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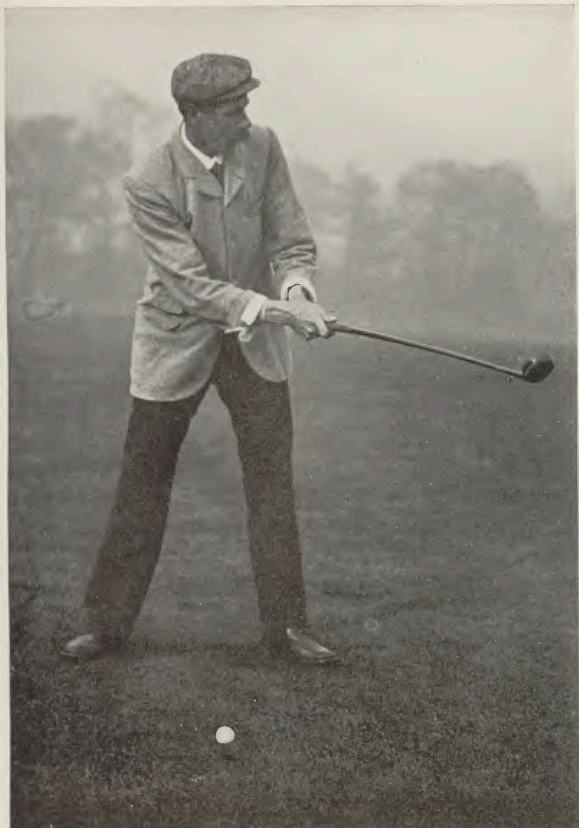
*LIST OF GOLFERS PHOTOGRAPHED*

- MR. JOHN BALL, Jr., Open Champion, 1890; Amateur Champion,  
1888, 1890, 1892, 1894, 1899, 1907  
*Pages 30, 31, 32, 42, 46*
- J. BRAID, Open Champion, 1901, 1905, 1906  
*Pages 6, 7, 12, 17, 23, 24, 44, 49*
- WILLIE FERNIE, Open Champion, 1883  
*Pages 20, 32, 57*
- MR. JACK GRAHAM, Jr., Scottish International  
*Pages 35, 60*
- MR. H. H. HILTON, Open Champion, 1892, 1897; Amateur  
Champion, 1900, 1901  
*Page 22*
- ANDREW KIRKALDY, Scottish International  
*Pages 29, 48*
- ARNAUD MASSEY, Open Champion, 1907  
*Pages 9, 15, 27, 36, 56, 64*
- MR. ROBT. MAXWELL, Amateur Champion, 1903  
*Pages 34, 58*
- J. H. TAYLOR, Open Champion, 1894, 1895, 1900  
*Pages 11, 16, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 61*
- MR. W. J. TRAVIS, Amateur Champion, 1904  
*Pages 10, 21, 33, 40, 43, 59*
- HARRY VARDON, Open Champion, 1896, 1898, 1899, 1903  
*Frontispiece, Pages 8, 13, 14, 25, 50, 62*
- TOM VARDON, English International  
*Pages 18, 26, 37, 41, 47*
- JACK WHITE, Open Champion, 1904  
*Pages 19, 28, 38, 45, 63*





JAMES BRAID.  
Stance with Driver.



JAMES BRAID.  
Address with Driver.



HARRY VARDON.  
Stance with Driver.



ARNAUD MASSEY.  
Stance with Driver.



Mr. WALTER J. TRAVIS.  
Addressing for Drive.



J. H. TAYLOR.  
Stance with Driver.



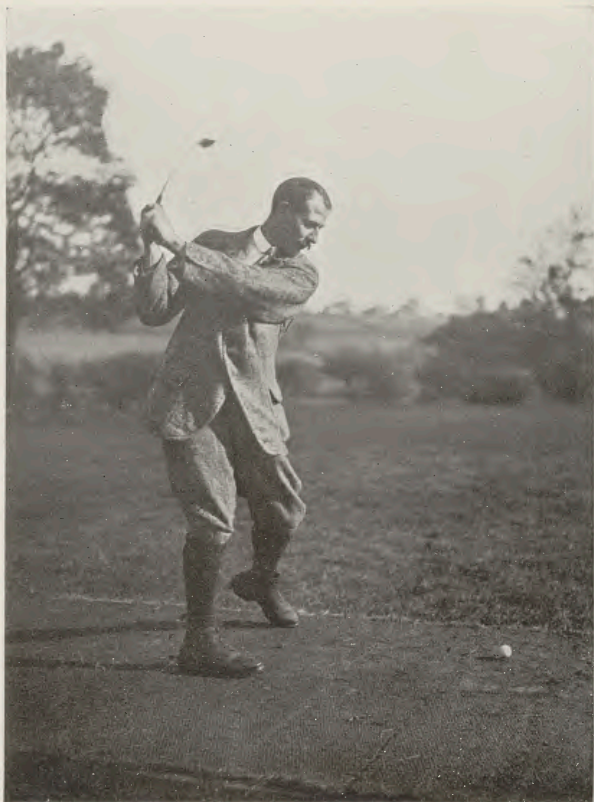


JAMES BRAID.  
Top of swing for Drive.





HARRY VARDON.  
Top of swing with Driver.



HARRY VARDON.  
Beginning downward swing of Drive.



ARNAUD MASSEY.  
Top of swing of Drive.



J. H. TAYLOR.  
Top of swing for Drive.



JAMES BRAID.  
Grip at top of swing with Driver.



TOM VARDON.  
Top of swing of Drive.





JACK WHITE.  
Top of swing for Drive.





W. FERNIE.  
Top of swing for Drive.



MR. WALTER J. TRAVIS.  
Top of swing of Drive.



MR. H. H. HILTON.  
At the top of a Brassey shot.



JAMES BRAID.  
Driving. Coming round.

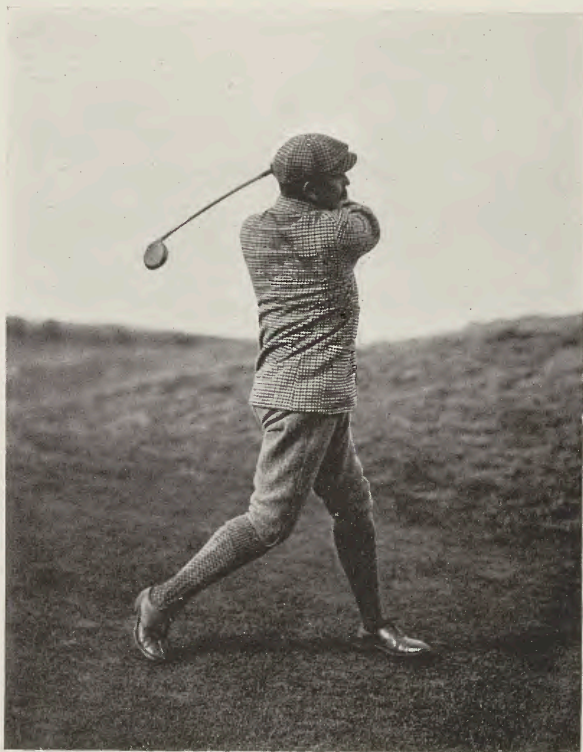


JAMES BRAID.  
An ideal finish with Driver.



HARRY VARDON.  
Finish with Driver.





TOM VARDON.  
Finish of swing of Drive.

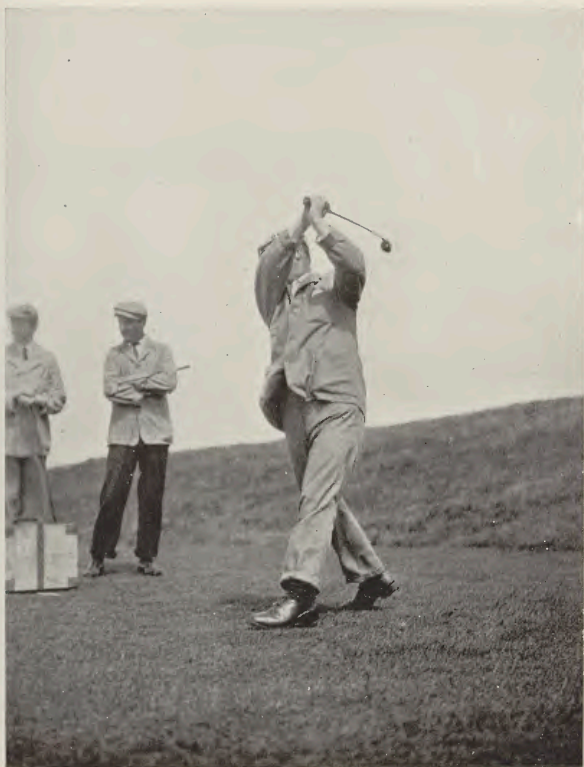


ARNAUD MASSEY.  
Finish of swing with Driver.





JACK WHITE.  
Finish of swing with Driver.



ANDREW KIRKALDY.  
Finish of swing of Drive.



Mr. JOHN BALL, Jr.  
Driving. Coming round.



Mr. JOHN BALL, Jr.  
Finish of Drive.



Mr. JOHN BALL, Jr.

Driving. The ball is to be seen near the centre of picture in full flight.



Mr. WALTER J. TRAVIS  
Finish of Drive.





MR. ROBERT MAXWELL.  
Finishing with Driver.





MR. JACK GRAHAM  
Finish of Drive.



ARNAUD MASSEY.  
Playing a full Cleek shot.



TOM VARDON.  
Top of swing with Cleek.



JACK WHITE.  
At the top of a push Cleek shot.



W. FERNIE.  
Top of swing for Iron shot.



MR. WALTER J. TRAVIS.  
Top of swing for Iron shot.





TOM VARDON.  
Finishing a full Iron shot.

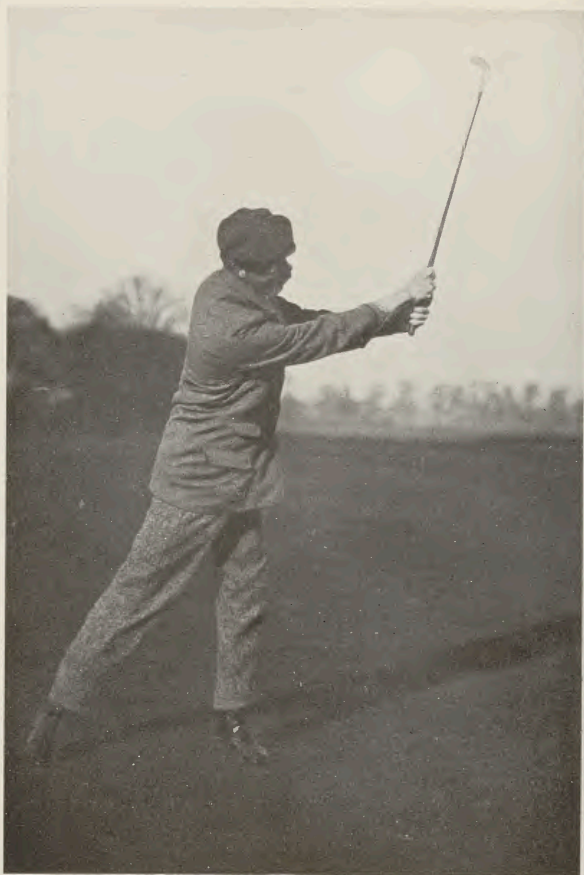




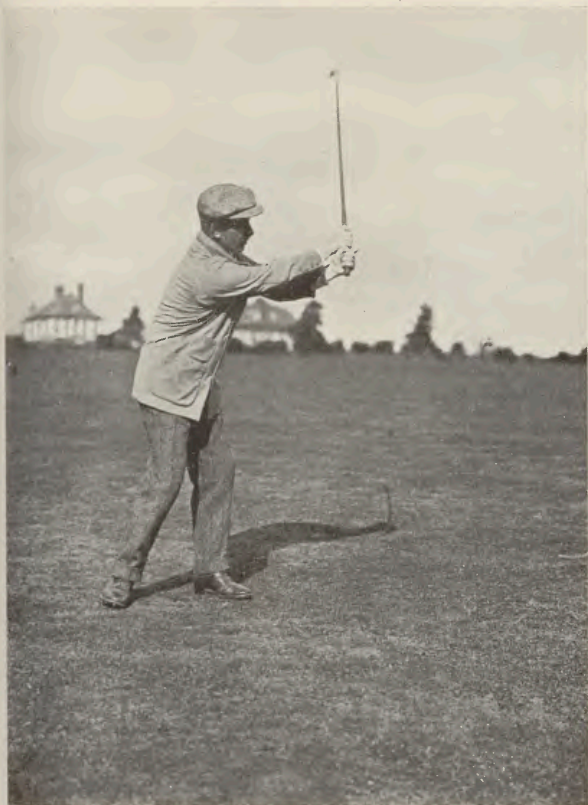
Mr. JOHN BALL, JR.  
Finish of Iron Tee-shot.



Mr. WALTER J. TRAVIS.  
Finishing with Iron.



JAMES BRAID.  
A half Cleek shot finish.



JACK WHITE.  
Finishing a push shot with Cleek.



Mr. JOHN BALL, Jr.  
Playing a half-push shot from Tee with Cleek.



TOM VARDON.  
Finish of half-push shot with Iron.





ANDREW KIRKALDY.  
Finish of his well-known push Iron shot.

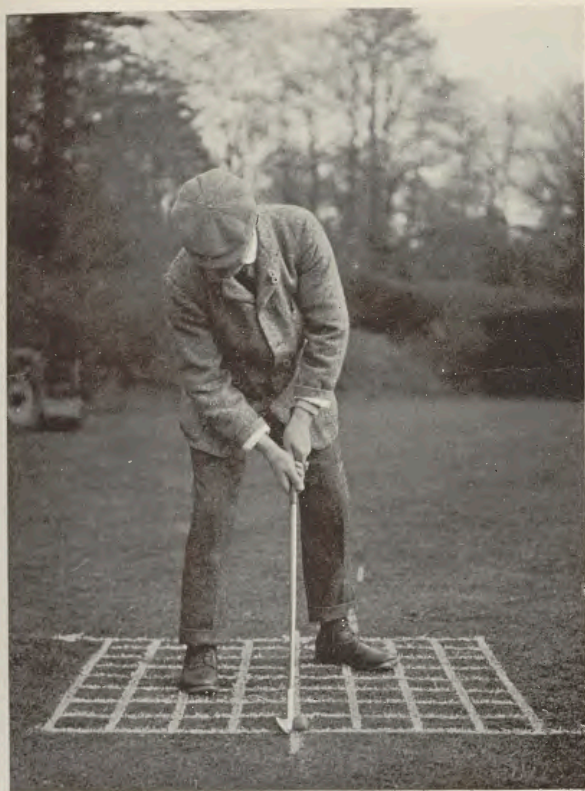




JAMES BRAID.  
Stance for Mashie shot.



HARRY VARDON.  
Top of short approach shot.



J. H. TAYLOR.  
Stance for pitch with Mashie.

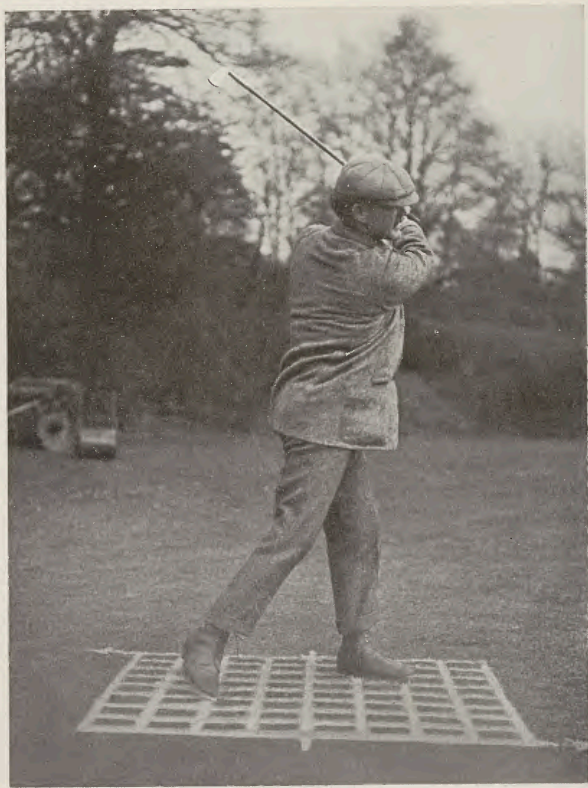


J. H. TAYLOR.  
Top of swing for pitch with Mashie. Front view.



J. H. TAYLOR.  
Top of swing for pitch with Mashie. Side view.





J. H. TAYLOR.  
Finish of pitch with Mashie.





J. H. TAYLOR.  
Finish of his famous Mashie pitch with cut,



ARNAUD MASSEY.  
Finish of Mashie shot.



W. FERNIE.  
Finish of Iron shot.



MR. R. MAXWELL.  
Finishing with Iron,



MR. WALTER J. TRAVIS.  
Finishing with Mashie.



MR. JACK GRAHAM.  
Playing an Iron shot from the Tee.





J. H. TAYLOR.

A bunker shot. The ball can be seen rising almost perpendicularly.



HARRY VARDON.

A long shot out of a bunker. The ball can be seen on its way out.



JACK WHITE.  
Putting.



ARNAUD MASSEY.  
Stance with Putter.

# Some Notes <sup>on</sup> the Preceding Photographs

BY

JOHN L. LOW.

---

## INTRODUCTORY.

GOLF is not a game in which pose is important : the movements are the things which count ; still there are even some aspects of position which are not at first sight easily understood. The portrait of Tom Morris, which has been exhibited on both sides of the Atlantic, and now hangs in the "big room" of the Royal and Ancient Club, was painted by Sir George Reid. When Tom went to stand for the artist, he was asked to take up a position, club in hand, which would suggest something of the game. Tom took up a pose which did not seem to the artist to have any reference to Golf as he understood it, and he accordingly asked the old man of the game what he was supposed to be doing. "Ah," said Tom, "I'm just waiting for the other man to play." The idea was very characteristic of the modesty of the old man, and also of the fact that Tom realized that Golf is a game played by two sides, the attitude of one of which he exhibited as courteous and dignified toward the more active opponent. And so Tom was figured just as he stood, waiting until his turn should come to show how deft he was at the many movements of the game.

I have said that in Golf pose is not important ; the older photographs of golfers gave us nothing but pose. To-day, with the help of rapid plates and shutters, we get a view of the players at their actual business, we understand the poise of their bodies, and see something of the very motion of their work. We cannot learn Golf from illustrations, but we can get a good view of some of its aspects. Pictures such as these, which we have in this little book, give us natural and faithful glances at great players, and for that reason they appeal to the interest of golfers who have passed the first stages of instruction. The beginner must not think that by copying the attitude of a hero he is to follow in his steps ; it is not so much important how a man stands as whether he is going. The fact that the best players vary so much in matters of stance and grip, and even of swing, shows that no rule of position can be laid down as correct ; to grip a club in the same way as Vardon is no guarantee that accurate hitting will result, for Vardon's grip is not suited to all people any more than Mr. Laidlay's stance is suited to the majority of us frailer golfers. As a matter of fact, many of the finest golfers have some trick of position or style which is not in itself good to copy, but just because it is peculiar, it fills the eye of the onlooker to the exclusion of the parts which are most worthy of imitation. In observing the champion, the beginner should, therefore, try to fix his

mind on the movement of the club rather than on the way it is held, or the position of the feet or body. To take but one instance, the putting stroke of Mr. James Robb, the Champion of 1906: it is a smooth stroke, played without any jerk or rapid acceleration of the club. We may notice the way Mr. Robb stands, or we may say "he putts so well because he follows through so well," but Mr. Robb would make his smooth stroke if he stood on one leg, and the follow-through is the result, not the cause, of the grace and evenness of the hit.

To take our pictures in something of the order of the game, we naturally come first to

#### THE ADDRESS (Pages 6-11).

Both stance and grip have changed very considerably during the past few years; the stance has become more open, and the grip more close. It used to be quite common to see the left foot in advance of the right. Mr. Hutchinson in the Badminton book of Golf recommends that the right foot should be "some three inches behind the left"; to-day almost everyone of note plays with the right foot in advance of the left. As a rule the advance of the left leg indicates a desire to pull, the advance of the right proclaims that the stroke will be more in the nature of a push. If the right foot be forward the tendency will be to bring the club backward at the start in a direction outside the ball; if the downward swing correspond to the upward the club will strike the ball from its farther side inward and so impart a spin from right to left which we know is a slicing spin. For this reason a player who wishes to slice a ball always stands to the right of his usual position so that his club naturally is drawn across the ball from right to left. Conversely the player who places his right foot behind his left takes the club back inwards and has a tendency to pull. But these points are perhaps outside the limits of these brief notes, so it may be sufficient to remark on the fact which is demonstrated by our pictures that the position to-day is one of the advanced right foot. A notable exception is, however, found in the picture of Mr. Travis, who stands (see page 10) with the right foot well back.

Formerly the grip was almost universally of the two-handed kind, the fourth finger of the right hand lying alongside the first finger of the left. At present it is commonly the custom with many of our best players for the little finger of the right hand to overlap the index finger of the left. Harry Vardon popularised this grip, though of course it was used by Mr. Laidlay and others before his time. I think it is a grip which the beginner should try, but I can hardly advise an old golfer to make the experiment unless he has naturally large hands and long powerful fingers. People often say "I think I must try the Vardon grip"; my advice would be first of all to look at Vardon's hands, and then at the thinness of the grips of his clubs, and after that the player may determine whether he has sufficient strength of finger for the task. In the overlapping grip the work, it may be pointed out, is done mainly with the forefinger and thumb of each hand; if these be strong enough the grip may be successful and certain difficulties will be overcome, but on the whole I am inclined to favour the older style as likely best to suit the majority, and also if mastered to have the greater possibilities of virtue. On pages 6, 7 and 8 the first finger grip is strongly marked, greatly in contrast to the looser hold of



Massy on Page 9. On Page 6 Braid would seem to be about to play rather more from his right leg than is suggested on Page 7; as a matter of fact all golfers in driving change and exchange the weight from left to right and back to left. The only difference is that they make the exchanges at slightly different periods of the swing's story. As a matter of fact Braid stands very nearly square to the ball in making his address.

It is moreover often difficult to compare positions in photographs; for a slight breeze from the front will at once compel most golfers to take up even unconsciously a more forward stance.

On Page 9 Massy's pose is suggestive of considerable looseness. The feet are close together, the right knee is not straightened out, nor do the muscles of the right thigh seem to be taut. The right hand grasps the club with something of the undergrip of the late Mr. Tait, only not to the same degree; the whole appearance of this hand denotes slackness and conveys the idea that the player will let the club back into the web of the thumb at the top of the upward swing. The left thumb is notably down the shaft.

Page 11 shows the compact solid stance of Taylor; the player standing for his height a long way from the ball.

#### DRIVING (Pages 12-35).

**The Backward Swing (Pages 12-22).**—We have seen that the fashion, as regards position and grip, has altered during the past few years; an alteration has also taken place with regard to the swing itself. The most notable changes are (1) the right elbow is now kept much lower and nearer the body at the top of the swing; (2) the wrists come much more into the stroke, the body much less.

On the first point, to be briefly historical, we find in the revised Badminton Library *Golf*, 1902, that Mr. Hutchinson thus describes the upward swing. "The right elbow should be raised well away from the body until, when the club is horizontal behind the head, this *right elbow is just about up to the level of the right hand*. The club will have turned so freely in the right hand that the right wrist will be straight and *the back of the right hand uppermost*." In 1904 Mr. Beldam found that none of his models assumed this position of the right elbow; and our photographs corroborate this latter view. One of the most striking of these (Page 17) shows Braid's hands and arms at the top of the swing; not only is the right elbow a long way below the right hand, but the back of the right hand instead of being "uppermost" faces the land, not the sky. Pages 13 14. 15, 16, 18, 19, 21 and 22 show the same low position of the right elbow and the downward turn of the right wrist; the wrists, in fact, in these pictures are always under the handle of the club. But Mr. Hutchinson's description was true enough of the style of many golfers when the 1890 edition of the Badminton book came out; Mr. Edward Blackwell, for instance, used to raise his right very nearly as high as Mr. Hutchinson describes, I say very nearly, for the description was never quite historical.

Turning again to Page 17 we note the strong flexion of the wrists, notably the right wrist, at the top of Braid's swing, and the same will be seen very plainly in the photograph of Tom Vardon, Page 18. In the older style, this right wrist, instead of bending outward toward the end of the shaft, came straight down at right angles to the

handle; there was, in fact, no great *flex* of this right wrist. This flex is very nice to look at, and works out an easy game for the flexor, but it must be remembered that it is all part and parcel of the same gift of long hands and powerful fingers which allow of its profitable use. We must all use to the greatest and best advantage the powers we may happen to possess. It is very nice to be able to drive a ball two hundred yards with this power of fingers and this turning of the wrists, but most golfers do not possess this faculty, and must needs use what powers they have. Taylor (Page 16), though he uses his wrists freely, has not the Vardon flex or flick, but he gets there just as well with the aid of his forearm work. Andrew Kirkaldy, with his great strength of arm and body, has small hands, and could make nothing of the flicking style, yet he can, without much apparent effort and with a short back swing send a shot up to the hole against the wind with an iron better than any man I have seen; but he works out his stroke with his strong right forearm. And in this case of the extraordinary wrist-flexion of the great masters, not intentionally to make any play on the words, one may say that to be forewarned is to be forearmed; for most men will find, especially in the long iron strokes, that the forearm work is safer, and as a rule more possible of development than the fascinating wrist-work of heroes.

Before leaving these upward movements, we will see in the excellent photograph (Page 15), that Massy, at the top of his swing, has his hands remarkably high—compare the Vardons, Braid, and Mr. Hilton (Pages 13, 18, and 22). The right hand seems to have to some extent relaxed its grip, and the whole position reminds one of Alec Herd's style, particularly in the action of the left arm; but Herd's wider stance takes away something of the resemblance. On Page 16 Taylor's right elbow is noticeably low and close to the side of his body. Braid says that the right elbow should not be more than six inches from the body at the top of the swing; but this position, and also the flexion of the wrists, which we have noticed, are, I think, partly the result of the tight grasp with the thumb and forefinger, which the so-called "Vardon grip" entails.

**The Downward Stroke** (Pages 23-35).—As a club rises so as a rule it falls; if you see a man's backward swing you can generally guess the manner of his downward stroke. Just when the club strikes the ball the weight of the body is transferred from the right to the left leg; the slightest circumstance will probably determine the exact instant of this exchange. Against a wind the weight will probably go on to the left leg just before the ball is struck, for the shoulders will instinctively come forward and the balance tend toward the hole. It will be noticed in Pages 24-35 that most of the photographs show a considerable delay in this forward throwing of the weight. Massy (Page 27) and to a certain extent Mr. Ball (Page 31) transfer the weight markedly on to the left leg; the others seem to be much more reserved in this matter. Here again fashion has rather changed. In a photograph in Mr. Hutchinson's *The Book of Golf and Golfers* we see the author stepping out to his drive as if he were trying to smother a well pitched ball by a forward cricket stroke; and in former days this forward movement of the body was common to many of the better players. On the other hand, we see the more modern style in the finish of Tom Vardon's swing (Page 26) where head and shoulders are well behind the left foot. Massy (Page 27) follows more the older method, his weight being thrown

well forward on to the left leg; Mr. Leslie Balfour-Melville is another notable example of those who step forward. As a rule the best players seem to finish with the centre of the body opposite the place which the ball has just quitted.

Pages 30 and 32 are worthy of note as exhibiting the characteristic shoulder work of the popular amateur champion of 1907.

#### **FULL SHOTS WITH CLEEK OR IRON (Pages 36-43).**

Pages 36-43 show the full swing strokes played with iron clubs, and are simply modifications of the driver work already described. On Page 36 we note again the height of the hands at the top of Massy's swing; an altitude of attitude which reminds us of the style of Mr. Osmund Scott. We also see more clearly in this photograph than in the driver stroke the absence of flex of the right wrist. Apart from the greater control and the slight advance in most cases of the right foot these pictures emphasise only the similarity between the full iron shot and the stroke with the driver from the tee,

#### **THE LONGER APPROACH STROKES (Pages 44-48).**

All shots which are intended to reach the hole are approach-shots; but it is only when we come to a graduation of swing that approach-ing proper begins. Pages 44 to 48 show two excellent examples of the long approach as played by Braid and Kirkaldy. The finishes are very markedly similar; and the creases in the right sleeve indicate that the action of the right arm has been the same in both strokes. This seems to me the best of all approach-shots—this pushing shot from the right forearm; it differs from other styles in the absence of swing. There has been more swing on Page 45; more still on Page 47; and much more on Page 46. In the last-mentioned picture Mr. Ball is seen playing his well-known so-called push shot with the cleek. But it is not really a push shot, it is a swung shot; it is, in fact, more correctly a spared full shot. Of all players I have seen none nearly approaches Mr. Ball in the absolute control he has over the length of his swing; he seems to be able by adding an inch to the backward swing to send the ball exactly eleven and a half yards further. Since no one else seems to have this gift to the same degree, it is a stroke which it would be folly to attempt to copy; Andrew Kirkaldy's shot, which measures the distance by the power of the forearm push, rather than by the length of the backward swing, is the safer model.

#### **THE SHORTER APPROACH STROKES (Pages 49-60).**

The shorter approach-shots are of endless variety; they are played, or should be played, almost entirely with finger power. On Page 60 we have a fine study of Mr. Graham; the picture exhibits the delicacy of touch and the fine control of the club. It will be noticed on Page 52, which shows Taylor at the top of his swing for a mashie pitch, that the hands are very low, they get up a certain distance, and then the club seems to go back the rest of its journey by the action of the wrists; the same remark applies to Vardon's style, Page 50. There is a marked difference between Taylor's finish on Pages 54 and 55; but this is accounted for by the fact that in the former picture the ball has been struck from a tee and the stroke has followed straight

through ; in the latter photograph the club has met the ground and the follow-through been checked. On Page 56 Massy's body is seen to go forward more than is common after the stroke is played ; but this is only in accordance with what we noted in his driving style. The finish of Mr. Travis, as seen on Page 59, is very characteristic, and shows and exemplifies his theory of taking a full swing with all his clubs— playing the club, in fact, to its full value. Personally I believe in an exactly opposite theory, viz., that a full shot should never be taken with an iron, unless in the case of forcing strokes from bad lies, but that the wrist-stroke or push-stroke should be made by cultivation to do all the approach work.

#### PLAY FROM HASARDS (Pages 61, 62).

These photographs show the one point which is of first importance in play from sand bunkers, *i.e.*, the eye must be kept firmly on the spot which is to be struck. In the case of Taylor's shot, this spot has been some grain of sand perhaps two or three inches behind the ball ; in the case of Vardon's it has probably been the ball itself, for he has evidently made a clean and long stroke. In no part of the game is a sure stance and a steady eye so necessary as in bunker play, and perhaps in no part of the game is more skill required or more interest aroused.

#### PUTTING (Pages 63 and 64).

The pictures of putting are only two in number, but the strokes which have illustrated the play through the green have been so perfect that the photographer no doubt thought that putting would hardly be necessary. Yet putting in the best company is about half the game ; we do well if we play less than thirty-six strokes on the green during a round. Position varies greatly in putting ; but the modern tendency is to hold the hands much lower than formerly. The advance of the right foot seen in Pages 63 and 64 has always been characteristic of putter play. Page 64 shows Massy with his left foot much more behind the ball than is the common custom ; for in putting there is a certain agreement as to one part of the stance, namely that the ball is nearly always opposite the heel of the player's left foot. Massy's stance back of the ball is therefore rather peculiar, but he puts beautifully with a slow even stroke and a fine follow through. Jack White is also a very fine putter, but I would not call him a good natural putter ; his is a style which has evidently been worked up to a pitch of perfection by laborious trial. White has a very good brain for the game ; he is a thoughtful and studious golfer, and he has been able to work out his own salvation rather apart from orthodoxy—but salvation is not only with the Samaritans. The style of Mr. M'Fie is to my mind on the right lines, for I cannot see any great advantage in the cramped position so commonly adopted. Vardon at his best is a beautiful putter. I remember a round of his at Sandwich in 1899 when, though he hardly holed a putt of more than a yard his longer putts all went within an inch or two of the hole ; with luck he would have been round a good way under 70. With the gutta ball Andrew Kirkaldy had also this wonderful power of "strength," but he has never quite got the same touch with the more elastic "Bouncing Billies." Freedom in the backward swing and true hitting constitute half the battle on the green ; the other half, and the more important, is confidence.

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