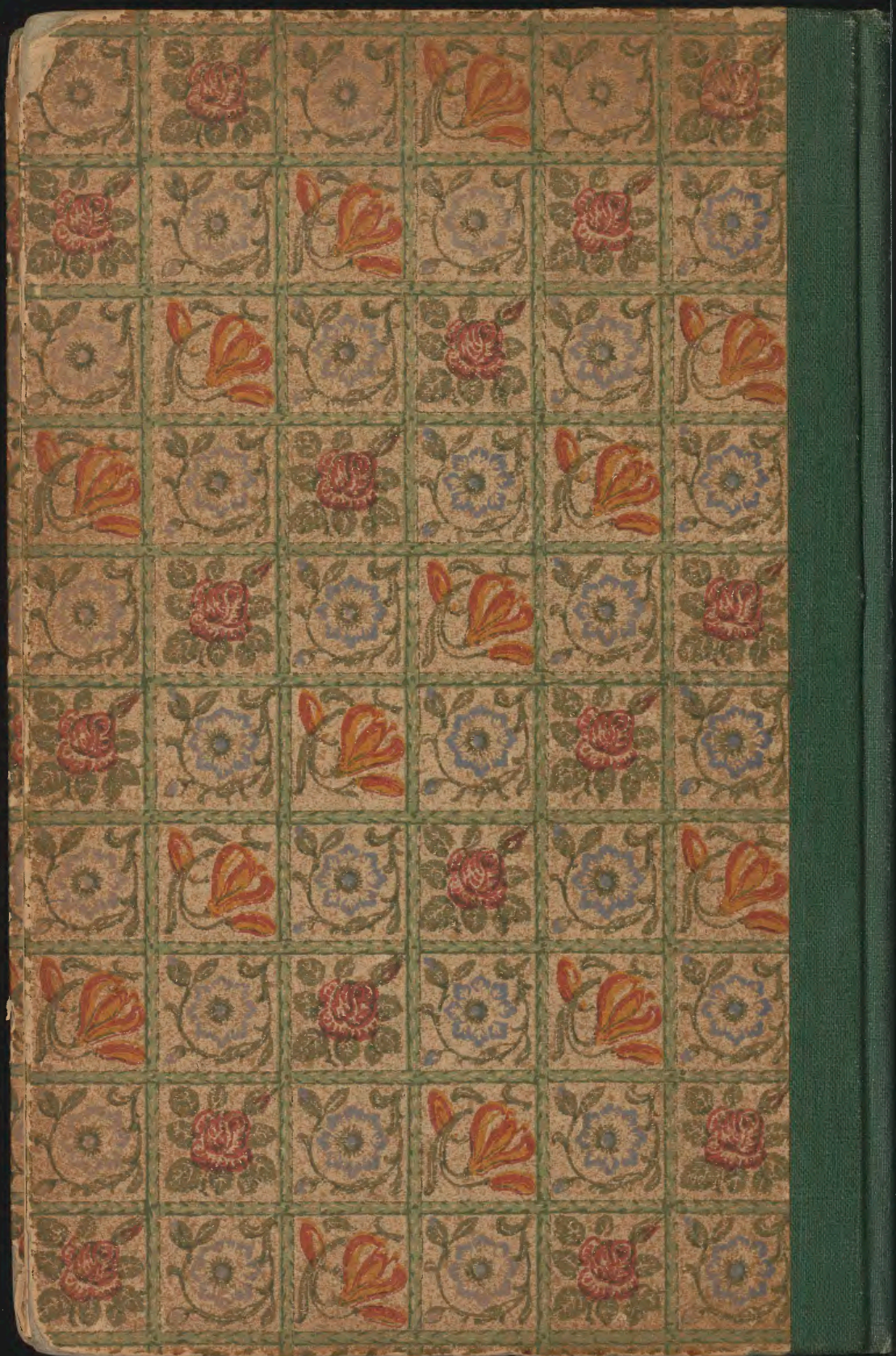








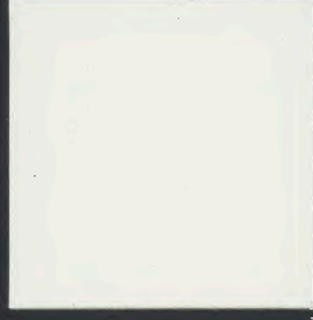
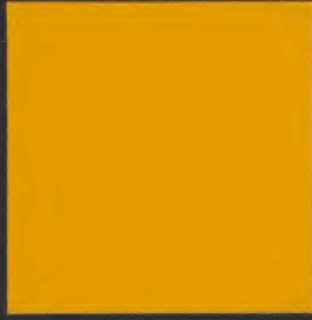
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