GOLFING REMINISCENCES

WILLIAM REID, F.J.I.

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The Old Golf Hotel, the rendezvous of 18th century golfers, Bruntsfield Links, Edinburgh, now replaced by a modern structure.

From a print in the Edinburgh Burgess Golfing Society Club House.

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THE GROWTH OF THE GAME

1887-1925

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Made in Great Britain

FOREWORD

Of the making of books there is no end. My only reason for adding to the output is a generally expressed desire on the part of professional colleagues and other friends that I should pen impressions with regard to the development of the game, formed during a long association with golf in the capacity of a journalist. In my time golf has spread from its cradle, a relatively small part of the Scottish seaboard, and has become one of the great ball games of the world. I purpose using a narrative form, taking certain periods as milestones in the progress of the game and linking them together in such a manner as will appeal to the general reader, to whom technicalities are anathema and tables of results abhorrent. Into the "politics" of the game, the formation of national Unions, the current ball controversy, I do not propose to enter—"the play's the thing."

December 1925

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GOLFING REMINISCENCES

I.

IN THE LATE '80s.

It is axiomatic in the game that "it tak's a man wi' a heid tae play gowff." It takes a man with some little knowledge of golf to report it. So thought the chief of the reporting staff to which I had become attached in the autumn of 1887, and as I was reputed to be the possessor of a set of clubs—may I say, parenthetically, that in those days a golf bag was generally regarded as an unnecessary adjunct, a bit of string costing much less and being equally serviceable—I was embarked on a course which has given me some of my most pleasurable experiences and made me some of my most agreeable comradeships. My first mission was to report a match for £10, played over Leith Links in the autumn of 1887, between the late Ben Sayers and two well-known amateurs. The professional was beaten. In what manner the amateurs reconciled it with their status to

play publicly for a stake of £5 I cannot pretend to reveal. Leith Links has, as a golf course, been so long numbered with the things that were, that comparatively few of the many thousands of people who annually tread its historic soil are aware of the fact that it was an original fastness of the game.

THE MUSSELBURGH SCHOOL.

It was my good fortune to be introduced to golf as a reportable subject in the late '80s. The old order was beginning to pass away, but the game still took its distinctive colour from what "Young Willie" Park, the Open Champion of 1887 and 1889, has styled "the old spirit of the challenge match." "My father," he tells us, "had an open challenge to the world for nine years"; and he himself "sustained the traditions of his forebears by challenging the world." The game, in a minor aspect, was passing through a period of transition. St Andrews was then, as now, the Mecca of golf, but the great St Andrews "school" of the '70s and early '80s had passed its zenith, and a younger St Andrews "school" had not yet emerged. For the time being

Musselburgh occupied the centre of the stage. The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers had given the famous old nine holes course an Open Championship connection. To Musselburgh there flocked golfers, gentle and simple. Willie Park, an ardent match player and already Open Champion, and Willie Campbell, one of the greatest match players in the history of the game, were at the head of a Musselburgh " school " that, for a time, held the little world of golf in subjection. Which of the twain was the greater golfer was a matter of opinion. Each man had his partizans who were sharply divided, one set pointing to Park's achievement in winning the championship and the other parading the record of Campbell in money matches — a record not of unbroken success but unequalled for range and impressiveness between the days of young Tom Morris and of Harry Vardon.

PARK *v.* CAMPBELL.

It is the custom to ascribe much of the improved status of the professional golfer to the " triumvirate," J. H. Taylor, Harry Vardon and Jas. Braid. Far be it from me to detract

from their brilliant services to the game on its professional side, but "there were brave men before Agamemnon." It may be the case that we owe that epoch-making event, the first appearance of a professional golfer in knickerbockers, to the daring of a noted Anglo-Scottish professional; but, in my judgment, the "father" of the modern professional was "Young Willie" Park, a man of a gentle, simple disposition, bred in the old home-spun school. He it was, I think, who by sheer personality first bridged the gulf between the old style and the new. His fellow-townsman and rival, Willie Campbell, was as distinctly of the old school, professional cum caddie. A man of a ready wit in a biting vein, Campbell had the heart of a lion. The douce townsfolk swore by Willie Park.

He was, as they say in reference to modern ringcraft, the boxer; Willie Campbell was the fighter. In a big stroke competition Campbell was as ill equipped, temperamentally, to do himself justice as the more equable Park was fitted to get the best out of his golf. But in man-to-man combat, the pith and marrow of professional golf in those days, Campbell was pre-eminent. The rough carle of one time was

the idol of the community in the day of battle.

GENTLE AND SIMPLE.

I first saw Campbell, in the spring of 1888, meet and defeat Bob Martin, the St Andrews man who won the championship in 1885 and, for some reason, threw down the gauntlet to Campbell early in 1888. That Campbell should win in a home-and-home match by " 7 and 6 " was an indication that Martin's day was done and, on the other hand, that Campbell was one of the most potent forces in the game. One of my few recollections of the Musselburgh end of a match that ended very tamely is of an occurrence that happened when the crowd was gathering. A foursome containing three Lords of Session began a round, it falling to two of the Senators of the College of Justice to drive off the first tee. The late Lord Shand, who gave his name to a celebrated bunker, was no mean player, but his brethren of the foursome were less accomplished, and the initial efforts of the party occasioned no little amusement to a gallery that was as blunt as it was critical. The old-time caddie was still in his glory, and woe betide the golfer who foozled his drive off

the first tee at Musselburgh. The old course was a rare example of a golfing green over which names, so to speak, grew up. "The Graves" got its title from the discovery of some evidences of ancient burial, and an old tradition of the course was that, in the first regulations of the green, the stipulation was made that "bones lying within a club length of a ball must be removed."

CAMPBELL'S BITING WIT.

Willie Campbell was a good example of the generally taciturn fellow who could, on occasion, deliver himself of a telling phrase, as witness the excuse he found for himself when beaten in a match by Ben Sayers, who was as noted at the time for certain little mannerisms as for the excellence of his golf. "A' went oot," quoth Willie, "tae play a gowfer, no a dancing maister." This deliverance must have referred to the £100 match between the pair played at North Berwick and Prestwick in the autumn of 1899, when Campbell had taken up an appointment at the Ayrshire green. Campbell was at the Bridge of Weir when, in the summer of 1890, his third and last money match with

Sayers was played. Although Campbell beat his man, his powers were clearly on the wane. He was not the dashing player, battling with distinction against Willie Park in a match that split the old burgh into two rival camps, nor yet the matured golfer, who won the great match of 1889 against Archie Simpson of Carnoustie. Which of these two victories was the greatest achievement of his career his admirers could never determine.

ARCHIE SIMPSON EMERGES.

In 1888, the year that intervened between his two championship wins, Willie Park was off colour. He was, perhaps, the first of our professional golfers whose form suffered through the cares of the business side of the game. Archie Simpson, the rising hope of a famous golfing family, issued a challenge to meet any golfer on home-and-home terms. Park, as title holder, felt it incumbent on him to accept, and the result perhaps unduly flattered the Carnoustie golfer, Simpson winning by " 9 and 8." In the early spring of 1889 Willie Campbell beat Willie Fernie over two greens by the tremendous margin of " 12 and 11." Nothing

would satisfy the golfing world but that the respective winners should meet, and the match was made for £100 aside over four greens, Carnoustie, St Andrews, Musselburgh and Prestwick. The tale of the match is easily told, Campbell being 3 up, 8 up, and 11 up respectively on the first three greens, and winning " 16 and 15 " at Prestwick. Simpson, a noted putter, found his short game fail him, but the failure was at the instance of Campbell, who affected Simpson much as he had affected Park two years earlier. Concerning the Park-Campbell encounter, the story was told of an old friend of Park that he was found on the outskirts of the crowd in a very distressful mood. " A' declare tae ma God," he exclaimed, " he canna hole a putt." " He " was Willie Park, the most noted putter of his generation.

II.

OLD TOWNSHIPS RIVALRY.

HARRY VARDON has expressed the regret that he and young Tom Morris were not contemporaries. The late Mr William Doleman used to say that Morris was the finest strokes player, Campbell the finest match player, and Bob Ferguson, the Open Champion of 1880, '81 and '82, and one of the sweetest cleek shot players the game has ever seen, the best combination of stroke and match player. It was in Harry Vardon's heyday the lament of Scottish golfers that Vardon and Campbell were not contemporaries. What a match they would have made, the brilliant, imperturbable Channel Islander and the lion-hearted Musselburgh man, the embodiment of the fighting spirit. One of Campbell's backers used to tell the story of how, as he said, Campbell "put the fear of death" on Archie Simpson in the Carnoustie instalment of the 1889 match. Playing one of the incoming holes in the morning, Simpson

put his second shot, a raker with his brassie, on the green amid shouts of exultation from his supporters. "Gie's ma cleek," said Campbell to his caddie. Apprehension filled the soul of the faithful henchman, who suggested the use of the brassie. "Gie's ma cleek," reiterated Campbell. "A'll pit it inside." This he proceeded to do. His arrogance and assurance cowed his opponent. The St Andrews and Musselburgh "legs" of the match left us with the conviction that that cleek shot settled Simpson's fate.

BEGINNINGS OF "ELIMINATION."

Campbell's decline was rapid. In the late autumn of 1889 his local rival, Willie Park, held the stage. He won the Open Championship, played for, for the sixth and last time, at Musselburgh, on a single day in gloomy November. In these days of much formality it is difficult to realise the almost haphazard manner in which, in the '80s, the great event of the year in golf was encompassed. I am told that at one time it was advertised that the championship would be played on such and such a date, and that the competitors simply

presented themselves at the first tee at the advertised hour of start and gave in their names. In 1889, of the forty-eight players who entered twenty-two were Musselburgh men. Four rounds of the nine holes course were played and, as daylight was waning with a round of the course still to be overtaken, the sum of five shillings was offered to such as would retire and thin the field. We had thus as far back as 1889 the germ of the elimination business which has given us so much concern in recent years.

A HOLE IN ONE.

Willie Park started favourite, and eventually the competition resolved itself into a duel between the local man and Andrew Kirkaldy, who made his public reputation in the championship. Tieing for first place, the pair divided £13. How relatively hole and corner was the Open Championship in those days is indicated by the fact that the play off for the title was put off from the day following the championship date, a Friday, till the Monday, as an amateur tournament was taking place at the Braid Hills on the Saturday. My chief

recollections of the championship itself are that, long ere the last couple came in, the lamps in the streets adjoining the course were lit, that scores were checked by candlelight, and that Kirkaldy's partner, a local amateur, had a penalty to pay at the close of play. He took his cleek to drive the home green. A cheer was raised by the crowd at the hole side, and those of us who were following Kirkaldy, learned, on crossing to the green, that the amateur had holed in one.

KIRKALDY'S WOODEN PUTTER.

The play off for the title, which fell to Park's aggregate of 158 against Kirkaldy's 163—the tieing scores were 155—had, as a practically inevitable consequence, a meeting of victor and vanquished in a challenge match. Park issued the challenge—any man, four greens, £100 aside. Willie Campbell was willing to accommodate the champion, but the general sentiment in golfing circles was that Kirkaldy was the man for the match and, eventually, it was carried through its first instalment at Musselburgh. The other greens were Prestwick, Troon and St Andrews, and the issue

turned on the Troon section, Kirkaldy holing six holes in 22 and winning four of them to go to his home green 3 up. "I shake every time I see him take his wooden putter in his hand," a Park supporter said of Andrew. What did Kirkaldy say of the Musselburgh gallery? "Bullocks couldna hae behaved much worse." Winning "8 and 7," well might Andrew Kirkaldy declare that "challenge matches were th' varra life o' gowff."

BICKERINGS.

Andrew Kirkaldy took over from Willie Park the role of match-player-in-chief, and in conjunction with his brother, Hugh, he played more than one foursome against a new North Berwick conjunction, Ben Sayers and his brother-in-law, Davie Grant, a player of no outstanding golfing quality as an individual, but a splendid balancing factor in a foursome match when his natural aptitude as a coach was invaluable to his partner. It was grudgingly conceded at St Andrews that Davie Grant partnering Andrew Kirkaldy, would have made a member of a winning confederacy just as he did partnering Ben Sayers. Sayers, a little man

with all the small man's proverbial guid conceit of himself, rubbed Andrew the wrong way, trouble ensuing and Grant pacifying Ben when the verbal exchange between the principals became heated.

On one occasion play had to be suspended while the merits of a dispute were argued out. Sayers and Hugh Kirkaldy drove together in the morning. In the afternoon Grant teed his ball on the first teeing ground and drove off. Hugh Kirkaldy followed, whereupon Sayers claimed the hole. With this spirit prevailing, it was not surprising that a violent altercation should take place as to whether a weed picked up by Sayers off the line of a long putt was growing, as one of the St Andrews men asserted, or was lying on the ground when lifted. The argument originating with the players spread to the partizans ; the task of the umpire was no sinecure.

CHAMPIONSHIP GOES SOUTH.

These North Berwick-St Andrews exchanges were after the worst traditions of the game. One wonders what J. H. Taylor and Harry Vardon, who have taken occasion to animadvert

on Scottish partizanship, would have said of those old township battles. They bring us on to the '90s of last century, when the game had entered on a new phase. The first winner of the championship entering from south of the Border was Jack Burns, who early trod the paths that have since been those of affluence to many Scottish golfers, a professional career in England. Burns unsuccessfully defended his title at Musselburgh in 1889, when he was one of three Scotsmen entering from English greens. A good Burns' story used to be told of the golfer from the English Midlands who stopped at Ayr on his way to his first visit to Prestwick. "That," said a Scottish confrere, indicating the Robert Burns Monument outside Ayr railway station, "is a Burns memorial." "Why here?" asked the Englishman. The Scot explained that this was the Burns' country, the Midlander remarking as he turned away that he always thought "old Jack belonged to St Andrews!"

III.

THE BOOM SETS IN.

In 1890 Mr John Ball was one of three English amateurs to enter for the Open Championship, and he was the first English-born golfer and the first amateur to win the title, a feat repeated two years later by Mr H. H. Hilton. The Hilton-won championship of 1892 was, to my mind, a much more striking occurrence than the Ball-won championship of 1890. The earlier happening the game took, as it were, in its stride, the 1892 championship was one of the most conspicuous events in golf's conquering march. In 1892 Musselburgh was deserted for Muirfield, the new course of the Honourable Company. The competition was made one of 72 holes, and extended over two days in September, and was taken part in by three English-born professionals, one of whom, W. D. More, was, I think, originally an amateur who took up golf as a profession for reasons of health. Another English-born professional

was Tom Vardon, brother of Harry, who played himself into the extended prize list. It took us exactly twenty years to find a challenger from the ranks of the American-born professionals. Between the significance of Tom Vardon in 1892 and J. J. M'Dermott in 1912, there is nothing to choose. One was the corollary to the other. Each was epoch-making in the game. Tom Vardon was the precursor of J. H. Taylor and Harry Vardon, just as M'Dermott was of Walter Hagen.

LONDON NOT CALLING.

To various agencies have been ascribed the "boom" in golf which marked the middle '90s, in particular the missionary zeal of Earl Balfour and the successes of J. H. Taylor and of Harry Vardon. It is difficult to apportion the exact measure of credit. Personally, I would unhesitatingly pronounce for Vardon as the chief factor in creating the "boom" in England. Taylor's successive wins in the Open Championships of 1894 and 1895 caused but a ripple on the surface of public interest furth of Scotland. We were still in the days when golf was "Scotch croquet" to the

English sportsman. It had not even yet become "a good game for Sundays" in America. In 1896, when Harry Vardon was hailed by the cognoscenti as the real challenger to Taylor, the Edinburgh correspondent of a London sporting daily sought instructions as to the length of reports he should supply. He was peremptorily forbidden to spend a shilling on telegraphing; nobody in London wanted golf. The case was altered in 1899—the Vardon-Park match of that summer made golf a reportable subject in England. That is, however, anticipating events. No one, chronicling the developments of the game, can ignore the Open Championships of 1893, '94, '95, and '96, or the Park-Taylor match of the last of those years. It was in 1893 that Taylor introduced himself. He "arrived" in 1894.

MONOPOLY BROKEN.

It seemed an amazing thing going to Prestwick in the autumn of 1893 to find an English professional installed as first favourite. But 1893 was an amazing year in golf. It was at the Ayrshire green in the early summer of that year that the monopoly enjoyed up to that

time in the Amateur Championship by Messrs Hutchinson, Ball and Laidlay was broken. Mr P. C. Anderson, a young man of twenty or twenty-one summers, won the championship. It was pure topsy-turvydom, the kind of thing we became better acquainted with in later years. The man who beat Mr Ball, the holder, was a "certain winner." Mr Mure Fergusson beat the holder and was beaten in his turn. Then the man who beat the winner of the Tait-Hilton tie—which, incidentally, provoked from the Black Watch officer one of the most tremendous exhibitions of long driving ever seen in an amateur tournament—could not lose. Mr Laidlay beat the winner and succumbed in the final to the young St Andrean. A wooden putter and a high gait under a blazing sun won the final, but so far was the result from being foreseen that a good many of the friends of the East Lothian golfer left the course half-way through the round, saying they would read in the Edinburgh papers of their man's success. What they learned was that Mr Anderson became dormy one and halved the last hole to win the 18 holes final by one hole. It was remarked of the winner that "he was playing golf as if he had a train to

catch," and the pace under a hot sun was, unquestionably, in part, the undoing of the champion of 1891. A more generous, if still somewhat grudging concession to the winner was that his opponent had played all his golf beating "Freddy" Tait in the semi-final the same morning.

"J H" COMES TO HAND.

So we had, in some sort of a way, a precedent even for a J. H. Taylor win at the first time of asking in the last Open Championship, played in the month of September. Taylor was sponsored by Mr H. G. Hutchinson. He had beaten Andrew Kirkaldy in a home-and-home match at Winchester and Burnham in December 1891 and January 1892. Andrew, who was having a short experience of professional life in England, was favourite at odds of 15 to 12, but he finished one down on his own green and was defeated "4 and 2" at Burnham. With characteristic generosity the St Andrews man endorsed the opinion that his conqueror was fit to take his place in the front rank. Taylor let a year pass before he entered the championship lists. He was received with a

fair approach to cordiality by the Scottish professionals at Prestwick, where Mr John Ball befriended his young compatriot. Taylor impressed a critical gallery not unfavourably. There was nothing of the airy insouciance of youth in his aspect. He was dour and stern, and that jaw of his bespoke the fighter he was already proving himself to be. His style struck onlookers as particularly neat and effective, and his marvellous iron play was generally commented on. Taylor returned a card of 75 in his first round. This was two strokes better than anyone else—even Willie Auchterlonie, the winner—did in the four rounds, and although Taylor failed to "last the course," there was abundant evidence that he was going to be a potent force in the immediate future. His opportunity came in the '94 championship at Sandwich. It had been agreed at a meeting held in Edinburgh, that the time had come for extending the Open Championship to Hoylake and Sandwich, and as the Cheshire green housed the Amateur Championship in 1894 the "Open" was sent to Kent.

MASTER OF THE MASHIE.

With singular propriety it was won by Taylor, regarding whose play I can recall some one saying that the only hazards were the guide posts, so straight a ball did he play. The deadliness of his approach with his mashie shots, which had occasioned so favourable an impression at Prestwick, was emphasized. It was clearly recognised that here was a master shot, that henceforth we should see a contention as between the pitch and run and the pitch and stop, a contention revived in recent years and never wholly settled, albeit the Scoto-American professionals have of late years come in to reinforce the English as against the old Scottish attitude. The new champion struck his colours a few days after winning his title. Douglas Rolland, one of the Elie giants, whom I saw at Sandwich for the first and last time—what a story could have been told of his checkered career—caught Taylor off his game, in a mixed amateur-professional match play competition which followed the championship, and beat him "2 and 1." English interests were, however, decidedly in the ascendant that year. Mr John Ball was winner of the Amateur

Championship after a competition which left few recollections. Very different was the case in 1895, when, under the unsettled state of the rota, both championships were decided at St Andrews, as had happened in 1893 at Prestwick and as was to happen in 1902 at Hoylake, and again at Sandwich in 1904, after which the system of no two championships in one country, far less on one green, in any year was adopted.

IV.

LARGELY ST ANDREWS.

THE Open Championship of 1895 was, and is still, one of the best discussed events in the history of the game. This was Sandy Herd's year. He won everything there was to win in the professional golf of the year—save and except the championship, and losing that, he lost all. He would, his friends averred, and their belief does not seem to have been shaken by the passage of years, have won that competition also but for a combination of unkind circumstances. Herd, his occasional excursions into the realm of golfing journalism lead us to believe, also inclines to that view. I always was a bit sceptical. Still, Taylor was the more fortunate of the two. The facts were, Taylor and Herd singled themselves out as aspirants in chief, and at the end of the third round Herd led by three strokes from Taylor. Herd played his final round during, and Taylor his last round after, a rainstorm. Herd was

putting on greens that were momentarily changing in strength, and he seemed to be afraid to give his putts a chance. Taylor, on the other hand, putting on greens that were saturated with wet, played for the back of the hole with the certainty that he could not run out of safe holing distance. "This was the occasion," writes one of the leading professionals, "on which hail stones very nearly as big as pigeon's eggs fell during the competition, and putting became the strangest operation imaginable. Taylor tackled it by lofting the ball over the hailstones on the green with his mashie." All I have to say in regard to this is that the hailstones have been growing for thirty years. In another thirty they will be as big as ostrich eggs.

THE CROWD ARRIVES.

Taylor's victory preserved for the year a balance as between the two countries. Mr L. M. Balfour Melville had won the Amateur Championship a few weeks earlier, beating Mr John Ball in the final. Born in 1854, Mr Balfour Melville was forty-one years of age when he won his championship. He had been winn-

ing Royal and Ancient and Honourable Company medals for over twenty years, and he had been four times a semi-finalist in the championship and, in 1889, runner-up. The seeming discrepancy between his club successes and his relative non-success in the championship was largely explained by the fact that Mr Balfour Melville, for many years the foremost cricketer in Scotland, preferred playing cricket in summer to playing golf. His second appearance in the final, opposed as he was to the greatest English golfer of his day, provoked an extraordinary amount of interest, using the expression in a relative sense. The "gallery" on modern lines dates from the final of 1895. *The Golfing Annual* said of the crowd that "there was the largest influx of visitors to the Cathedral City, and it looks as if the onlookers will soon play as prominent a part at golf as they do at other sports. Well may players ask, therefore, to be saved from the ever-increasing 'golf stream.'" All this over "a critical and excited concourse of over 2000." Did not some one estimate the Prestwick crowd of 1922 at 20,000? However, we may concede the writer in *The Golfing Annual* the prophetic instinct.

VERY BAD TASTE.

I would be inclined, however, to join issue with him in the matter of "the large influx of visitors." It was a St Andrews week, eleven local players in the last sixteen, six in the last eight, three in the last four, and a Royal and Ancient member the champion. St Andrews, unhappily, besmirched her good name in a sporting sense as greatly as her representatives embellished it in a golfing connection. When, in the fifth round, Mr Willie Greig played the ultimate winner, the sympathies of the gallery were wholly with the townsman. It was the same in the semi-final. In the final the crowd forgot their previous apparent antipathy to Mr Balfour Melville and, as the Americans would say, "rooted" for him as flagrantly as they had for his opponents of the earlier rounds. It was now a case of a Scotsman against an Englishman, a man who had learned his golf as a boy at St Andrews against a product of the famous Hoylake "school." As I say, the spectators veered right round and applauded every good shot the Scotsman played. "It was," declared old Tom Morris, "very bad taste to applaud before the second player had

played the like "—this, mark you, on the putting green. Far from heeding the admonition, the crowd cheered a bunkered shot by Mr Ball and also a missed short putt. It was one of the most pitiful exhibitions of partizanship ever seen in the game. I could never bring myself to believe that the demonstration was other than a purely local one. It was not occasioned by an influx of visitors, large or small.

VARDON'S PUTTING WINS.

The 1896 championships were won by Lieut. F. G. Tait at Sandwich and by Harry Vardon at Muirfield. Somehow or other the Muirfield championship left no very vivid impression on my mind. It is a matter of golfing history that Taylor and Vardon tied on a Thursday and that the play-off took place on the Saturday, the opening of the North Berwick extension having been arranged for the intervening day. Vardon was emerging; to use his own expression, "from the ranks of players whom the golfing public regarded as promising," and in a golfing country, where the cleek shot was a hallowed tradition, Vardon's cleek shots

were a delight. In an appreciation of his play it was remarked that "he had his off days on the hole side, but it was his putting that won him his first championship." Vardon has recalled that even in the play-off he was practically unknown to the general public, adding: "But, as Taylor has often laughingly told me since, *he* knew me." As a matter of fact, Vardon had previously beaten Taylor in a match by the wide margin of "8 and 6." Coming events were by this time casting shadows before.

CHAMPIONS ALL.

It is on the Tait-won championship at Sandwich that the recollections of the old-timer are prone to linger. Lieutenant Tait achieved at Sandwich a triumph such as has perhaps never been attained by any other winner of the championship. In succession he beat Mr C. G. Broadwood, the Yorkshire crack, and Mr Hutchings of Hoylake fame, and then he had—I quote *The Golfing Annual*—"to measure clubs with champion after champion. One down, the other come on, was the order of the day. Mr Laidlay, Mr Ball, Mr Hutchinson,

each in turn fell a victim to his prowess, and then he had to face in the final Mr Hilton. At the conclusion of the first round (a 36 holes final was played for the first time) Mr Hilton was 6 down, and he eventually, after a characteristically plucky fight, succumbed by 8 up and 7 to play to the Black Watch representative. Lieutenant Tait's cup of victory was, of a surety, filled to overflowing, he having prefaced his championship win by one over an equally strong field in the St George's Cup Stroke Competition." The champion returned to Edinburgh to be lionised by the mess of his regiment and, at a little distance, by the entire golfing community in Scotland. Lieutenant Tait was "Freddy" to everyone. He was the personification of the young man glorying in his strength. The tales of his prowess were legion. Temperamentally, he was as far as the poles are asunder from the modern all-out-to-win school, cradled across the Atlantic. The night before he beat his great rival in the 1896 final, he electrified the community at Sandwich—and alarmed those of us who were "banking" on his success—by playing the bagpipes through the tortuous streets of the ancient burgh.

V.

VARDON ESTABLISHES HIMSELF.

J. H. Taylor has said somewhere, relative to the challenge issued by Willie Park to play Douglas Rolland in a money match on the eve of the 1894 championship, that "no English golfer was at that time thought worthy of Park's attentions." It fell to Taylor in 1896 to receive Park's defiance. The pair met in a home-and-home encounter in the spring of that year while Taylor was still champion. The match excited the world of golf in an inordinate degree. Of course, the golfing world was a relatively small place in those days, and it was possible to bring off half the match on the historic but circumscribed course at Musselburgh. I have seen the proceedings contingent upon that day's play referred to as an example of the Scottish golfing partizanship of the time, and certain it was that to preserve order it was necessary to secure the good offices of the Royal Musselburgh Golf Club. There was an

amusing side to the business. When Park holed a long putt the Musselburgh section of the crowd cheered, and when Taylor holed out the Edinburgh section broke into applause. So a fair balance was established, though the locals did excel themselves at one hole, where they cheered Park's putt that went down and Taylor's that stopped out. The late Mr Andrew Thomson, originally a backer of Willie Campbell, now a prominent member of the Park camp, told me, concerning the Richmond instalment of the match, that he missed a hole to escape for a few minutes' breathing space. "Park," he said to a friend, "has won that hole." "How do you know?" he was asked. "Because," was the significant reply, "there was no applause." In the end that hole won Park the match.

"FIERY."

At that time Park had associated with him, in the capacity of henchman, the last of the old line of Musselburgh caddies, John Carey, who was more familiarly known under the sobriquet of "Fiery." An inoffensive mortal, "Fiery" was so called, presumably, in the spirit of rude jocularity characteristic of the Musselburgh

"FIERY." From a Painting by Gemmell Hutchison, R.S.A.

game of the time. His sturdy figure, weather-beaten countenance and inevitable Balmoral bonnet were as familiar as the personality of Park himself, and many were the stories in circulation regarding this sound golfer and independent mortal. One of the best of them indicated the character of the man and of the race. He was caddying for Park in a match when he was seen wending his solitary way to the club-house. Asked what had happened, "Fiery" said: "A' wanted him to play his iron, and he wud tak' his cleek and we've faun oot." Accepting a proffered glass of whisky on another occasion, "Fiery" refused soda water on the ground that it was "spiling guid drink." On his return from one of his expeditions to the south of England with Park, "Fiery" said of Sandwich that it was so warm "it cudna be very far frae th' Saharry Desert." Park himself was responsible for the story that in one of his matches a tee shot struck the pin and lay on the rim. "A bad thing for the caddie," said a by-stander. In a moment came the rejoinder from "Fiery": "No for Park's caddie."

WHEN YOUTH WAS SERVED.

The championships of 1897 were events concerning which one has many cherished recollections. Muirfield that year housed its first Amateur Championship. To it attached a rare distinction. It was a championship of glorious youth. Mr R. Maxwell, a sensational debutant, was twenty-one years of age, his conqueror, Mr Jas. Robb, was nineteen, the late Dr A. J. T. Allan, who had the beating of the St Andrews boy in the final, was twenty-two. It was a triumph right through the piece of immaturity, stiffened by sheer pluck. To this day I can recall the whisper that ran round the course that " Johnny " Ball was being beaten by a boy. The " boy " was a mighty big lad, a powerful young fellow, with a rare muscular development over the shoulders, but, in golfing experience, Mr Maxwell was a David to the Hoylake Goliath. The match picked up a following that was augmented at every hole, and was the biggest of the first two days of the championship, when it turned all square. The youngster was one down at the seventeenth hole, but he squared the match on the home green, and won after playing five more holes.

When, on the following afternoon, he beat Mr Hilton by the wide margin of " 6 and 4 " we seemed to have unearthed a phenomenon, but Mr Robb putted as if inspired when the two young players came together, and the youth of nineteen beat the lad of twenty-one, going down in the final to the imperturbable Allan, whose death within a year came as a sad shock to Scottish golfers. He learned his golf on the Braid Hills, and has been the single product of that famous municipal course to win the championship.

A TAIT WEEK.

Mr Hilton, beaten at Muirfield, went home to Hoylake to win the first Open Championship played on the Cheshire green. It was in this championship that James Braid came to the front. He finished second, one stroke behind the winner, who, years later, wrote of Braid's finish : " In Braid's long career he has probably seldom played a finer stroke than his second to the last green. It was never off the line, fortunately for me the green was keen and the ball kept trickling along, passed within a foot or so of the hole and did not stop until it had

rolled some six or eight yards past." Braid missed the putt, the championship fell to the amateur. We were back at Hoylake again the following May to see the Amateur Championship of 1898 decided. It was a week of "Freddy" Tait, a week of pipe playing and of golf that sent his friends in turns into fits of dispair and into moments of ecstacy. At the presentation ceremony at the close of the meeting the Black Watch officer assured the gathering that he did deserve his success. In a measure that was so. No man playing the golf he did against Messrs John Graham and J. L. Low deserved to win the championship. His long game was ragged beyond belief, but his recovery shots electrified the spectators. One of them, executed at the sixteenth hole, where he was trapped off his drive, got out of the hazard with difficulty and, going all out, carried the corner of the "field" and the bunker guarding the green, I have seen referred to as one of the historic shots in the game. The distance, measured, was found to be practically two hundred yards—with the gutty. In two rounds he did this sort of thing again and again. In the Low match he turned in 48; in the final he disclosed remarkable

form and beat Mr Mure Fergusson "7 and 5."

PARK-VARDON DUEL.

Harry Vardon won at Prestwick a few weeks later one of his most conspicuous successes in the Open Championship. We have found a good few championships resolve themselves into a duel between two men, but there have been few more remarkable instances than that of 1898. It was from Willie Park's aggregate at the end of the first day that the scheme of compulsory retirement operated. It was the first systematic effort to curtail the number competing on the second day, and it was the irony of fate that the only prominent player discharged under the scheme was Willie Auchterlonie, the winner of the last previous Prestwick championship. On the first day Vardon went into the railway at the first hole, yet was only three strokes behind the leader at the end of the day. On the second day Park began each round, 6, 3, 6 against Vardon's 4, 3, 4, yet was a stroke to the good at the end of the third round, and only one behind at the close of the competition. It is a moot point whether Park should have saved that stroke.

He maintained that he made dead certain, as he thought, of a tie. One's own impression as an onlooker was that Park played for the 3 that would have given him a tie, however, he knew best what was in his mind, and it was a very unhappy end of a splendid endeavour, a champion, nine years removed, striving to wrest the title from the leading representative of a younger generation. A natural enough outcome of the finish was Park's famous challenge to Vardon. In the old days the £100 a side match would have come on the heels of the championship, but in 1898 the making of the match was a very protracted affair. Vardon had not imbibed " the spirit of the challenge match."

WHO WINS?

Played in July 1899, the match took place a year too late for Park, who had lost the form of '98. Vardon, on the other hand, had established himself as the world's greatest living golfer. I can recall in the early summer taking a run out to Richmond on my way home from a Continental holiday, and meeting there the " triumvirate " that was to be, and

Sandy Herd. There had been tournaments at Cruden Bay and St Anne's, and one was now proceeding at Richmond. Wanting to be posted up I "speered" at Herd, "Who won at Cruden Bay?" "Harry Vardon!" And at St Anne's?" "Vardon!" "And who was winning here?" "Vardon!" At this there was a general shout of laughter It seemed so unnecessary in 1899 to ask who was winning from a field containing Vardon. As in the preliminary tournaments, so in the championship. The Sandwich course had been liberally bunkered as between 1894 and 1899, and was considered to be a much more severe test than when J. H. Taylor, won his first title. Taylor himself took six strokes off his 1894 aggregate of 326, but Vardon's total was 310. Jack White's position as runner-up was a portent of what was to happen five years later, the old Dirleton boy having an aggregate of 315, which included a fourth round of 75, a record for the green. Golf, as I have indicated, was beginning to interest the London press. To this was owing the father of all the fast time stories. White did his 75 in his last round. A message transmitted to one of the London evening papers: "White went round in 75, a record,"

fell into the hands of a sports' sub-editor who, ignorant of golf, caught a "stop press" box with the intelligence that Jack White had "broken record at Sandwich, going round in 7 minutes 5 seconds."

VI.

A GREAT SUMMER, 1899.

One hesitates as to placing the other two great golf happenings of that eventful summer, the Amateur Championship, at Prestwick, and the Vardon-Park match. Taking them in their order of date, let us deal first with the championship. It had happened in connection with the Open Championship of the previous year, that the Glasgow correspondent of a London sporting paper, himself a complete stranger to golf, had asked a confrére to take a run down to Prestwick and execute a commission for him. The result was disastrous and the poor man fled back to the comforts of the Sautmarket, leaving the London journal reportless. In 1899 the Glasgow correspondent appealed to me to help him out of his difficulty, and, in the course of the competition, I indicated, in a highly summarised press telegram, that F. G. Tait had beaten Ballingall, Edinburgh University, and got into the toils through the mishandling of

my message by a London sub-editor, who made of the well-known Scottish name, Ballingall, a verb and a noun. A result was that the London journal lost a subscriber, a golfing London Scot, who wrote the publishers a very angry letter which duly reached me with the demand for an explanation. I was, they had been told, well versed in golf. How could I account for this ? With difficulty I refrained from making the obvious comment that I had agreed to supply them with golf, not with intelligence. The Ballingall in question was one of Lieutenant Tait's five victims. The fifth was Mr H. H. Hilton. It was remarked of the Scotsman's long game that never by any chance was he on the line, but the sounder golf of the Hoylake crack was matched by some uncanny putting on the part of the Black Watch officer, who won a tie of thrilling interest by the narrowest margin.

THE BALL-TAIT FINAL.

This was the prelude to what was generally conceded to be the most remarkable final in the pre-war series. The great incidents were the famous shots from the bunker guarding the Alps green, in the afternoon round. Most of

us will have seen shots which ranked with either of them, but who can recall seeing two such shots from the same hazard under such thrilling circumstances? People were present in thousands and made of the affair a scramble. Neither of the players—for Mr Ball was, in Andrew Kirkaldy's expression, as much a "greyhound" as Lieutenant Tait—wasted any time over a shot, and the match progressed at a great pace. With a rush we carried the heights overlooking the Alps green and the bunker into which both balls had fallen, and to this day I can hear the murmur that ran round the assemblage as Lieutenant Tait, in obedience to the umpire's injunction to give the odd, took an iron club from his caddie and waded into the water which lay in the bunker a foot deep. The murmur swelled into a roar as he lofted the ball on to the green, and a second cheer was raised as his opponent laid his shot from the sand a foot or two from the water's edge, within holing distance. It is on the records that the younger man, fated to meet a soldier's death within the next few months, was beaten after a tie. Here is a nutshell summary of the day's play, representing telegrams sent by me

to Lieutenant Tait's mother at the request of a member of his family: Morning, 9th hole, Tait 4 up; end round, Tait 3 up. Afternoon, 9th hole, all square; end round, all square: 37th hole, Ball wins, 1 up.

NORTH BERWICK'S NIGHTMARE GOLF.

Released from Prestwick, we were immediately interested in the preparations for the big money match. Public opinion had practically forced the engagement upon the champion, and when the match was eventually made it was learned with surprise that, whereas Park was going off his home green of Musselburgh to North Berwick, Vardon had succeeded in pressing his stipulation that Ganton should be the venue of the English end of the match. The day's play at the East Lothian green in July 1899 was a species of nightmare golf. The crowd was variously estimated at from eight to ten thousand. The course, an excellent test of the game, was ill-suited for a gallery exceeding one thousand. The day was one long scramble. There was, for a long time, acute disagreement as to whether Vardon suffered from an attack of nerves that for half

the day affected his short game or whether he deliberately played well within himself, content to take from the course nominated by his opponent the two holes' advantage that was his at the end of the 36 holes play. Personally, I never was enamoured of the theory of the nerve-ridden Vardon. His straight raking shots with his brassie were superb. Park had invariably to play the odd through the green but for hole after hole in that trying time, when the long succession of halved holes was being registered, Vardon had almost invariably to play the like on the green to Park's long hole out and some experienced golfers among the onlookers were free to confess that they would rather have played the putts of Park than those of Vardon. The sequence of divides was broken at the 11th hole, which had, in practice, generally cost Vardon a 5 instead of a possible 3, or the par 4. Curiously enough, he lost the same hole in the afternoon when he was establishing the superiority he made so manifest when the second half of the match came to be played at Ganton two or three weeks later.

IN A STRANGE LAND.

Before leaving North Berwick, Tom Vardon, who had been carrying for his brother, gave it it as his impression that Park would need a month's acquaintance with the course of the Scarboro' club to be able to go round under 80, and odds of 6 to 1 and 8 to 1 were freely laid on Vardon's chances. For some reason, there was a revulsion of feeling in Park's favour in Scotland, prior to the Ganton excursion, and offers to accept 7 to 2 against him were made by some of his supporters, who threw their native caution to the winds. The less said about the dreary day at Ganton the better. My chief recollection of the doleful day is that play began in fine dull weather, but that ere long rain began to fall heavily, whereupon those of us who had left our wraps in Vardon's workshop had reason to curse our imprudence, a hurried scamper across the course revealing the fact that the erstwhile occupants of the workshop had deserted the building, taking the key with them. The single story I can recall bringing back with us concerned the good fellow who kept the hotel at which we put up. He wanted to know what was bringing us to

Scarboro' at the end of July. "The match," we said, but "the match" was Greek to him. The only match he could think of was in the Scarboro' cricket festival some weeks later. He knew Ganton as a railway station, the game of golf he had never heard of. But seeing we were "sports" he thought he would show us something, and taking us to a window of the dining-room he pointed with pardonable pride to a shop opposite, occupied by a famous member of the Yorkshire eleven. "That," he said, "is John Tunnicliffe's shop." "Yes," said somebody, with ready wit, "but who is John Tunnicliffe?" Exit the affable landlord.

THE GRAND TOUR,

Shortly after the Park match, Vardon did his grand tour of Scotland, up to that time the most pretentious essay ever made by a professional golfer. Extraordinary interest was taken in the tour by Scottish golfers, and a considerable number of enthusiasts went the round with him. What they thought might handicap Vardon was the fact that he was playing the home professional, or virtually so, on five strange greens, but his judgment of distances—

in which respect he was regarded as having an even finer intuitive sense than Taylor or Braid —stood him in good stead as the record of the tour indicates :

Aug. 8. Beat Willie Fernie at Troon, 5 and 4.
„ 10. Beat A. H. Scott at Elie, 10 and 9.
„ 11. Beat Jas. Kinnell, at Leven, 3 and 2.
„ 14. Beat Ben Sayers, at New Luffness, 5 and 3.
„ 16. Beat Joe Dalgleish, at Nairn, 8 and 7.

It was at the match at Elie that Andrew Kirkaldy delivered himself of his famous aphorism. "Man," he said admiringly to Vardon, when the latter holed off his mashie ; "Ye wud brek th' hert o' an iron horse." The tour ended, Vardon went on to St Andrews, where he played the best ball of Messrs J. E. Laidlay and L.M. Balfour Melville, the respective winners of the two previous Amateur Championships at St Andrews. The odds were against Vardon : he was beaten "2 and 1." On the following day he played Messrs J. M. Williamson and Josiah Livingston at the Burgess Society's course at Barnton on the same principle, and beat them "3 and 2." It was of that period

that Vardon has written: "I then felt I could play. It was just a matter of securing the correct stance and then the stroke was bound to be a success. It was great."

VII.

GUTTA "TAKES THE COUNT."

"WHAT spoilt me," Vardon has told us, "was my trip to the States. I made a nine months' tour and it was nothing but golf, golf, golf all the daytime, and travelling all the night. I played some eighty matches altogether and won about seventy. I never recovered from the strain." Vardon interrupted the American trip to come to this country, with the American Championship added to his other distinctions, to defend his title of Open Champion, but J. H. Taylor wrested the honour from the Channel Islander. There probably never was in our time a championship which excited so little concern as the Open Championship of 1900, unless it was the Amateur Championship of the same year. From this the winner and runner-up of the previous year were amissing. We were involved in the South African war, in which Mr John Ball was serving, and in which Lieutenant Tait had shortly before been

killed in action. The 1901 championships, too, were overshadowed by the war, which was dragging on its weary length. James Braid began at Muirfield, the great decade of his life with the first Scottish-won championship since 1893, and at St Andrews, Mr H. H. Hilton won his second amateur title, after a final marked by the last of the disgraceful exhibitions of partizanship to which I have had occasion to refer. Mr J. L. Low, who had had a sensational win over Mr John Graham in the semi-final, made a fine fight of the final which Mr Hilton won on the home green. Mr Low played a deadly short game. What decided the issue was the manner in which the Hoylake golfer got home at the Road Hole in the afternoon, the shot being regarded as one of the most memorable efforts in his career.

THE FOUR "H's."

By the summer of 1902 national affairs were in a happier position, and the golfing public threw themselves with the old ardour into the championship period. In a lesser degree, perhaps, than 1893 and 1894, but still in a very important manner, 1902 made its lasting im-

pression on the history of the game. It was the year of the four "H's"—Hutchings and Herd, Hoylake and Haskell ball. Both championships were played on the Cheshire green, and the star of Hoylake was still in the ascendency in amateur golf, Mr C. Hutchings winning the title. The final was made memorable by the conjunction of a great storm of wind and rain that broke over the course in the forenoon; of a gallant recovery from a seemingly hopeless position made by Mr S. H. Fry; and of the ultimate narrow win of a gentleman who confessed to being a grandfather. The Open Championship of a month later introduced us to the Continental professional. Ben Sayers took Arnaud Massy with him to Hoylake. "Here," said Ben to some of his friends of the press, "is the coming champion." We looked at the big, good natured, shy-smiling Frenchman and returned his smile. "You'll laugh with the other side of your face," quoth Ben, and so we did but that was in 1907. Massy took some time to "arrive." He finished tieing for tenth place in 1902, and had nothing to do with the determination of the championship which yielded to Sandy Herd the triumph of his life.

Many great golfers, Willie Campbell, Douglas Rolland and Mr John Graham among them, failed to attain championship honours. But for 1902 Herd would have been the classic example of the really great golfer who never succeeded in winning a blue riband.

NOT A HOYLAKE BALL.

Never was there a more popular win than that of the old St Andrews boy. There may have been a certain degree of good fortune attendant on his eleventh hour change from the solid ball to the Haskell variety. To my mind Herd benefited more from the circumstance that he was partnered on the last day of the championship by Mr John Ball, to whose steadying influence Herd owed it that he retained his grip of the lead in the last round. Herd stood at the back of the home green and saw Vardon and Braid finish so near and yet so far: Herd, 307; Vardon and Braid, 308. It took Braid a long time to forgive the pressman who sent off Herd as the winner when the Elie man was still a hole or two from home. It took a confrére of mine as long to forgive an intelligent compositor for what the journalist

regarded as an error of commission on the part of the typesetter. The reporter's copy contained a reference to Mr John Ball and another to the Haskell ball. The sub-editor, through whose hands the message passed, headed the paragraph "Another of the Ball family." This choice example of hasty "subbing" was lost to my confrére's collection through the compositor's disregard of the case room maxim: "Follow your copy."

Mr MAXWELL WINS.

While, one way and another, 1902 was a distinct milestone in the march of golf, 1903 was a relatively unimportant year, though it witnessed a further triumph of Harry Vardon in the Open Championship—to be followed by his breakdown in health—and the first Amateur Championship success of Mr Robert Maxwell. The England-Scotland Amateur International had been inaugurated in a tentative fashion in 1902; in 1903 it was made a fixture. Mr Maxwell, leading the Scottish team, beat the English captain, Mr John Ball, by "8 and 6," and went on to win the championship. The runner-up was Mr H. G. Hutchinson, but the

match of the week was one of the semi-finals in which the ultimate champion was opposed by Mr H. de Zoete. My recollection of the affair is that the Englishman was the taller, the Scotsman the broader-shouldered man. A better favoured couple never met at Muirfield, and it was a case of pull-devil pull-baker, till the Scotsman ran down a putt for the hole and the match on the 19th green. Harry Vardon was a good, and would have been an easy, winner of the Open Championship, in which he held a lead of 7 strokes from his nearest attendant after three rounds had been played, had it not been that he began to falter in the last round, a precursor this of an illness which overtook him some time later, when he was playing in a match in England.

VIII.

AMERICA ARRIVES.

COME we now to 1904, one of the real landmarks in the game. It was a Sandwich year, the Open Championship coming on at the heels of the Amateur Championship, on the Royal St George's course. What made 1904 ever memorable was the fact that Mr W. J. Travis, an Australian, won the Amateur Championship for America. As has happened since, the American menace came upon us with a sense of shock, if not of downright injury. What had chiefly concerned us was whether Mr John Graham would come into the position he struggled in vain for ten more years to attain. It was as if some one had stalked into our own house and taken part in a domestic squabble. Mr Travis came with three American Amateur Championships at his back, but American golf did not stand for very much, the Transatlantic amateurs having just succeeded in shaking off the shackles of the expatriated

Scots while the Open Championship of the States was practically a preserve of men from Scotland's eastern seaboard. The man who really "found" Mr Travis was Mr T. T. Gray, who entered for the championship from the Royal Musselburgh Club. He went to Sandwich a stranger in a strange land, met another stranger and suggested a practice round, a little fraternity being formed which lasted over the preliminaries, when, mark you, Mr Travis was much less the "hope" of a strong American contingent than a mere compatriot of theirs. Mr Gray, in a moment of effusiveness, when he was greeting a contingent of Scottish pressmen who reached Sandwich two days later than he did, confided in us that he had found the winner. He offered to let us in, in sundry wagers he was making at 20 to 1 against the American for the championship. When the St George's Cup came to be played for the following day, and Mr Travis took 169 against the 154 which won Mr John Graham the trophy, Mr Gray was the most discredited man in Sandwich.

A MAN WHO COULD PUTT.

Mr Travis was, to my mind, the real precursor

of Walter Hagen. "He did not," a critic observed of his game, "use his clubs like Mr Graham when the latter was playing his best golf, but he used his head better than any of his rivals. A typical American, he had studied every detail in connection with the course, and had mapped out a plan for every hole. He did not always hit the ball as hard as he could have done, but he hit it hard enough. If he could get up with two 'pokey' shots he played them. 'He was not going to break blood-vessels over full drives when they were not necessary,' was his remark at the finish." He was described as all wire and whip-cord, and he was about as expressionless as a bit of either material. Said one bystander to another when the imperturbable American holed a long putt in the final and silenced some applause by his sheer immovability: "Would he bleed if you cut him with a knife?" This was the man, who, in the final, met Mr Edward Blackwell, a man six years his junior, but one who had for a good many years been a prominent figure in the game. It was recorded of the St Andrews golfer that when still in his teens he played Jack Simpson, the champion, always outdrove him and beat him by a hole; that with

a drive and an iron he went further than Mr J. E. Laidlay's two full shots when the latter was at the top of his game, and that he performed the feat of driving the long hole at St Andrews both ways in two, an average of 260 yards for each of the shots. He outdrove Mr Travis, 20, 30, 40 yards, but the American was usually inside on the green, and if he had to play the odd he ran down a putt of any distance. There was no sense in saying that such a winner was lucky. A long-distance runner who runs to schedule and accomplishes what he sets out to accomplish is not lucky.

CAUSTIC HUMOUR.

The championship final was played on a Friday; the following day Mr Travis went out to see Harry Vardon and James Braid play a single in the England-Scotland Professional International which had been instituted that year. At the fourth hole he turned to a compatriot and dryly remarked, "This is golf." He had just seen both men lay full shots on the pin. Concerning the International, a confrére used to tell an excellent story. He had gone round with the Andrew Kirkaldy-Ben

Sayers foursome. Let us forget who their opponents were, the story was: Playing one of the long holes in the back stretch with the issue in the balance the Scot driving got the longer ball and along the old adversaries went communing audibly as to how the next shot should be played. The two Englishmen were all ears, and when the veterans agreed that the brassie was the club to play the English player took his brassie — and deposited his ball in the bunker guarding the green. "Umphum. A'll tak' ma cleek," said the Scot, to whom it fell to make the second shot, and his ball was played short of the bunker, a pitch and a putt winning the hole. This was "heid wark" of another sort to that of Mr Travis and, as the records show, the veterans won their match to save *the* match. Braid, the Scottish captain, went out to see the finish, and communicated to Kirkaldy the fact that the round must be won if the match was to be saved. "Dinna tell the wee yin," quoth Andrew, "He'll drap deid." In passing I may mention that one of my few recollections of the later Professional Internationals concerned the old enemies, now warm cronies. One put the other into the railway at St Andrews:

"Lend's yer wee mashie," said the man who had to play the shot, "Nae, nae," was the dry rejoinder, "brek yer ain club."

A MEMORABLE AFTERNOON.

Jack White, whom I caught in a reminiscent mood at Leuchars Junction on the eve of the 1921 Open Championship at St Andrews, told me that he thought Sandy Herd and he did uncommonly well to win a championship apiece in the first decade of this century. "Did it ever occur to you," he asked me, "that from 1900 to 1910 Herd and I were playing against the best of three balls, those of Braid, Vardon and Taylor ?" White himself had to withstand one of the most magnificent challenges in the history of the championship when winning in 1904. It has always been my belief that Vardon would have won the championship but for the state of his health, which, at that time, gave some concern to his friends. After two days blustering weather he stood alone among the big men, returning 149 to White's 155, Taylor's 155, Braid's 157. On the way down to the course on the last morning I remarked to an English professional that this was to be

another Vardon year. "Not a bit," he said regretfully, "he'll never last another round." I remember that morning dividing my attention between Vardon and Braid. Vardon, 8 strokes to the good as against the Elie man at the beginning of the round, was 2 strokes to the bad at the turn. Braid had played a great half-round, all 3's and 4's, and a total of 31. Records had begun to be cut with 74 in the first round. Vardon did 73 and Sherlock 71 in the second round, but Braid's 69 in the third round seemed unbeatable, and when White tied with it in the afternoon, and returned a gross score of 296, we took it for granted that his aggregate was unassailable. "White, Champion, 296," was flashed to every centre in the kingdom. We knew definitely that Braid was not doing another 69, and that Vardon was not making a recovery. When some one came in to say that Taylor had begun with 3, 3, 2, or three strokes under Braid for the first 3 holes of his record round, our complacency was blown to the winds. Taylor turned in 32, came home in 36, broke record at 68, and a single stroke stood between us and a "wire": "Correction, Taylor, 296; White Taylor tie for championship."

IX.

THE £400 FOURSOME.

THE championships of 1905 were of a domestic character, and were overshadowed by the international foursome of the autumn. Some controversy was occasioned in connection with the Amateur Championship at Prestwick by the conceding of putts, a department in which Mr Robert Maxwell was over generous. He was one of the victims of Mr Gordon Barry, the eventual winner, who was another Peter Anderson, save that his reputation was better established at St Andrews than that of his predecessor. He was, during the championship week, brimful of confidence and destitute of nerves. His somewhat florid style impressed a good many people unfavourably and they proclaimed him a chance winner of the championship but inasmuch as, at a time when the art of putting seemed to have been lost to British amateur golf, Mr Gordon Barry could putt, he was to me a good winner.

It was the same story in connection with the Open Championship. James Braid, the winner, putted with confidence on greens that were as hard as iron. He won on the putting greens, but he gave his admirers a shade of anxiety in the fourth round through his predeliction for putting recovery shots from bunkers on to the railway. It was of that failing, which took toll to the extent of one stroke at the fifteenth green and two at the sixteenth, that an elderly enthusiast complained, when, with a sweep of the arm seaward, he said: "And Jamie had the haill world to play out into," a remark the full significance of which will be realised by those who can visualise the great expanse of links between the railway and the beach.

10,000 ROUND THE RING.

One of the best matches in the Professional International series was that played at St Andrews between Braid and Herd and Taylor and Vardon, the excellence of the play suggesting to an English sportsman that it would be a good idea to bring the couple together in a big money match. The Scots-

men found ready sponsors and the match was made for £400, the note of dissent being struck in certain circles in Scotland where it was argued that Braid should have had Willie Park as his partner. The Park of 1899 and the Braid of 1905 would have been matchless as putters but the general agreement was that Park was old enough for so strenuous an undertaking as that projected, and Braid and Herd were left to do battle for Scotland. Possibly nothing more imposing was ever seen in British golf than the scene which attended on the opening of play at St Andrews. Round about 10,000 persons saw the balls hit off the first tee, a great ring embracing the entire area of play from the back of the first tee to the back of the first green. While the crowd was waiting in a state of tension a number of donkeys were driven across the head of the links from the houses to the sea. The simple little every day occurrence was so much at variance with the vast concourse of people that the risible faculty of the crowd was tickled and a roar of laughter ran round the ring. Then a stillness, that betokened breathless expectancy, settled down once more on the great congregation.

ECLIPSED—SUN AND SCOTS.

Nothing finer than the play in the St Andrews instalment of the match could have been seen. That the Scots carried away the lead I was inclined to put down to two great running shots played by Herd in the afternoon when he won two holes and established a lead which was maintained till the end of the day. The signs and portents, when we went to Troon, to what was to be the gala day in the history of that green, were that we should see an eclipse of the sun. This duly happened. Over and above, we saw an eclipse of the Scots. It has been stated since that Braid or Herd—or Braid and Herd, it really does not matter which—suffered from indisposition. Beyond question, they suffered a humiliation. But who would have escaped that fate ? I am persuaded that more perfect golf than was played by Vardon and Taylor that day was never seen. Taylor had a faithful friend in his mashie and his pitching shots were so perfectly executed than an admirer of his hardly overstated the case when he said that Taylor could have pitched the ball from any reasonable distance on to a sixpenny piece. Beginning

the day 2 holes up, the Scotsmen left off 12 holes down. That the Scotsmen pulled their opponents down to 7 up at St Anne's failed to revive interest in the match, and Vardon and Taylor ran off with the last "leg" pretty much as they did with the second section, winning at Deal by "13 and 12." The only crumb of comfort vouchsafed to us was that the match came to an end comparatively early in the afternoon. The wind blew in from the North Sea, and brought with it a solid mass of water. "Usquebaugh, Usquebaugh" was the cry as we got back to the town. "With a little sugar and hot water" sympathetically suggested mine host, and it was so. He wondered, good man, what had brought an incursion of Scotsmen from Edinburgh and Glasgow. In those days the town and course might have been separated by the Strait of Dover. Neither seemed to give the slightest countenance to the other.

AN IDLE DREAM.

The standard of play in the Amateur Championship of 1906 was possibly as low as ever it has been. Mr James Robb, beaten "7 and

6," by Mr F. H. Mitchell, the old Oxonian, in the Amateur International, won the championship the following week, when the last eight were all—with the exception of Mr Robb and Mr J. Gordon Simpson, an internationalist for the first time—practically unknown men and very ordinary stuff at that. It was in the Robb-Lingen final that the famous " half in 9 " occurred at the Briars. It used to be said that Mr Robb extracted a certain amount of consolation from the fact that James Braid took 8 at the same hole in a championship, but at any rate, there were no 8's on Braid's card at Muirfield in 1906. Of Braid's third championship one can recall that the Elie man had to start late each day, and putt on greens glazed by a strong sun, and the tramping of many feet. He had to do a 76 in the last round to win. That Braid did a 73, five strokes under the next best last round of the men " among the money " speaks for itself. He gave his friends no qualms. Two points fall to be noted in connection with the championship. George Duncan, then a promising player, was given a place in the Scottish team in the international, losing to P. J. Gaudin, " 4 and 2," and, in conjunction with J. Kinnell,

beating Tom Williamson and Gaudin in the foursome by "5 and 3." Duncan tied for eighth place in the championship and earned 50s. for his initial success. In the second place, Mr A. R. Paterson, the captain of the Honourable Company, asked the professionals through their Association, to aid the delegates of the clubs who undertook the management of the competition in devising some scheme whereby only those players who were of championship calibre might be seen competing in future in the leading golfing event of the year, a pious aspiration which has remained an unfulfilled dream.

X.

ST ANDREWS PAYS TRIBUTE.

For some years Mr John Ball had given little more than glimpses of his old form. We were inclined to regard his day as done. He was failing to "stay the course." To the general delight the Amateur Championship of 1907 found us a new John Ball, the John Ball we were to know so well in later years, the John Ball who played the better, the longer the competition lasted. He beat Mr Robb, the champion of the previous year, who was installed as leader of the Scottish team in the international at St Andrews, "6 and 4," and became favourite for the championship when he disposed of Robert Andrew, the Prestwick artizan, who later went over to professionalism, and joined the Scottish forces in the United States; a sweet iron shot player, but erratic to a degree at the hole side. Andrew was vanquished by the sound short game of the Hoylake amateur. In the afternoon Mr Ball

won what was regarded as the virtual final, from Mr Guy Campbell, who looked to have the winning of the 7th hole when he would have been 3 up. Instead, the older man won the hole on the putting green, and this proved the turning point in the match. Mr Ball had as opponent in the final, Mr C. A. Palmer. It had been a week of cold winds : it now stormed. Half of the bedraggled little gallery in the morning seemed to be pressmen ; two of the four press umbrellas were wrecked at the seventh hole, their remains being consigned to the Eden sands. Mr Ball was a winner all the way, and in the afternoon St Andrews turned out to cheer him. It was his first win over the classic course. His conqueror of 1895, now captain of the Royal and Ancient, presented the championship medal, and not long afterwards Mr Ball was made an honorary member of the premier club. In the end St Andrews made handsome amends to the great English golfer for the misdeeds of that summer morning in 1895.

MASSY THE WINNER.

To Hoylake we went a month later to find the Ben Sayers prophecy of 1902 come true.

The Irish-born professional had come to hand but the first break in the Scoto-English wins in the Open Championship was occasioned by that best of all Continental golfers, Arnaud Massy. He won by the narrow margin of two strokes from J. H. Taylor. Massy was playing the sixteenth hole in the last round when we sent him off as the winner. He played well out to the left with his tee shot—to take a line on the hole was to risk going into the "park" and losing a stroke—and going up to the ball, Massy paused a moment to consider the position. A wooden club meant either the bunker guarding the green or the green itself; the Frenchman took his cleek, played short of the bunker, pitched over in 3, and got a safe 5. It was the game at the stage at which he was to win a championship the player had well in sight. Congratulations without stint were bestowed on Massy. He had picked up the game at Biarritz, and had had polish applied to his golf at North Berwick, and a combination of powerful physique, perfect style and native modesty, unaffected by success, won all hearts. Massy confided in me that the one man he dreaded was James Braid, who was then pre-eminently our longest

and straightest driver. I think it realised Massy's dearest wish when he was partnered with Braid in the Coronation match at Sandwich, in 1911. Messrs John Ball and Charles Evans were given to understand what Massy had meant when four years before the Frenchman spoke of what "Jimmy and me" could do in conjunction.

MAKING A FOOL OF THE COURSE.

There was nothing to comment on in the Amateur Championship of the following year, the "form" being as poor in 1908 as in 1906; but the Open Championship at Prestwick, made full amends. Massy might have said, as did Jack White, that he was playing against the best ball of the "triumvirate," who were out to avenge British golf for the set-back of the previous summer. Then Braid, Taylor and Vardon went to Chester on a Thursday, to play an exhibition game in teeming rain, engaging on the Saturday in the Professional International, the while Massy was being carefully nursed by his mentor, Sayers. In 1908 the boot was on the other foot. Massy constrained to do so by his position as title-holder, played in a tournament at Turnberry,

in stormy weather. His rivals stood down. It suited their book, too, that the Professional International of the Saturday should, perforce, be abandoned on account of a rainstorm. At all events they went into the championship fray well tuned up, and as keen as mustard. All three finished in front of Massy, and Braid won one of the most conspicuous successes even attained in the championship. An 8 at the Cardinal in the third round did not check the conquering march of "the big dour man from Elie." Away he went to get a 2 at the Himalayas, to uproot a whin bush over at Monkton, and finish in 77. This, he has declared, was the best championship round of his career. In the afternoon he simply walked over the course. His aggregate of 291 has never been equalled in British championship golf. "Great work," I remarked to a member of the promoting club, when Braid finished his last round. "Great work," was his grumbling rejoinder: "It's making a fool of the course."

AMERICAN CHAMPION FAILS.

The Amateur Championship recovered its tone in 1909. Possibly, this was insensibly effected through the coming of Mr Jerome D.

Travers. He had in 1907 and 1908 won the American Amateur Championship, and he crossed the Atlantic with apparent hopes of emulating his compatriot, Mr Travis. However, the younger American held in 1909 the most unorthodox views on the subject of training for a championship, and, as his methods did not suit our variable climate, close followers of the game were far from being astonished when he was beaten in the first round at Muirfield, by that reliable match player, Mr W. A. Henderson. The final is still recalled as one of rare excellence, the perfection of match-play golf. That it was won by Mr Robert Maxwell was not to be wondered at. If there are " horses for courses," there are also golfers for courses. Mr Maxwell was, in a sense, a product of Muirfield. He made his sensational debut there in 1896, won his first championship there in 1903, his second and last in 1909. The embodiment of sheer muscular power, allied to a genial temperament, Mr Maxwell was in 1909, one of the idols of Scottish golf. When in the very plenitude of his power he made it known to an astonished world that he was done with golf championships. That was in 1911 : in 1909 he was making golfing history. It was

at Muirfield, in the Amateur International, which opened an amazing eight days, that he inflicted on Mr John Ball, the most astounding defeat ever sustained by that great golfer.

GREAT GOLF AT MUIRFIELD.

The Amateur International ran for eleven years prior to its abandonment in 1912, and it never saw the like of the Maxwell-Ball match of 1909, and a lot of queer things can happen in golf in eleven years. It was not merely the return made, "12 and 10," sensational though that was, having regard to the personality of the beaten man. The details were amazing. Mr Ball did not win a hole in the morning till the seventeenth, and he finished the round four down. Mr Maxwell played phenomenal golf in the afternoon, eight holes in three under 4's (34335434), and all won. The Scottish captain looked fit to play golf for a kingdom. Never did he seem more absolutely capable, fuller of power than on that day. A week later Mr Maxwell beat Captain C. K. Hutchison by one hole in a final we have come to regard as a classic. It was chock full of sustained brilliance. I find I

stated at the time that we welcomed a mistake made by either man as breaking the monotony of practically perfect golf. The result was always in the balance, too. Mr Maxwell was two up at the middle of the day, the match was squared at the seventh green in the afternoon and three holes later Captain Hutchison led for the first time in the day. A magnificent running pitch enabled Mr Maxwell to square the match on the seventeenth green, and at the home hole Captain Hutchison, for the first time in a round of approximately 75 strokes, or one over his own record of the course, was weak on the green. This was, no doubt, a case of reaction. Mr Maxwell, on the contrary, pitched up better and holed his putt, again a reflection of that great shot of his at the previous hole. A friend I chanced to meet a day or two later—I have ever since regarded him as, of all men, the most difficult to please—remarked, "Yes, it was a great final, but would it not have been better if we had had Travers in the final to be beaten as Hutchison was beaten?"

AN UNHAPPY CONJUNCTION.

To Deal we were taken back in the following

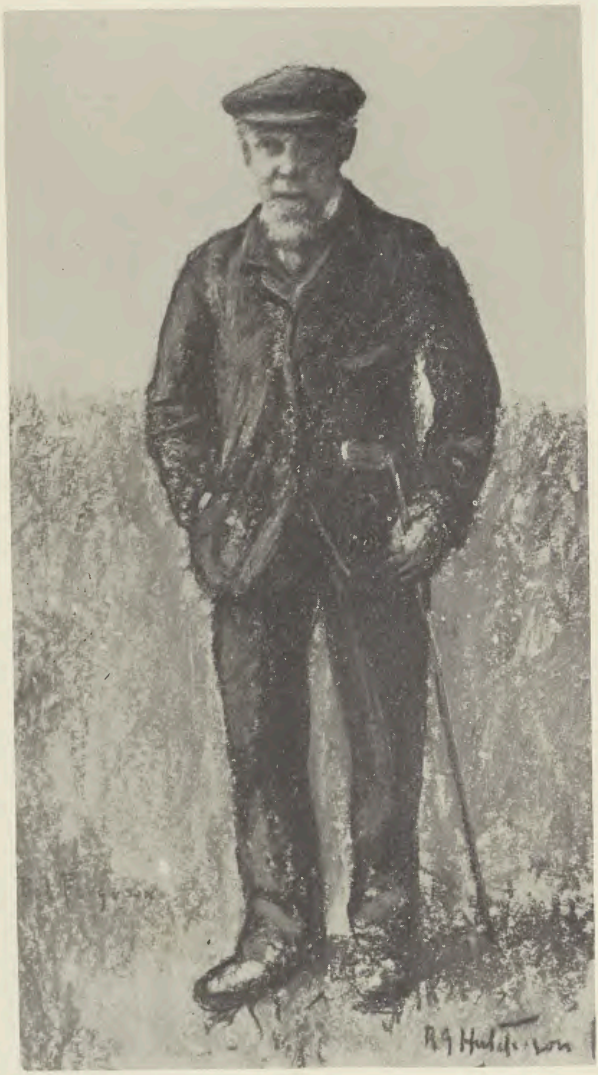
month. To Deal, where, in the autumn of 1905, we had, in the picturesque phrase of a London journalist "attended the obsequies of Scottish golf." The Open Championship of 1909 was one without "pep." It was one of J. H. Taylor's triumphs, and was none the worse for that, but in the end Taylor won by the relatively wide margin of six strokes from the late Tom Ball and James Braid. Taylor made a great finish. He had in his mind's eye a dangerous rival who had tried to bolt a long putt on the home green for a round of 71. Taylor had done 74, 73 and 74 for three rounds, and he looked like getting above his own figures in the last round when he heeled a long tee shot to the sixteenth green into the rough. Risking everything with his brassie, he reached the green and got a 4, and at the next two holes he was trying for 3's. He finished with another 74. The man he feared most was Braid. Braid had started favourite, and his admirers rather rejoiced when they learned that he was drawn to play in the first day of the championship proper with George Duncan. The Aberdonian had impressed his unique personality on the game. He was overshadowed by Braid, but he was a man of note.

It was about this time that a spectator remarked of him : " He walks up to his ball and hits it to glory, and he putts as if he liked it." Duncan was to pull out the favourite. As a matter of fact the association of the pair was good for neither. Insensibly, they began a process, not unfamiliar under such circumstances, of beating one another. A strange discovery was made. It was realised that Braid, the imperturbable, had a bit of temper tucked away in the recesses of his otherwise ideal temperament. The discovery was made at one of the early holes. Braid tried to hole a long putt, missed by a hairsbreadth, and ran out of safe holing distance. " Hard lines," exclaimed a sympathiser. " Will you stop talking," snapped Braid. Half an hour later the story ran round the course that Braid had threatened to brain the man with his putter.

XI.

OLD CHAMPIONS HOLD THE FORT.

BACK again to our now favourite conjuction of courses, St Andrews and Hoylake, we had in 1910 Mr John Ball *revividus*. We also saw the first of Abe Mitchell, the best product of purely artizan golf in England, the man of whom it is said that until he went to Hoylake to take part in the Amateur Championship of 1910, he had never hit a ball on a seaside course. Like J. H. Taylor, in 1893, he was heralded as a protege of Mr H. G. Hutchinson. He was installed in the English team for the international on the Saturday preceding the championship week, and not even Mr Maxwell's pronounced victory over Mr John Ball in the leading match excited so much interest as did the result of the Mitchell-Guy Campbell match, a win by "7 and 5" for the new-comer. The immense power of the Cantelupe player was the talk of the



BOB FERGUSON. From a Painting by Gemmell Hutchison, R.S.A.

championship week, but in the semi-final round of the competition, Mitchell fell to Mr Ball quite as decisively as "5 and 4" would indicate. That the winner beat Mr C. C. Aylmer in the final by the wide margin of "10 and 9" merely served to emphasise what everybody had believed, namely that the climax came in the Ball-Mitchell match. Coming home a beaten man, Mitchell was sympathetically spoken to by a bystander. Mitchell's response was that Mr Ball could make him a champion in a month. The third hole was characteristic of a match which taught Mitchell the best lesson of his life. Rain was falling and wind was blowing. Mitchell was over the green in two mighty shots, his opponent far short. But off a beautiful half-iron the Hoylake player was inside in 3, and Mitchell had to struggle for a half.

WHAT LAUDER SAID.

From Cheshire we betook ourselves to St Andrews to see James Braid win his fifth championship in ten years. On his return home Braid met Sir Harry Lauder and was congratulated by the famous comedian on his latest

success. "Aye, Jamie," remarked the music-hall artiste, with a measure of truth that robbed the observation of any suggestion of conceit: "What would Scotland dae withoot you and me?" Braid's triumph was the greater inasmuch as it seemed as if circumstances had conspired to snatch from him an initial advantage. The first day's play had to be cancelled because of a thunderstorm which broke over the course in the afternoon, the downpour putting several greens under water A colleague and I were caught in the storm. We were out at the Eden when it broke, but our sense of discomfort was forgotten in the experience of witnessing what seemed to us the sublimity of concentration. The thunder was rolling,, the lightning flashing, the rain descending in a deluge. Braid examined the line of a long putt, rubbed the head of his putter on his coat sleeve and holed the putt. My colleague and I were agreed that we had "found" the champion. Braid was that week, for the last time in my experience of him in a championship connection, the Braid with the true ring. Yet he found the winning of the competition the most difficult in his illustrious series. Taylor was defending the champion-

ship title, but Braid was holding the fort for the "triumvirate," and he had first of all to survive a challenge thrown out by Willie Smith, Mexico, under which strange designation was hidden an old Carnoustie boy, a member of the family which had some years earlier given us an overseas visitor, the jovial Alick, and has of recent years given us the more sober-sided Macdonald Smith. George Duncan threw out the second and more dangerous challenge.

HANDWRITING ON THE WALL.

Willie Smith, at the close of a long day, played his celebrated trick on the pressmen. Braid had finished his second round a stroke better than Duncan, three strokes better than Herd and four better than Ray, and the journalists assumed that the day was practically over, and that they could double up their introductory messages and send them off headed: "James Braid leading," or words to that effect. Came in then some one who, little realising the bombshell he was dropping into the camp, mentioned that Willie Smith had two 4's for a round of 70. There was racing and chasing, first after the telegrams

and then after Smith, the Carnoustie golfer heading the Elie man by a stroke. The occurrence was long quoted as the classic example of being too previous. The following morning saw Smith pass into relative oblivion. In a pot bunker at the fifth hole he took 3 to get out and 8 for the hole, and interest in the Carnoustie man collapsed like a pricked balloon. It was recognised that Braid alone could take 8 in a championship round and keep on fighting for first place. Still, Smith got into the money, and Donald Ross, the Dornoch American, was only a stroke behind. Somehow, it struck across Scottish rejoicings, over the fact that we had the first four in the championship, like a cold douche, the announcement made during the later stages of the meeting that Willie Smith's two brothers were concerned in a three-fold tie for the American championship, and that Alick was the final winner. Somehow, we seemed to discern in this a forecast of what would happen when the inevitably greater drain on Scottish resources by American golf would come about. Alas, the prophetic vision was no mere idle dream.

BRAID'S PROPHECY.

The lead relinquished by Smith was grasped by George Duncan. The Aberdonian was now firmly established among the leaders in the game. He had won the 300 Guineas tournament on the Burgh Course, North Berwick, in July of the previous year, and was generally regarded as a certain winner of the championship, sooner or later. His time almost seemed to have come when he tied with Smith's record round of 71 of the previous day, his play through the green being the very champagne of golf, daring but seemingly inspired. His approach putts were always "up." It was a practically perfect round. What gave one pause was that the implacable Braid was at his heels. The half-expected happened in the afternoon. From 71, Duncan went out to 83. It was advanced by his friends that the big gallery of the afternoon imported a new element into Duncan's consideration. The crowd broke the force of the breeze, the player had to putt in an atmospheric stillness that could be felt. So his putting failed him. My own estimate of the position, based on an extended study of temperament, was that Duncan

listened to unsound advice, playing for safety and becoming a trifle demoralised when stroke after stroke was slipped. The confident putting of the morning was replaced by timid strokes, and once Duncan failed to hole the long putts which he left himself the beginning of the end came. It was then—was it not ?—that Braid said that Duncan would never win the championship till he began his last round several strokes to the bad. The remark, if actually made, was strangely prophetic.

ON CONCEDING PUTTS.

We got in the summer of 1911 an experience of sharp contrasts. Never was an Amateur Championship better won than that of Mr Hilton, at Prestwick. Never was an Open Championship a greater gift of the gods than that which fell to Harry Vardon, at Sandwich. We had at Prestwick a welcome visitor in the person of Mr Charles Evans, the redoubtable "Chick," a big boy with a happy smile and the most unassuming manner in the world. He was as generous in the matter of conceding putts as Mr Maxwell had been six years earlier, his caddie having to intervene in one of his

matches and prevent him repeating an unwise concession. Mr Bruce Pearce, a left-handed Australian, beat the American after a tie that went to the nineteenth hole. In turn the Australian fell to the then Prestwick St Nicholas representative, Gordon Lockhart, who was a round later beaten by the eventual winner. It may be recalled that Lockhart conceded the Hoylake crack a half on the first green when the ball was two feet from the hole, and that in the final the following day Mr Hilton missed a putt of the same distance on the same green. But that was one of the very few holeable putts missed by the champion, whose short game was the feature of the week. It *was* hot that week. The landward part of the course was like Fiery's "Saharry." On greens of adamant Mr Hilton alone could put "stop" on his ball, and his win was a triumph of brilliant approach play.

FIRST TIE FOR FIFTEEN YEARS.

The Sandwich Vardon-won championship was productive of a tie for the first time since 1896. It was accepted that alterations had made the course four strokes worse than in

1904. So Major C. K. Hutchison wrote. Mr E. Martin Smith demonstrated how unsafe any general conclusion is in first-class golf by going round in 68 when winning the St George's Cup but the phenomenal scoring of the last day in 1904 was not destined to be repeated. On that memorable day there was rain in the morning and a dead calm throughout the day—except of course, in the vicinity of the press quarters when Taylor was doing 2's and 3's in the afternoon, but in 1911 the weather did not invite record scoring and there was none. When it was learned that Vardon led at the end of three rounds by three strokes it was agreed that nobody could have held the old Vardon in such a position, but Vardon seldom laid a long putt dead in the last round and, as he ran out to 80, he stood to be beaten by any one of six or eight men. Vardon's face as he stood at the back of the home green was no reflection of his feelings. He smoked his pipe and calmly surveyed the scene and saw man after man fail narrowly. And there was a total of 303 literally sneaking away with the title till that brave old salt, Arnaud Massy, came rolling up with a 4 to tie. "There's nae anither professional could hae done that,"

said that generous appraiser of a good thing, Andrew Kirkaldy, when the long-deferred tie eventuated. Everybody was certain that the title would go to France. Massy was to "putt Vardon's head off." Instead Vardon "drove Massy's head off." Off the tee and through the green newcomers to the game saw the Vardon of 1899. Driving without apparent effort, he was getting 20 to 30 yards further than Massy and his cleek shots were dead on the pin. Technically, Massy retired on the 35th green after playing 148 strokes against his opponent's 143. What actually happened was that Massy left the rough where he had been hewing away at his ball and, crossing the course, held out his hand and congratulated his conqueror. It was a dramatic finish.

XII.

GOLF A WORLD GAME.

We have now put a period to the time when the British Open Championship was a thing even of purely European concern. Arnaud Massy had for some years been firmly established in the high places of the game. Jean Gassiat, a man as slim as Massy was rotund, was forcing himself upon our attention. Other Frenchmen were making reputations for themselves. James Edmundson was crossing from Ireland with Michael Moran, the finest product of the professional game in the sister island then or since, in his company. The event of 1912 was the arrival on the scene of the American-born professional—the native son. We were slow to read the signs of the times. It was with no sense of unpleasant anticipation that we went to Devon to spend at Westward Ho ! a relatively uneventful week of Amateur International golf in foursomes, and Championship golf in John Ball spasms. The character of the game

in a public sense was changing fast. Championship golf at Westward Ho ! in 1912 became a newspaper "story." Abe Mitchell became, or seemed to become, of more consequence because of his occupation than because of his great hitting. We had entered the era of " stunt " —of the working-gardener golfer, the railway porter golfer, the postal servant golfer, the one-armed golfer. Prior to that we had had in Edinburgh, a one-legged golfer, but he played the game for the game's sake and, happily for him, he lived in a day and generation which knew not the smart paragraphist, the " stunt " golf writer, and the ubiquitous camera man.

M'DERMOTT'S FATAL PULL.

Much more important than Abe Mitchell's job, more striking than yet another John Ball championship, at Westward Ho ! was the appearance of J. J. M'Dermott on the scene at Muirfield. He crossed from the United States first native-born Open Champion of America. He was no slouch was M'Dermott. He landed in this country on a Saturday, the following evening I met him on the front door-step of an Edinburgh newspaper office. He

was anxious to see the editor, to tell him that he had arrived. He wanted the news sent to the Associated Press of America. What really was communicated some days later was the fact that M'Dermott had failed to qualify for the championship proper. It was at Muirfield in 1912, in Ted Ray's well-won championship, that the vicious principle of the qualifying competition was introduced. The late Tom Ball played a round of 68, which till the day of his death, was professional record for Muirfield, only to find the score wiped out when the competition proper began. M'Dermott found the woods of Archerfield a fatal attraction. He pulled four balls in succession when playing up the dyke, three of them went over the wall, the fourth hit the wall and lay badly. Prior to this the American had taken four putts on one green. Such indulgences could not be condoned. M'Dermott beat himself; on the Sunday night he had confessed to fearing only one thing—Jamie Braid. Muirfield found a new champion. Ray started favourite, the leading price being 10 to 1 bar Ray, and he led throughout by one stroke, three, five, four, a 71 to Vardon in the last round pulling Ray back a stroke. He was relatively new to the

East of Scotland, his great driving and his dainty touch on the putting green caught the imagination. Everybody was glad when he won.

RUNNING INTO STORMY WEATHER.

Ray was the last stone-wall favourite to win an Open Championship. Taylor won against the odds in 1913, another eventful year. Whereas 1912 saw Mr John Ball win his seventh Amateur Championship at the age of forty-nine, the following year saw his comrade-in-arms, Mr Hilton, win his fourth at the age of forty-four. We were not strong in amateur golfers in the immediate pre-war years. Why in 1913, almost to a certainty had not Mr Hilton beaten the chance American entrant, Mr Heinrich Schmidt, in the sixth round, the amazingly painstaking short game of the American would have won him the championship. He had got on most people's nerves, including those of the remaining players, so it was said. My chief recollection of the week at St Andrews after the fright the redoubtable Heinrich gave us, was the thunderstorm that broke when the final was under way. It came,

literally, like a bolt from the blue, necessitated the suspension of play until some fresh holes were cut and ruined more ladies' dresses than any previous thunder-plump in the history of St Andrews. Even so, that storm was an incident. At Hoylake in the following month we had a week of storm. If the strife of the elements was stilled another storm seemed brewing. The wild women of the period threatened to ruin the putting greens, and the course was as closely guarded as was a naval base a year and half later. Nothing untoward happened. James Braid, it is true, played in smoked glasses, and George Duncan, after winning his match in the Professional International by "5 and 4," from Harry Vardon, failed to qualify in the championship competition. Neither circumstance, no matter how vexatious, was abnormal. The last day's golf was in a gale.

TAYLOR BEATS THE ELEMENTS.

We had a lovely day between the Professional International and the opening of the play in the Championship, and our young men went out strong as lions. They wanted to have a welt at the ball. They smiled indulgently at

the spectacle presented by the three American entrants, J. J. M'Dermott, T. L. M'Namara and M. J. Brady, who, in the most painstaking fashion, went on putt, putt, putting on the clubhouse lawn. Nobody smiles at the painstaking putter nowadays, especially if he comes across the Atlantic. We have had some. Brady, the eldest of the three Americans, did nothing in the championship, and M'Namara, who was sent across with the reputation of being the finest short game player in the States, was never in the running. It was reserved to little M'Dermott to uphold the credit of his country, and it was the shocking weather on the last day that proved his undoing. I chanced to meet the late Mr Willie Doleman on our return from Hoylake. He said the worst day ever known in big golf occurred in 1881, when a terrible fishing disaster was occasioned by the storm, the day at Hoylake he was prepared to concede was the next worst. Two or three of us saw the funniest golf of our lives between the second and the fifth holes. No one would of his own accord venture further out. J. H. Taylor shamed us into doing so. He pulled his cap over his eyes, looked his dourest and most determined, cheated

the wind by his long, low driving, pitched dead on greens that held every ball and, by sheer resolution, won one of the biggest triumphs in the history of the game. Taylor rose from a first and second rounds aggregate of 148, to a third and fourth rounds aggregate of 156 —eight strokes being his concession to the storm. Ray, his runner-up, jumped from 147 to 165. Is anything more required to be said ? I think not.

MORE AMERICAN VISITORS.

Of the " triumvirate," James Braid was first to break record in the matter of championships won. Harry Vardon tied with Braid in 1911. Taylor in 1913. In 1914 it was an even break between Vardon and Taylor as to which of them should win the championship for the sixth time. However, that is anticipating events. We had Sandwich and the Amateur Championship before we had Prestwick and the Open Championship. The Amateur Championship began with interest at fever heat and ended tameness itself. A year earlier the three American professionals, M'Dermott, M'Namara and Brady, came to Hoylake

asking for an international match. It was amazing that the American contingent at Sandwich did not prefer a like request. They had over Mr Charles Evans, of whom it was said in America at the time that if his putting was on a par with the rest of his game competitions would become uninteresting, Mr Jerome Travers, whose short game was as deadly as that of the Chicago man was erratic, and Mr Francis Ouimet, who had the previous autumn done one of the most amazing things ever known in golf, tied with Ray and Vardon in the American Open Championship, and beaten them in the play-off. He was heralded as a phenomenon, received like a conqueror, feted, interviewed, made the man of the hour. What was it all about was asked when he came to play in the championship. How his commonplace, slap-dash play had beaten the two English professionals no one could imagine, unless it was that the wet and heavy course gave no play to the scientific golf of the British professionals. This was the popular theory —let it go for what it was worth.

THE ROUT OF THE "INVADERS."

The feature of the Sandwich week was the

manner in which the American golfers faded out in every case at the instance of a player who, incontinently, joined his victim in the shades a round later. Thus, Mr C. A. Palmer, doubled up as he was with lumbago, beat Mr Travers, and in the next round fell to a clubmate. Mr H. S. Tubbs beat Mr Ouimet, and for half a day was a national hero, and then he met Mr Ellis—exit Tubbs. The case was the same with Mr C. B. Macfarlane. He played the golf of his life ; all 2's, 3's and 4's, barring one 6, against the last of the celebrities from the other side, went out against Mr Evans in 31, turned 5 up, and won handsomely and, then, against Mr Martin Smith, lost his inspiration and suffered a commonplace defeat. Mr Evans was entitled to sympathy. When a man's opponent begins to ram putts down off 30 yards he wants something more than an average of 4's out to give him a chance, but Messrs Travers and Ouimet were alike at fault. One could not lay an approach putt within holing distance, the other seldom hit a clean ball off the tee, and as seldom showed any judgment in his approach play. The " invasion " was a lamentable failure. When the single real personality in the last eight, Mr John Graham,

was beaten, the championship became as lustreless as it had seemed full of colour a few days before. In the final we had a Scotsman and an Irish golfer in conflict. For some reason the crowd made themselves partizans of the Irish entrant, Mr C. O. Hezlet. Those of us who were from the north would, if we could, have "rooted" for Mr Jenkins by way of restoring the balance. Not that it mattered. The Ayrshire man was a bit better than the man entering from the other side of the North Channel.

VARDON'S CROWNING TRIUMPH.

The Open Championship pursued a diametrically opposite course from that taken by the Sandwich competition. Save that M'Dermott came all the way from America to find that he was "disqualified"—he was at Havre when he should have been in London, and in London when he should have been at Troon—the qualifiying competition was quiet to dullness. M'Dermott waited on in the hope that "Francis" would do something. "Francis" did nothing. Mr Ouimet was the curiosity of a day. The following day all interest centred in one of the most dramatic struggles ever seen

on the golf links. Vardon and Taylor, drawn together as partners in the third and fourth rounds were the central figures in the drama. The morning round, which saw Taylor convert a two-strokes' deficit into a two-strokes' lead, was the wind, the afternoon round the whirlwind. It took the pair practically three hours to go round the course and only the most enthusiastic and exhaustless of mortals could profess that he had seen the full round played. The turning point came at the Cardinal. Vardon drove to the edge of the bunker, and sat down till the course was cleared. For the moment he was the old Vardon, the imperturbable. When he came to play his shot he was Vardon, the superb. The green cleared, he went for the hole, carried every obstacle and literally wrested back a stroke from Taylor. The latter was feeling the strain more, and when he got down by the burn-side off his next tee shot, plopped his ball into the stream and took 7 for the hole, it was pretty apparent that the duel was over. So events proved. The history of later years has suggested that this was Harry Vardon's swan song. If that is so, what a magnificent ending to his championship successes it was.

XIII.

THE WAR INTERVENES.

After this the deluge. When we parted company in June 1914, the only cloud on the horizon of those who were interested in golf and golf championships was the difficulty of controlling the crowd. Both the Amateur and the Professional Internationals had been abandoned, the former because of waning interest, the professional because the only men who wanted a contest on the eve of the championship were the few who would be advertised by inclusion in one team or the other. We were to foregather in the autumn on the occasion of the *News of the World* finals. The Professional International, it was hinted, might be revived in, perhaps, an attenuated form, by way of enhancing the match play week, and making a big autumn event of it. There was to be a banquet in London. Man proposed: what really occurred in the autumn were the excursions and alarums of war. Against the

years, 1914-1919, in a *News of the World* connection, against the years 1915-1919, on the championship registers there stands the mute but not inglorious epitaph: No contest (or no championship) owing to the Great War.

TIME CHANGES.

Things were "never to be the same again after the war," in any of the relations of life. The old champions, Messrs Ball and Hilton, in the amateur game, the "triumvirate" and Herd among the professionals, were removed by the lapse of years from the eminence they had so long adorned. To this extent things were "never the same again." in golf. This was but to be expected. Messrs Ball and Hilton were beyond the age of recovery of any part of the lost years, the "triumvirate" were on the post-war resumption of competitive golf on the threshold of the fifties, Herd was in his fifty-first year. A new generation of amateur players was emerging, at the head of the professional ranks were Ray, already a champion in his own right, Duncan, who should previously have won the championship, and Mitchell, a potential champion. That we

should be furnished with a new set of champions was practically inevitable, what was not immediately apparent was that the chief contenders for our greater title should come from overseas. The "American menace" seemed, as a matter of fact more to be dreaded in amateur than in professional golf. It was within the scope of easy comprehension that we should have to strike our colours to our American cousins in team matches—the war having bitten very deeply into our resources, and left those of America practically unscathed—but that we should see the Championship Cup cross the Atlantic four times in six years—1921, 1922, 1924 and 1925—was beyond our mental grasp in 1919.

PRACTICE CONFOUNDS THEORY.

In tentative, somewhat hesitating, fashion the threads were picked up in the early summer of that year. We had medal and match play tournaments in England and Scotland; the most important being the so called "Victory Competition" at St Andrews—the first of the *Daily Mail* annual series. We in Scotland had renewed our acquaintance with big golf a

week or two earlier at Killermont, the suburban course of the Glasgow Golf Club. There George Duncan beat J. H. Taylor in a final, which must rank as one of Duncan's finest performances. Duncan was a sick man on the morning of the final day. His win by " 6 and 5 " was a veritable triumph of mind over matter. There was, perhaps, more in that day's golf than there seemed. Taylor had raised an internecine strife over his famous query, " Can Scotsmen play golf ? " Duncan was out to persuade the Sassenach that Scotsmen could. Duncan himself had been advancing the plea that the holes were too small. He had to putt to beat Taylor and he did putt to some purpose, incidentally blowing his newfangled theory into the air. Naturally, the victor was fancied to win the St Andrews tournament. The honours should have gone to Ray, they might as well have fallen to Harry Vardon, who on the classic green played his finest golf of the post-war period in this country. Ray's mischance at the Eden let Duncan and Mitchell in for a tie for premier position. An aggregate of 312, or thirteen strokes above the winning register of Braid in 1910, bore out the contention—of George Duncan was it not ?

—that " form " had gone back two strokes per round since 1914.

MITCHELL TAKES THE LEAD.

There was no time to play off the tie, a winner had to be found, and it was agreed that a round of the Eden course in a supplementary competition should be taken as the deciding factor. That Mitchell should win was accepted by his friends as a favourable augury. He had changed his status late in 1913 and had had his single conspicuous success as a professional in the 1914 Open Championship when he tied for fourth place. Here he was at St Andrews, vindicating the claims of his admirers that he, not Ray or Duncan, was the chief of the challengers of the old supremacy. The manner in which Duncan forfeited premier position was rather disquieting to the well wishers of the Aberdonian. An incident in the Eden tournament round clearly indicated, that with all the changes effected by the interregnum, there was no change in George Duncan. He was still the enigma of golf. What happened was this. Playing the eighth hole on the Eden course his ball lay under a wire fence.

Duncan spent two strokes trying to dislodge it by a backhanded stroke and then he played back, taking 8 for the hole and ending the round as slackly as he had begun it brilliantly. "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel," was one's verdict concerning Duncan when the year closed with his rival, Mitchell, winner of the *News of the World* Tournament and, to all practical purposes, leading professional of the year. How was anyone to anticipate the happenings at Deal the following summer?

XIV.

GEORGE DUNCAN'S CHAMPIONSHIP.

THE game was in full swing in 1920. The Amateur Championship, revived at Muirfield, set us all thinking and talking of the championship of 1904. There were points of similarity between the two years. One of the most marked was the fact that in 1920, as in 1904, we were a long time in realising a distinct sense of "menace." Mr Travis began in 1904 as an outsider, so in 1920 did Mr Robert Gardner. At Muirfield we occupied our minds chiefly with speculations as to the potentialities of certain debutants, Mr Tolley, for example, and Mr Harry Braid. The Gardner "menace" like the Travis "menace" came with a sense of shock. Had Mr Gardner won, his success would have been resented less than the earlier American victory was. Some one discovered that Mr Gardner had Scottish antecedents, or so it was alleged. In any case he was a likeable fellow. His opponent in the final, Mr

Tolley, was as innocent of restraint as was Mr Blackwell in 1904. Of the St Andrews man we had a glimpse at Muirfield on the Friday afternoon when the Oxonian by a mischance jeapordised a position that was looking so safe. His second shot to the fifteenth hole—where a Travis would have taken a putter and ran the ball down to the hole side for a half—was a Blackwell shot. There was in the end nothing to lament in the mischance. It gave us that wonderful 37th hole—as memorable as the 37th in 1899. Muirfield was the subject of much criticism that summer, much of it justified, some of it a little vindictive. At any rate Muirfield held its own with any green on the rota in producing a champion whose elevation was unassailable. And, after all, a regenerated Muirfield is to be the venue of the Amateur Championship of 1926.

RAILWAY, NEWSPAPER, AND GLENEAGLES.

The success of the *Daily Mail* "Victory" tournament of 1919 made the proprietors of that journal resolve upon a further instalment, and other promoters were anxious to come into

the field. Under the circumtances it was inevitable that Gleneagles should enter the lists. Gleneagles, a great course, contrived out of a wilderness, under the ægis of one of the leading railway systems in the country, was associated with the big golf of the year through a junction of forces between the railway company and the *Glasgow Herald*. The course was Scotland's first break-in on the age long undisputed supremacy of the seaside green. It is not without significance that since we have had Gleneagles we have had no Cruden Bay, a place where we used to get professional golf in its most charming semi-holiday guise. Gleneagles has thrust itself into the ring. It is in golf the embodiment of the modern spirit. Success has attended its every venture. Familiarity with the Perthshire green has done nothing to lessen the sense of wonder we experienced in 1920 when the first of the annual series of Gleneagles weeks took place, the magnificence of the site, the grandeur of the prospects, the fine natural features of this amazing golfing ground being in the first instance a revelation and remaining a delight. Somehow the play in the first professional tournament left no very vivid impression. The

picture was more or less out of proportion to the frame, or so it seemed. George Duncan followed up his great scoring feat at Westward Ho! in the *Daily Mail* finals by winning the most important match play tournament of the early summer. This was another pointer to the seemingly inevitable; Duncan, it was generally agreed, "could not lose" the Open Championship.

MITCHELL'S LOST OPPORTUNITY.

He should never have won it. When he was finishing his second round on the evening of the Wednesday he played in so casual a manner as to cause a bystander to remark that Duncan might have been acting as a partner to the other fellow, Gassiat as it chanced. Twenty-four hours later, when Duncan held the championship in his grasp, he duffed a short approach like the veriest novice. But for that he would have tied with the record he set up in the morning, and two 71s at Deal represents marvellously good golf. What had made possible the advancement of Duncan was the recession of Abe Mitchell in one of the craziest days in the history of the champion-

ship. Starting 13 strokes in arrears to the leader Duncan never made golf look easier than he did that morning. Mitchell, on the contrary, had a veritable rake's progress in a half round out that ruined as fair a chance as ever golfer possessed. What precisely happened to him was impossible of elucidation. Short of the first green in 2 he laid his pitch a foot and a half from the hole. In putting he merely touched his ball which rolled six inches. The dismay of his friends occasioned by this extraordinary lapse was heightened as mischance succeeded mischance, the misfortunes culminating at the fifth hole where Mitchell sliced his drive, dropped a stroke in a bunker, pulled his fourth across the fairway, pitched over the green with a half iron and missed a holeable putt for a 7.

CODLIN YOUR FRIEND, NOT SHORT.

Mitchell had not even the mitigation of running into second place, Sandy Herd attaining that distinction at the age of 52. First in order of finish of two Transatlantic "invaders," Jas. Barnes and Walter Hagen, was the Cornish-American, "big Jim Barnes" who,

alone of the entire field, never touched 80 in any round. Like the character in a popular comic opera of a generation ago, Barnes is long and lean and lanky. He is, in his quiet way, an engaging personality, and he always had a gallery at Deal. Not so, Hagen. He was not nearly so impressive. He had crossed the Atlantic with a record of two American Championships in five essays. What chiefly engaged the attention of the critics regarding the pair was the fact that Barnes' ball was usually hit at a relatively low trajectory, while Hagen cultivated a relatively high air route as diligently as he attended to his personal adornment. It was assumed that Barnes was the man to be dreaded, not Hagen. If the wind-swept sea-side course was the true test of the game the air route was, and would be, fatal to Hagen. So "Walter" was incontinently set down as a diversion, not a danger, and was dropped after the first day. So much for the prescience of most. Sufficient unto the day being the evil thereof, British golf had a respite in 1920, the more welcome because of the forebodings that had been indulged in.

XV.

AMERICA GIVES BATTLE.

In the early summer of 1921 a prolonged coal strike made railway travelling a precarious project, but the big events in golf suffered no ill consequences, and the interest of the general public underwent no diminution. We had this year for the first time two British-American Internationals, an amateur event at Hoylake, its professional counterpart at Gleneagles. The professional contest was unofficial, it was a good exhibition "stunt," filling in a blank day acceptably enough. Otherwise, it was of no account, four or five of the American team of ten men being British-born while the visitors had hardly found their feet. The case of the Amateur International was different. At the Cheshire green was gathered the flower of British and American amateur golf. The best of all—of the hour—Willie Hunter was not yet revealed, save, perhaps, to his intimates, but to our old friends, Messrs Charles Evans and Francis

Ouimet, were added other American celebrities, notably Mr R. T. Jones, the greatest amateur, some say, the game has ever seen, a youngster with the likeable qualities and some of the faults of youth, a much-made-of youth. He was a disappointment here, and at St Andrews the prodigy did not find his form and was petulant. In the hour of defeat in the championship he was responsible for one of the most surprising shots surely ever played in that event. He was playing the eighth hole at Hoylake and a hooked shot lay on the fence. Instead of playing back and sacrificing a stroke, the young American turned his back on the hole and drove the ball with all his force against the fence, the ball rebounding and reaching the putting green. The stroke was brilliantly unorthodox and it was the sort of shot that might have been the turning point in the tie.

INTERNATIONAL LOST: CHAMPIONSHIP SAVED.

We lost the international match by nine matches to three. A feature of the morning foursomes round was the machine-like accuracy of Messrs Evans and Jones, another was the

dull and colourless golf played by Mr Tolley in the second foursome. In the afternoon there was the snap and decision in the play of the champion of the previous year hitherto awanting and when he beat the rival captain, Mr Evans, so decisively as " 5 and 3 " he was installed as favourite for the championship which was retained for this country, not by the Oxonian, but by W. I. Hunter after a week of golf remarkable, in the first instance, for the steady elimination of the Americans and, in the second case, for the manner in which the eventual winner established himself as " the goods." Hunter, a Post Office employee, was, according to a section of his branch of the Civil Service, afflicted at the moment, perhaps, with a little " class consciousness," somewhat badly used. For the life of me I could see nothing amiss in the treatment meted out to him. His calling interested us. It was mentioned in the press, but the mention was nothing more than incidental. Hunter was not included in the international team—a great grievance—but one swallow does not make a summer. The fact that he had reached the " last eight " at Muirfield a year earlier was neither arresting nor very convincing, for he

was beaten by the Hon. Michael Scott in the sixth round by the wide margin of " 6 and 5." Others with equally good credentials were overlooked.

CAPACITY FOR TAKING PAINS.

Hunter showed in an unusual degree, for a British amateur, the capacity for taking pains. He had a neat compact style and was well equipped in all departments of the game, but his determination was the lesson of the week. He was never taken beyond the sixteenth hole in round after round, and so had no occasion to play the seventeenth hole till the first round of the final, but day after day he played the last two holes with meticulous care. The man capable of taking him to the home green was going to reap no return from a superior knowledge of the last two holes. This was characteristic of the golfer who would spend part of an evening at Deal retracing the steps he had taken in a friendly round and replaying the shots he had failed to execute to his satisfaction. Of all the British players of the modern generation, perhaps professionals as well as amateurs, Hunter had imbibed most of the American spirit, the sheer intuitive sense of mastering

every detail in the game partly for the sake of the end to be gained, partly to be perfect for perfection's sake. It has been a three year's wonder to many of us that Hunter has not made a greater success of his golf than he has done. Now that there is no equivocation about his status the very best there is in him may be seen. It would be an unpardonable oversight to pass from the eventful week at Hoylake without making a reference to the manner in which two or three of the Americans garbed themselves. Mr Jones favoured a brown Cardigan jacket, knickers and shoes, with stockings a deep shade of yellow. He had some colour sense, Mr Ouimet had none. He wore a hat of some green substance, rising from his head sugar-loaf fashion. The rest of his garb was all browns and yellows. He lingers in the memory. In the douce old Scottish game he struck a decidedly barbaric note.

"JOCK" A LUCKY WINNER.

The Gleneagles tournament, now a movable feast, once again intervened between the two championships and his victory in the match play competition advanced Abe Mitchell's

stock in view of the impending Open Championship. He had, we were assured—how often since have we had to listen to the same tale—regained the putting he lost on that fateful morning at Deal. With Mitchell were associated George Duncan, the holder of the title, and Ted Ray, who had in the intervening year gone to America and won the Open Championship of the States—a very impressive performance. Neither of them had very much to do with a somewhat disappointing championship, won by that expatriated son of old St Andrews, Jock Hutchison. The victory of the master of the " stop " shot was won under circumstances which are more deeply embedded in the public memory than many more recent events, the near approach to what we had come to regard as the practically impossible, a win for an amateur, being calculated to strike the public imagination. Jock Hutchison had a hole in one, Mr Wethered trod on his ball. What was worse, he elected to play the wrong shot up to the home hole in the last round and, furthermore, he played it slackly. An error of judgment lost him a championship which Hutchison was lucky in winning. Hutchison, on a course that exacts punishment for a bad shot,

would have shut himself out of the title by an extraordinarily pulled shot to the home green. The moral was, some one said, that, if a bad shot had to be played, let it be an out and out bad one. This affirmation applies to St Andrews as it does to no other championship green. Whins, heather, rough have gone. You have, literally, "the haill world" to play into at some places.

XVI.

WHAT AMERICAN COMPETITION MEANS.

The absence of an American "invasion" was supposed to militate against the sporting interest in the Amateur Championship of 1922. This proved to be the case, up to a point. A similar state of things unquestionably detracted from the popularity of the championship of 1924. One finds it difficult to get away from the impression that the championship of last year at St Andrews was the dullest of the post-war series. It was to eventuate in a Wethered—Tolley duel in the final. Neither survived. Similarly, the championship of 1922 was to terminate in a meeting of the champions of the two previous years. This also was denied us through the chance that plays so big a part in the fashioning of our Amateur Championships. The title holder, W. I. Hunter, had come home from America with some of his original likeable quality obscured by an aggres-

sive American accent. He had not lost his golf, as his victory over Mr Tolley in the revived Scotland-England International showed, but he played himself more or less stale and fell a victim to the ultimate winner in the semi-final round. The final was that awful day of heat and mob and scurry that had only one precedent in the game, the last day of the Open Championship of 1914, also at all too accessible Prestwick. Sir E. W. E. Holderness was a good winner in 1922, just as he was two years later, on the return of the championship to his mother's native country. Of a reserved temperament, cold even in championship-winning golf, Sir Ernest does not make the appeal to the public most of his great contemporaries do. His championships will not be among the storied events of the game.

A NEW OUIMET.

To the championship of 1924 I would add a footnote. For half a day we were chiefly interested in the fate of Mr Francis Brown, not because he was Francis Brown, but because he was "Honolulu Brown," and as such the single representative of America. Had he been

Brown of Hoylake or Helensburgh, meeting and suffering defeat from an Invernessian of no greater reputation, all he would have got would have been a single line in the results table. As of Honolulu, he was a personality while he lasted. We do pay court to American golf and not without reason. Look how distinguished, in comparison with 1922 or 1924, was the summer of 1923. This was a summer of "invasion," with a double object, the wresting from us of the Amateur Championship and the winning of a third successive international, a sort of super "hat trick." British golf flattered at Deal to deceive at St Andrews. At both places we saw great golf played. The most disappointing feature, perhaps, of the championship was the final. That was because Mr Robert Harris could not hold Mr Wethered. Nobody expected that he would. So the final was a sort of anti-climax. The climax was magnificent. It occurred in the Wethered-Ouimet match in the semi-final. The American, who had not made a great impression in 1921, had perfected his style in the intervening period, and the manner in which he played that high long-carrying shot of his, retaining full control of the ball on

landing, was greatly admired. He had adopted an extreme pendulum-putting stance that inspired the ordinary opposition with dread. It did not exactly fulfil expectations in the semi-final tie.

SOMETHING SAVED FROM THE WRECK.

Mr Ouimet's own comment on his defeat would, one imagines, have been a repetition of an observation ascribed to him at Hoylake in 1921. The 18 holes match, he declared, was "too sudden" How well this view was borne out at St Andrews need not be emphasised. In 18 holes singles Britain would have won the Walker Cup by a wide margin. As it was, Mr Caven, one of our golfers-cum-journalists, has succinctly and correctly described Saturday, 19th May 1923, as "Black Saturday." We had half repelled the greatest of all amateur "invasions." Some held, having regard to the composition of the British side, that we could not be beaten, the more especially as the Americans, it was advanced, could not become familiar with the peculiarities of the Old Course in the time at their disposal for practice. Wise after the event, one could reflect, when all was

over, on the curious tenacity of the tradition that American golfers are fatally susceptible to the conditions, atmospheric and otherwise, under which the big events are played in this country. Walter Hagen, of all men, has killed that belief. "Black Saturday" did its share. At the same time it contained some of the most fascinating golf one could wish to see. The man who went out with the first couple, Messrs Wethered and Ouimet, and came home with the second, Messrs Tolley and Sweetser, saw inspired golf in one instance and a great recovery in the other. But those who were carried away by Mr Sweetser's recovery let the first match get out of their reach and so missed Mr Ouimet's last three holes in 3 4 3 to square the match. When saw we a finer finish? Personally, I am of a mind to forget the discomfiture of the home country and confine my recollection to the two leading singles. They are a precious addition to one's store of golfing memories.

THE HAGEN ERA OPENS.

The corresponding Open Championships to those with which I have just been dealing will

be for ever notable in golfing history on account of the achievements of Walter Hagen, whose record—Champion, 1922; Runner-up, 1923; Champion, 1924—should be written in letters of gold by all admirers of a great performance. It was possibly the most remarkable ever recorded in the game, considering the manner of field Hagen had to beat and the way in which he went about his work. In 1920, at Deal, Hagen was little more than good newspaper "copy"—twopenny coloured. His motor car, his changes of raiment, what then seemed a rather bizarre personality, obscured the merits of his golf. He was slightingly referred to as an inland player. He "could not play in a wind." Jim Barnes suggested himself as the sounder golfer under British championship conditions. The lanky Cornishman was well in the running at the middle of the second day, when Hagen had ceased to be of interest. At St Andrews the two men finished on the same mark, but, whereas Hagen made little impression Barnes—a supposedly sick man—had played brilliant golf in a round of 70 on the Old Course in the qualifying competition. Had he possessed the stamina, as he had the golf, to repeat the performance on the eventful Friday

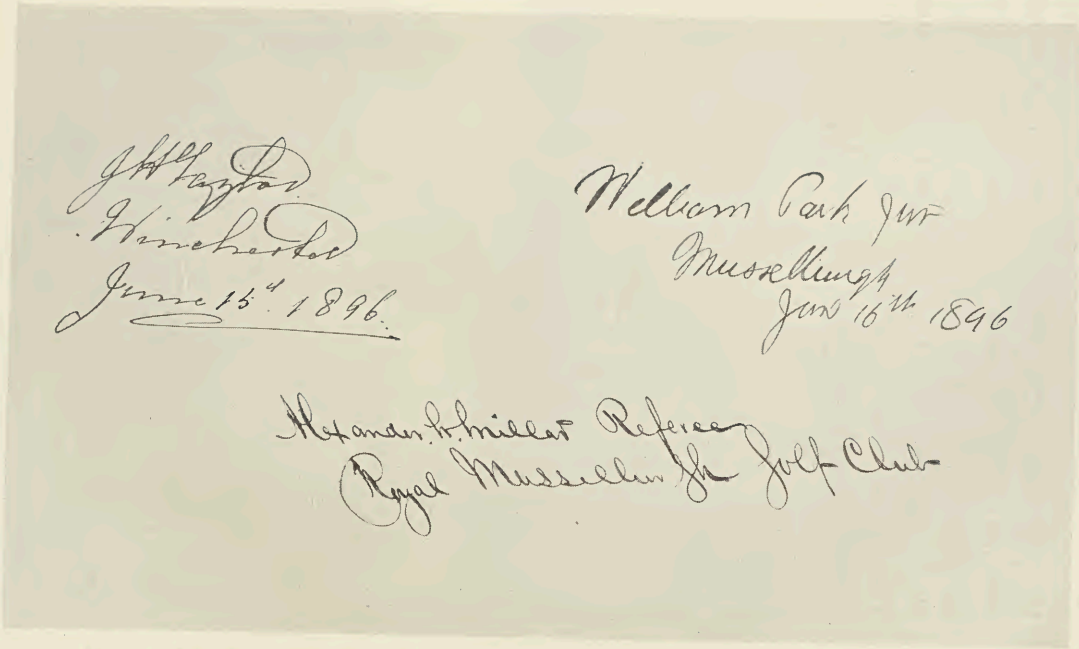
afternoon which saw Jock Hutchison return a 70 and Mr Roger Wethered a 71, Barnes would have been champion. Ah, those might have beens! A half hit tee shot at Sandwich kept Barnes from winning the championship in 1922. He crossed the Sahara three rounds running off his tee shot and got a 3, in the fourth round he got into the sands of the Sahara and took 6. The hole was a bogey 4, an eclectic round 2. Barnes finished one stroke above the winner. It was a glorious failure. His great bid for a 3 from the back of the seventeenth green was the measure of his failure.

DUNCAN'S SPLENDID FAILURE.

Of course, Jock Hutchison had his bits of bad luck. The Suez Canal at the fourteenth hole proved fatal to him in his endeavour to retain the title he won in 1921. Playing his second shot, he hit an iron stanchion of a bridge over the ditch, the ball glancing off at a tangent and finishing close up against a fence. He gave me the impression, too, that he was very unlucky in playing the fourth hole in the last round. He banged the ball up in the teeth of the stiff head wind which fell the moment the

shot was played. The drop in the breeze was responsible for a miscalculation of the strength of the shot, the ball carrying over the fence at the back of the green into a garden. But it is futile to scrutinise a contest of 72 holes in this manner. Hagen, no doubt, had his mishaps, the broad fact remains that, after heading the qualifying list with Joe Kirkwood, Hagen returned an aggregate of 300—76, 73, 79, 72. The last round in 72 was a rare proof of nerve. It was equal to the lowest round played in the championship proper with the exception of the never to-be-forgotten last round of George Duncan. No round in golf has ever been the subject of such eulogy as that brilliant failure. It was twelve strokes under Duncan's third round, one stroke over his phenomenal record-breaking round at St Andrews two months earlier. Logically, the 69 should have been a 67. Had the ball broken to the right instead of the left off a great second shot to the home hole, Duncan would, in all likelihood, have holed the putt to win the championship outright. Duncan's final round saved our credit. With the Aberdonian still to finish the leading returns were : Hagen, 300 ; Barnes, 301 ; Hutchison, 302. Duncan broke the monopoly.

He was bracketted with Barnes. It was an obvious thing to say that no other than Duncan could have played that round of 69. It is equally true to say that Duncan and Duncan only could oscillate as he did between relative indifference and positive brilliance.



Autographs of the principals in the match between J. H. Taylor and Willie Park at Musselburgh. Park died at Edinburgh in May, 1925.

XVII.

HECTIC OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS.

In the old days we had our colourless Open Championships but in 1923 we seemed justified in assuming that we should never see a drab championship again. June 1923 saw us again at Troon, a place of many golfing memories, the scene in 1923 of many disputations, many acrimonies. In the qualifying competition the weather took a hand in the game with fatal results in the case of a number of fancied men. In the championship proper interest was throughout at fever heat, with one unhappy sequel, a charge of national bias levelled broadcast against the crowd. Simultaneously to this a charge was brought against the Troon Golf Club of a lack of manners towards our American visitors. The seeming want of courtesy on the part of the promoting club was the fault, if fault there was, of the golfing authorities on both sides of the Atlantic. An international entry demands some little ex-

tension of international courtesy. It is bare justice to the Troon Club to say that one's own experience was that Mr H. Ross Coubrough, the secretary of the club, and his coadjutors, were courtesy itself. As regards the other charge, a slight manifestation of bias was grossly exaggerated. To some extent the charges militated against the satisfaction felt in this country in regard to Arthur Havers' vindication of British professional golf.

QUALIFYING CANTRIPS.

The championship proper was shorn of some of its celebrities through the operation of the qualifying competition. It seemed the irony of fate that a qualifying competition over two odds and ends greens at Troon should result in the loss to the competition proper of Sarazen, the American champion, Jim Barnes, reckoned by some good judges of the game the best of the Americans, and of Mr Wethered, the brilliant winner of the Amateur Championship a month earlier. The loss of Sazaren was particularly regretted. His sudden leap into world fame, his Italian parentage, his fondness for display, all contributed to make him a personality. He was in the morning cited as an

example, par excellence, of the American zeal for "preparedness." He actually went into the storm for half an hour in order to get the feel of it. In the evening he had folded up his tent and faded away. It was a long time ere it dawned upon us that Sarazen was in danger of being counted out. As a matter of fact, Hagen was a much greater concern. His probable fate was continually before one. To reach the presumed safety of "two 80s" he had to score 78. Four above 4s, with two holes played, made the test exceedingly difficult and Hagen's friends had a series of strange sensations as the title holder retrieved three of the lost strokes in two holes, lost as many in two more holes and then settled down to as game a struggle as one could wish to see. He had seemed all at sea, now he pitched the ball up to the hole with grim confidence. In the end he reached a position of safety as one of nine or ten 159s. Only two were needed to furnish the championship complement of 80 players, the others got in as tieing for 80th place. Sarazen had returned a aggregate of 160.

HAVERS WINS FROM HAGEN.

The Troon championship came very near to

providing us with a counterpart to the Jock Hutchison who had won the title two years earlier. Macdonald Smith had points of resemblance to his compatriot. He had the same high complexion, affected the same natty costume and played much the same kind of golf, the feature of his game being his iron shots up to the pin. Unhappily, he hung a millstone round his neck in the shape of a first round of 80. The real struggle was a composite English-American-Australian affair. Joe Kirkwood was the disappointing member of the group. He played in the morning of the final day a round of 69. His shots up to the pin were so perfectly executed that it made putting easy, but for all that he missed three holeable putts in the middle of the round. In the afternoon he went up to 78. Six of the nine strokes represented the difference between 4534 from the fifteenth to the eighteenth holes in the morning round, and 5674 at the corresponding holes in the afternoon. Nerve strain, eh? There was so such thing in the case either of Havers or Hagen. Havers leading by two strokes at the end of the third round, played, in the height of a storm of wind, only one hole he might wish to recall—the home

hole in 5. He bunkered over the green. Hagen had rubbed one off his original deficit when, holing out on the seventeenth green in 3, he had a 3 for the home hole for a tie. The last hole must have stamped itself on thousands of memories. From the terrace of the club house one looked out on a remarkable scene. The spectators formed a large ring which contracted and was made impressive by its proportions. Hagen's drive was dead in the middle of the fairway, his second shot of about 160 yards had a little too much steam and a little slice. The ball ran over the green and was trapped. Shot No 3 was a pitch from the bunker and, as Hagen studied the line, the excitement was breathless. It was still possible for this man of iron courage to hole his pitch and tie. The pitch was a good clean shot but it fell three yards short.

A.D. BEATS TAYLOR.

It was to the discredit of a section of the crowd that the pitch which fell short was greeted with a murmur of applause, immediately suppressed but perceptible. It remained for Hoylake in 1924 to blot out the recollections of

the bad taste of Troon in 1923. Hoylake rose to the occasion nobly. There never was a succession of championships equalling in hectic quality those of 1920-24. Of the five I would give the palm to 1924. Our chivalrous English friends who cheered the American winner had seen more or less of what I take to be the most remarkable victory in the long series. In the qualifying competition over Hoylake and Formby, Hagen had his troubled moments. He played indifferent iron shots and did not redeem his errors by consistent putting. J. H. Taylor, winner in 1913, the last previous visit to Hoylake, headed the qualifying returns with a magnificent aggregate of 142, 14 strokes better than that of Hagen. At the close of the championship Taylor was 6 strokes over Hagen's aggregate. Alas for those 14 strokes, representing an achievement as barren as the Rocks of Aden. At one time Taylor had a chance which would, in the hands of the Taylor of 1913, have led to certain victory. Inexorable A.D. exacted its toll. George Duncan, with no burden of years, ruined chances in a manner which drove his admirers to despair. Some one said succinctly of his golf that it was patchy, brilliant and plebian

by turns. Macdonald Smith, with the championship in his hands, if only he could show real winning capacity, faltered at the finish. So did E. R. Whitcombe, the surprise runner-up, and Frank Ball, the local product.

"NAE BACK SPEIRIN'."

I shall ever remember Hagen's victory because of a curious psychological effect it produced. A critic who desired nothing less than to say a harsh word said that Hagen did not play a hole correctly till the twelfth, and did not miss a holeable putt till the sixteenth green. At the turn Hagen seemed out of the running. The big gallery following his fortunes had a look of complacency. It was not that they liked Hagen less but that they liked an Englishman's chances more. The half round in converted honest doubters into warm admirers. I daresay, later on, some of our English friends, ordinarily stolid folks, would wonder at their own exuberance expressed with regard to an American golfer—a 100 per cent American, too. But they had seen sheer unconquerable spirit wrest victory from defeat. It is our boast that we love a fighter; Walter Hagen

was better fighter than golfer. One has noted since with regret a tendency to depreciate Hagen's performance on the score of his erratic golf. Would a George Duncan victory at Sandwich in 1922 have produced a like depreciation ? I think not. I am content to leave the verdict with the crowd. I prefer their flush of generous enthusiasm to the second thoughts of the critics. They had just seen Hagen's battle. Then there was the little lady in the brown dress, who had waited with such evident anxiety on the fate of the last momentous putt, and had convulsively clutched her hero in her arms. It could not have been better done if it had been arranged and rehearsed for "the film." There was a big human touch in it all—unlike anything I had seen for many years of golf.

DISAPPOINTING YEARS.

On the whole, although it had its purple patches, 1924 was a disappointing season. That feeling was, I daresay, engendered largely because of the manner in which our leading professional golfer, George Duncan, flattered to deceive. His marvellous golf at Gleneagles in

the *Glasgow Herald* tournament in June seemed to forecast a summer of continuous success, but the super-golf was only carried into the Open Championship in snatches, which made the lapses only really comprehensible to those who had made of Duncan the interesting study in temperament he is. He raised hopes in the first of the two British-American matches which followed the championship in the south of England and at Gleneagles, to dash them in the Scottish event. Such was Duncan ever. And never was he more disappointing than in the summer which is now closing. He has given fugitive glimpses of his best form, the most conspicuous instance being at Gleneagles, when he followed up his failure in the qualifying rounds of the big money competition by playing a brilliant round in the consolation competition. The golf was there; what everybody was agreed was that Duncan needed a six months' rest from the game. What to prescribe in Abe Mitchell's case it is difficult to say. He has displaced Duncan as the enigma of the game. In the two years we have seen emerge from the ranks but one player on whom we can rely to put up a resolute opposition to the American "invaders" of a

summer hence, the erstwhile breaker of clubs, Archie Compston. He saved some of our credit at Prestwick, and added to a growing reputation at Gleneagles. A great point in his favour is his physique. In that strenuous undertaking, a modern Open Championship, a good big 'un is, more than ever, better than a good little 'un.

THE PRESTWICK MOB.

With the Open Championship of 1925 so fresh in mind it is unnecessary to go into details regarding one of the most vexed competitions ever played in the game. As in 1914, we were at Prestwick. As in 1914, we found two men become the great protagonists. As in 1914, we experienced an excess of popularity. There were, however, points of divergence between the two years. In 1914, two Englishmen fought out the issue, in 1925 the two leading factors were an Anglo-American and a Scoto-American. In 1914 the two great rivals fronted the storm of public mobbing together, in 1925 the winner escaped unscathed, whereas the challenger was involved in an unnerving struggle against a mob. It is an open

question whether Macdonald Smith, starting at the times allocated to Jim Barnes by the luck of the ballot, would have won the championship. I am certain of this, that his chance was ruined by the mobbing of which he was the victim. But I feel equally certain that the Braid of 1908, the Vardon of 1914, or the Hagen of 1924, would have won, despite the mobbing. In other words, Macdonald Smith has not the nerve possessed by the old heroes of the game or by the Hagen of Hoylake. Favoured by the luck of the ballot though he may have been, Barnes is a worthy addition to our list of golf champions. So, too, is Mr Robert Harris, whose victory at Westward Ho ! redeemed an Amateur Championship otherwise wanting in character.

TIME FOR REFLECTION.

It struck us some little time ago as singular that we left Westward Ho ! persuaded that we had seen the last of that inaccessible place in a golf championship connection and parted with Prestwick convinced that a like fate was attendant on that course by reason of its very

accessibility. The championship venues of 1926 being fixed there is, fortunately, no call for a panic decision regarding the housing of later championships. It is, happily, no part of a chronicler's business to attempt to forecast an uncommonly uncertain future. It has been my endeavour, in a manner, to bridge the golf that separates golf as I knew it first, a game, practically speaking, of the Scottish seaboards, from the golf of to-day, a world game, made such by its intrinsic merits and the enthusiasm of its votaries, first in England, next in America.

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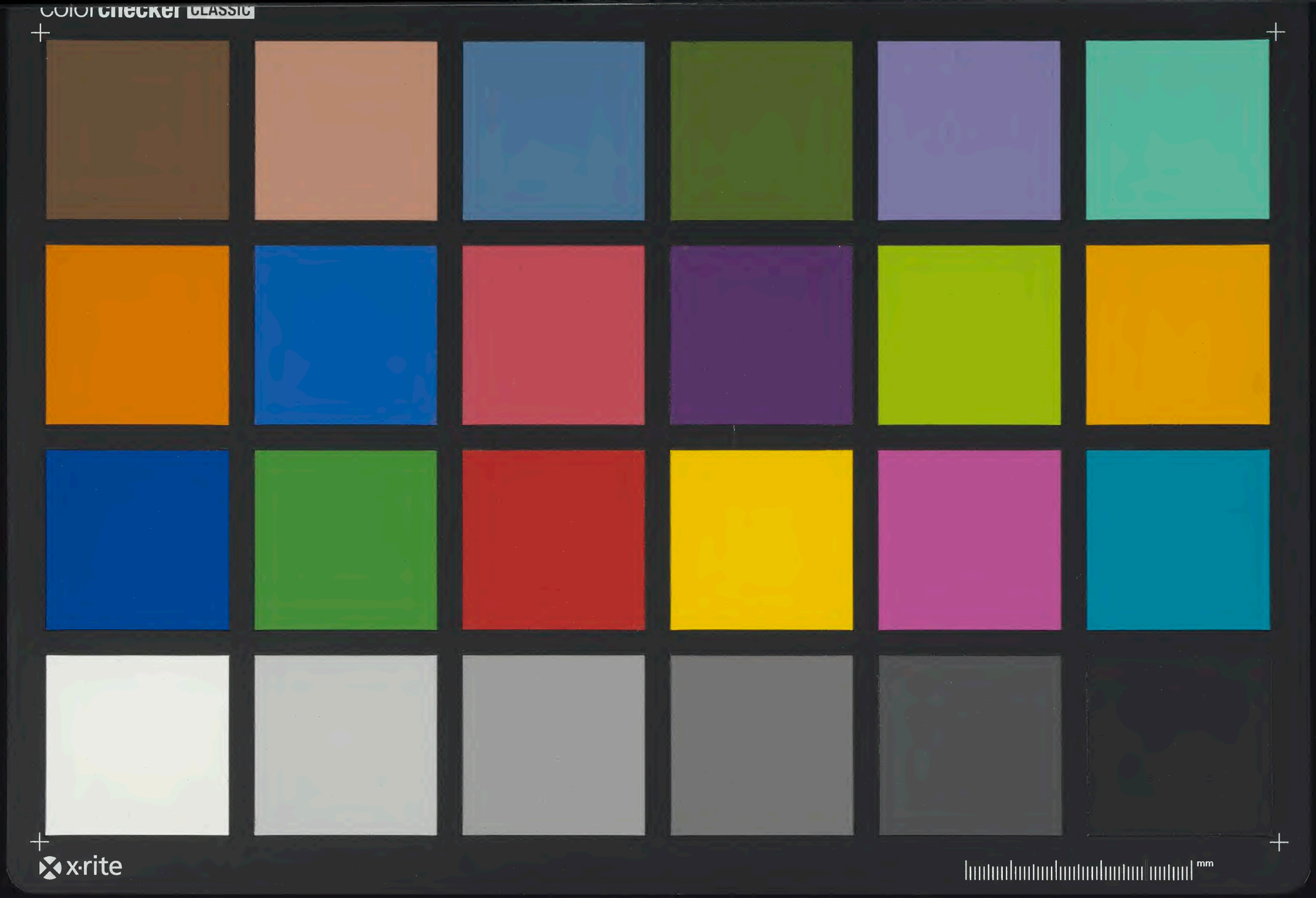
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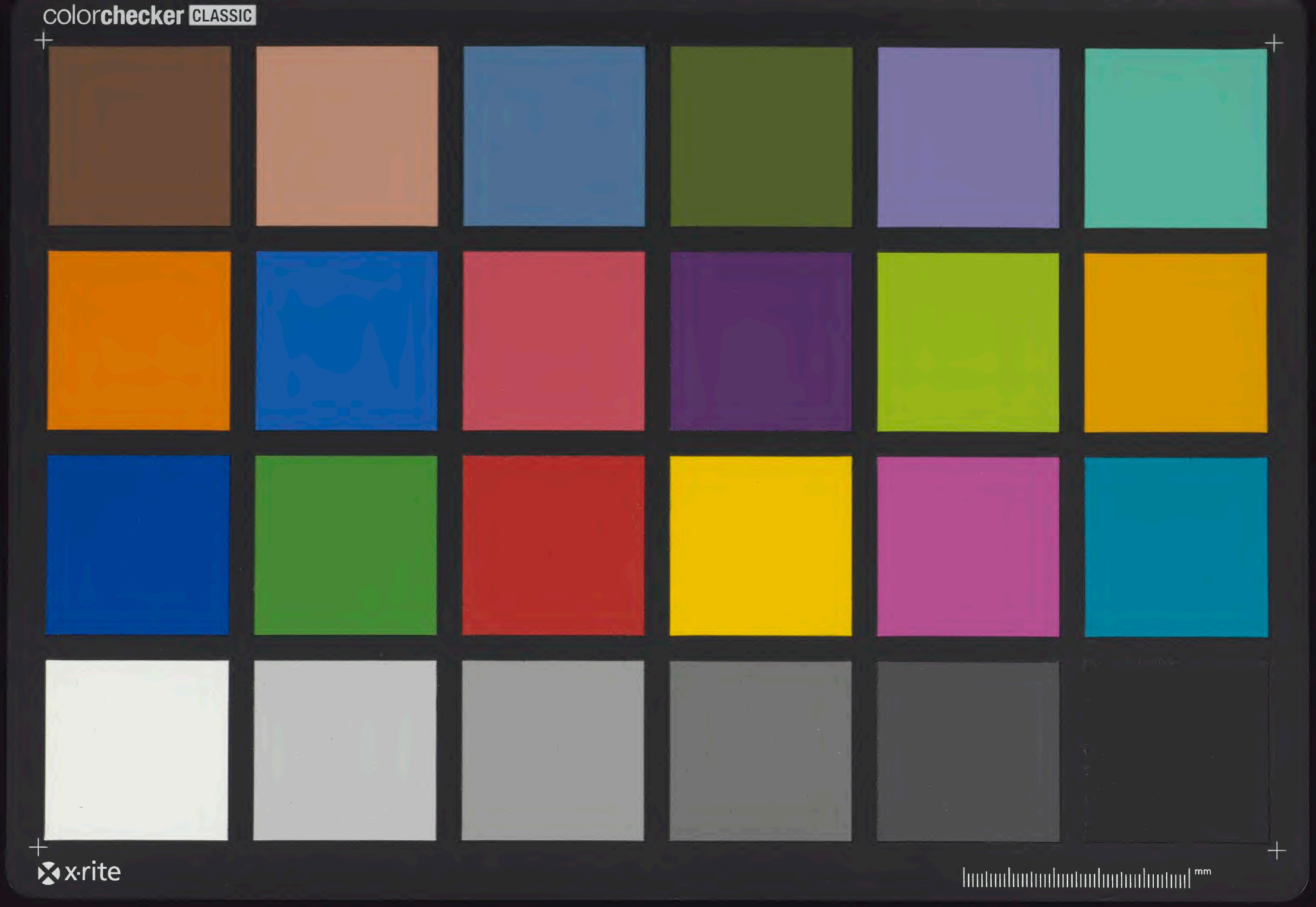
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