The Golf Craze

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Cleeke Shotte, Esq.,

of Bunker Hill.

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CLEEKE SHOTTE, Esq.,
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T. N. FOULIS
13 & 15 FREDERICK STREET
EDINBURGH: & LONDON

TO WILLIE

THREE YEARS OLD

Dear Trifler with your ball, one day
You too will stride abroad and play;
But, meanwhile, Captain Blue-Eyes, deign,
Before you mingle in the fray
That nerves the arm and clears the brain,—
Ere you the burn or bunker dread,
To take my little book instead.

Preface

THESE Sketches and Rhymes are, by kind permission, reprinted from the pages of *The Spectator*, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, *Truth*, *Chambers's Journal*, and various other periodicals, some of which are devoted wholly to the Royal and Ancient Game.

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"Out on the links, where the wind blows free,
And the surges gush, and the rounding brine
Wanders and sparkles, an air like wine
Fills the senses with pride and glee."

W. E. Henley.

The Golf Craze

Reminiscences of an Old Hand

"If you have a moderate appetite for sand, take your *tee* if you like, but not the tiniest slice of anything with it, remember," said the soft humorous voice beside me, as I addressed my ball for the first time in the season, with more apparent dexterity, I confess, than inward confidence. It was my second year at golf. I had passed the initial difficulty, it is true; I "missed the globe" no longer! Ah, good old friend of those days! Is it truth, indeed, that Tennyson sings of the yew's fibres netting "the dreamless head"? Have you no flashes of remembrance of faultless approach or

miraculous niblick-shot? For you, too, are under the earth—like the ball you used to send straight home all the way off that marvellous putter of yours—and, alas, for a longer period.

He was one of those men whose eyes have an edge, so to say. They kindled with interest while you spoke, and took in the situation perfectly before you had fully described it. His face was healthily russet, and even in extreme age he looked strong and straight. My intimacy with him dated only from the previous year. He had long worked hard as a medical man in a populous district in the south of England, and his means were considerable in consequence. As the years advanced, however, he longed for that strong sea-air of the northern portion of our island, which seems to pull a man together in a manner which no artificial pick-me-up, persevered in to the uttermost, may pre-

tend to do—outside its advertisements. Talk on the subject succeeded talk, for a year or two, and nothing meantime came of it; till, on his sixtieth birthday, he told his married son and his unmarried daughter—he had been a widower for ten years—that he had finally disposed of his practice; that his shrewd investing had largely augmented his savings, and that the coming spring would, please God, see him in some snug retreat in the town of his boyhood, his love, and early manhood.

A snug enough place, too, it came to be. One had to enter a wood to reach his house, which stood on the bald crown of an eminence. The strong scent of the sea surrounded and permeated the place. A level lawn in front, with blackbirds running quickly over it, was a picture of peace. The sea could not be seen at all from the ground floor; but when you had climbed the wide staircase—none of your

giddy spirals, but a strong, old-fashioned square stair with substantial landings—and had passed into the airy drawing-room, what a view broke upon you! Through the clear air you could view the sea, a couple of miles off, as though it were just at hand, creeping up upon the yellow breast of the shore, where it was delicately fingering a frill of snow—its daily gift. The links lay between you and the sea; and between the links and the sea were sandy knolls, where the glaucous grass grew four—here and there six—feet high. There lay the dimpled little bit of ground, with its hillocks, its mimic forests of furze, its yawning bunkers, and its mazy burn, where thousands had played the game of all games the most like our larger life, with earnestness, and yet brotherly kindness. Dear sport that it is—made up of continuous striking, without cruelty!

Here, then, lived Dr ——, who could never be identified with those loungers who work at nothing and play at everything, for he was diligent and regular in all the details of his life—however dearly he may have loved his round at golf. Early morning found him outside, and off along the upland road on foot or on horseback, to return with appetite to his letters and breakfast. I wish I could paint his own room for you—his "den," as he called it; but that is beyond my scope, in this connection at any rate. I may at least tell you that there lay on the broad serviceable oak table the current number of the *Athenæum*—more frequently in his hands than the *Field*—and a good modern book or two; but in truth, a richly-carved old bookcase contained his chief treasures in the shape of well-chosen and well-thumbed classics, generally speaking of the graver sort.

Emerson, however, was the Doctor's especial favourite, modern though he be; and while the sweet-tempered Concord mystic never mentions many of the subjects of which my friend loved to speak, I take it, that the extraordinary ability the latter displayed in aphoristic utterance had been unconsciously developed by familiarity with the style of the great American. As regards the matter of his discourse, it always appeared to me to be strictly his own.

It is not my intention to speak of his manner of talk in general, although I have often felt sorry that his conversations on higher matters had not been caught back out of the invisibility of the air, and fixed in a darker fluid by some accurate reporter. Others have shared this regret with me. Alas! Johnson has his Boswell, Goethe his Eckermann, Coleridge his own kinsman, and Rabbi Duncan his

Knight; but this man's talk enriched the atmosphere only, in ways we may not trace. He shot many arrows into the air, but they are not to be found unless we search in the hearts of his friends. But now comes a curious admission. Let him not shrivel down into a lesser man because of it! If you are a golfer, you will not. Nothing in the world would he allow to come between him and his round of the links. One round a day, but one round always, excepting on Sundays. Never was day dark or stormy enough to keep him back; and if he had been favoured, as Mr John Blackwood was, with a letter from George Eliot, in which occurred words like "You cannot play golf in the rain," he would have startled that wonderful lady with several aphorisms which would have done no shame, in sense or in construction, to *Romola* itself. He was humane enough, withal, to give his caddie

an oilskin suit: he himself wore nothing above his thick tweeds, and never allowed for a moment that he had been one whit the worse in his life for any ducking he had received. He played as near perfection as an elderly amateur may well be expected to do. He had that easy unconscious swing begotten only in youth. The analysis of the subject had never troubled him; he played as children play, and yet he was no "idiot" ("The ideal golfer is an idiot."—*Saturday Review*, July 2, 1887), dear old fellow that he was. Wherever you might place him in the wide world, you might depend upon his giving a good account of himself.

He had lived for five years in his seaside home when I was introduced to him. His low-set voice often haunts me; and whenever I find myself on short green grass, with fragrant thymy knolls around me, there I see the authentic background

for a loved figure which comes no more. —But let us go on with the round. He had taken in hand to teach a man of great willingness but small ability, and this was, as has been said, the first lesson of the second year. With a fine fortitude, he abstained from taking his occasional cleek-shot alongside my erratic game, contenting himself with giving advice in that wonderfully neat short way of his. His counsel, I hope, has been worked long since into flesh and blood movement—grip, swing, loft, and putt; but many of his odd little effortless speeches stick well to me in the shape of words, and these I wish to give some idea of. The regular golfing jokes that have served successive generations,—are they not written in the books of Clark, Simpson, and others? It was not these that this man retailed. They multiplied according to the varying exigences of the game, and I never heard him

repeat himself. It is said that the occasion makes the man; surely, then, it may well be credited with the minor creative power of making the joke. It did that at any rate, say what you will. His humour was sometimes so delicate as to defy repetition in any but the precise words which had been used. The story somehow would not tell at times, if the exact inflection of the voice failed in the reproduction. As it is, I can but give the broader fragments of his talk. If I had not heard such multitudes of smart sentences from his lips, I should have considered them carefully coined specially for use beforehand; but to know your man, put such a conclusion at once out of sight.

The ball stood on its tee bright and shining one mid-day in May. The first hole is a short one. Others regarded it, indeed, as a good cleek-shot—no more; why shouldn't I? The cleek fell furiously

on the ball (a bad one, no doubt, although duly charged for), which leapt forward in two parts—neither of which lay dead, it is needless to say. "Ah," my adviser said instantly, "golf is a game of which it may be said that opening the ball ought not to be synonymous with beginning play."

Here and there pleasing him with my work—for he was generous in criticism ("Never let your spirits run down," he would say, "or your score will run up—they are always at seesaw with each other")—I sometimes drove wildly, and would just catch the murmur of his voice as he said, as it were to himself, "It is quite undeniable that golf-playing is an art, but *drawing* is altogether out of place there"; or, "It is as poor an indication of a man's play as of the state of his boots that he goes in for toeing and heeling."

"Don't you think, Doctor, that, like the poet, the golfer is born—not made?"

I asked once, after consecutive foozling. "Well, probably so—to some extent. I myself venture to believe that when you find the veritable omnipresent accoucheur, he will tell you plainly that exactly as many men are born with a *short* spoon as a *silver* spoon in their mouths."

I remember him saying to an unduly loquacious caddie, while he tapped with the handle of his driver the spot he wished to tee on, "Young man, do your duty just *there*; and remember I regard you principally as a *tee-caddie* on two legs instead of four; but you will also hold my clubs and—your tongue!"

I had, and have still, a decided opinion on the subject of putting, and it is this: that you had better be well up in your play; that is to say, if your ball runs straight, it has the chance of getting home—travelling on the fast side though it be—which, if you play short, is altogether

impossible. Carrying out this idea now and then rather energetically resulted in an occasional *gobble*, which at once called forth the remark, "Do not attempt too much of a gobble! Let your moderation be known to all men, whatever *course* you are at, whether it be —— or Macrihanish." Anon, luck would give a ball that went sweetly off the bone and looked infinitely well in mid-air, a bad lie. Ere we came up to it, the Doctor would praise the shot, but, on sighting the ball, he would quietly remark, "Ah, there you are! No ball has yet been invented which may be said to be too good for *hanging*—if the ground lies that way."

What can a man, who is not mighty on the links, do with a bad hanging ball? Foozle, of course, and lose his temper too, which would call forth, "Good for you you have no opponent to-day; but you need not be your own, for all that. It is

no paradox to say that you indicate that you are *green* if you look *blue* over a single bad shot; and even if you will allow your nose to divide the colours, they never look well together."

Laughingly, I would say, "It is a moral training of no mean order, this same game of golf—is it not?"

A humorous twinkle flashed across his eyes as he said, "Certainly; and yet there are odd contradictions in it. Good temper is essential. There is a deal that is *straight* about the game—club handles, driving, putting, etc. On the other hand, knowing that honesty is the best policy, a long driver, nevertheless, will never choose an *upright* club; and you know how we all like to *steal*, when we can. Indeed, it is not only morality that is in danger, but the whole intricate system of values. For instance, if you know how to play your approaches, it is good golf *patois* to say

that your iron is as good as gold to you—execrable nonsense in the eyes of one at least of the two men who have equal quantities of one or other of the metals to dispose of. Again, we believe in correction. Every club is the better, we all say, of a good sound *whipping*; and yet, like a very demon, we constantly exhort our partner to give us a *good lie*."

This last sally put me in mind of a conundrum I had heard at the club-house the previous forenoon; and as I have never seen it in print, I repeat it for the benefit of the reader, as I did for the hearer. "Why was Ananias like a good golfer?" "Because he lay stone *dead* after a bad *lie*."

I remember on one occasion we had made up to a passionate young man who was playing a "single" with a phlegmatic old gentleman who was known to the Doctor. The elderly golfer stood *dormy* seven. Having holed out, the winner intimated

the fact like a sphinx; whereupon the little fellow with the passion, the gaiters, and the red coat, broke into a volley of oaths. Dr——said in a firm and earnest tone, "Your *bye*, sir, will begin after the next hole; save up your strength, I advise you. There is no need of interlacing your play with *by* ——, *by* ——, *all* the way. Besides, swearing doesn't help you a bit." I had been playing a little wildly at one hole, and had overshot the green a good way. To my own amazement, as will sometimes happen, my next shot lay—not dead, but home! "Bravo!" cried my companion. My elation, however, was suddenly cooled by his calmly observing, "If you do go *floundering* into the rough, and then send your ball home, off a fifty yards' iron shot, you needn't be surprised if your opponent hails your triumph as a *fluke*." His readiness was extraordinary. Sometimes, indeed, he would speak at con-

siderable length, rolling the words out slowly, as though he were reciting Milton. Again—although he never spoke swiftly—he would confine himself to a single short sentence, the inflection being always laden with point. My ball lay badly cupped, for instance, on one occasion, and I remember he instantly said, "The *cup* is not a *loving-cup* in golf, and your *spoon* is simply nowhere in such a case."

I recall, too, a neat remark which was made when my kind old friend was instructing me during the first year of my practice. I had topped a teed ball, when those words, gravely uttered, and catching nothing in sound as it were, from the twinkle in his eye, fell upon my ears, "In *addressing* the ball be careful not to give it a *top*-dressing; leave that for your lawn." At another time my play would merit the remark: "Do not begin to *screw* before luncheon-time, and neither then nor at

any other time let the past tense of the verb be applicable to you." He was not a teetotaler; but he had, I think, a more bitter contempt for hard drinkers than for any other set of men. I remember once when the green was pretty full, and a handicap medal was being played for, that, at the close of the first round, he cautioned a young fellow who was slightly known to him in terms something like these: "If you require a handicap of a *half-one* you will not find it to your advantage to drink to its health and prosperity in its *namesake* every few holes. You will drink rather to its confusion, sir!"

The best players for the most part unconsciously *press* now and then. I never saw Dr ——, however, other than most deliberate in his own game. It was nothing extraordinary that I should, in these days at least, put more effort than was wise into my swing; none the less there

came to me these words: 'Keep *game in your press* for luncheon, if you like, but don't for any sake *press in your game*; keep everything in its place!"

When he went with me to choose my clubs, he looked on smilingly as I swung them to and fro. I saw his thought in his eyes before he had given it to his lips: "You feel yourself such a rare hand in the shop—do you not?" And then, as I, like a beginner, made a short leet of the supplest of the drivers, he said more coldly, as though his thought deepened towards the close of the sentence, light as the words seemed, "Don't take these just yet; if your club has too much *spring* in it, you will find 'the *winter*' of your 'discontent'—when it snaps!"

It has been my intention only to speak of this fond old enthusiast in connection with the royal and ancient game. At home there was the same facility in his

play upon words; even in our more serious conversations, which were punctuated by sips from the social (but single) tumbler, or whiffs from the soothing weed, the inveterate habit betrayed itself of re-stating things—that is, placing his words in one order and then in another, with sometimes startling ingenuity. It was an exercise, indeed, that was never engaged in to no purpose; never so that the changes ministered to mere *non*-sense; they always brought an added sense, rather, and interest. It is not too much to say that as a rule they fulfilled Hood's exacting conditions, short of which the common pun becomes a contemptible thing, which ought to find itself in the ranks of that large visible and invisible assembly, "the unemployed."

There's a double chuck at a double chin,
And, of course, there's a double pleasure therein,
If the parties were brought to telling:

And however our Dennises take offence,
A double meaning shows double sense;
And if proverbs tell truth,
A double tooth
Is Wi dom's adopted dwelling!

In fact, the habit was a craze with Dr ——, as was his daily round of the green. Time had not staled his infinite variety in word-play. My memory, however, has run down. He was at least himself; and his odd little speeches, whether on the links or indoors, had certainly not entered the atmosphere through other lips. He never thought anything he said was worth deliberately putting down—although in *very* early youth it is true he published a pamphlet on Anæsthesia—and it may be you, my reader, agree with him in this. Ah, well! as I recall the tones, the gestures, and think of the kind soul himself as I knew him, the conclusion comes to me that these remembran-

ces must be to the writer very different from what they appear to you. The bloom of the rare personality is upon them all, in my vision, and they hang free and full. To you—and I blame you not—they are dry, it may be, and stiff in arrangement—redolent of the box they are packed in, rather than the honeyed sunshine in which they swung to and fro.

The lettering on his simple epitaph is losing its sharpness. He died in extreme old age. Day by day, when reaching the big links was beyond his power, he played a short game with his putter over a small green behind his house; and I am told—for I was then at a distance, and had seen my last of him, indeed—when he could no longer go out of doors at all, that the noble game of billiards was discarded and dethroned, and that his green table was fondled by the old man's fancy into a mimic golf-course, which by-and-by in its

turn became too tedious for him. Now he lies at rest in a hollow—which disturbs him not at all as it would in his golfing days, and over him primroses and violets bloom in becoming abundance and beauty.

Echoes

Pray, Echo, may I play at Golf with you?
Off with you!
What shall I beg beforehand of James Braid?
Aid!
How may I quickest learn to play the game well?
Aim well!
Does one need aught if he starts with a Haskell?
Skill!
What will you call me if I dig up grass?
Ass!
Will you use strong words if I lay a stimie?
I may!

All things depend on how I play the ball?

All!

What should I *not* have when I play my iron?

Run!

If dead I drop what would you call the shot?

Hot!

What better can I be than near the pin?

In!

A Song of the Flag

Others have sung of flags, and I too sing;
Yet not of blood, though red, my flag may tell,
But mimic warfare where the blossoming
Of thyme makes glad each tiny hill and dell.
Here, where I stand, the starlings stalk about,
The hungry mavis delving deep is seen;
Till bounding Haskell consummates the rout:
I am the little flag that marks the green!

I know not of the hectic hand that holds

The banner on the lead-bespattered
hill;
Or of the winds that violate its folds;
Or of the stifling lyddite-shells that
kill.
For me the days in dreamy quiet pass;
The gentle sheep at even on me lean,
And nibble at my foot the tender grass
That circles round the flag that marks
the green!

My journeys are but short: the arm that
lifts
Replaces in a moment as before.
But strong am I though still: when winter
drifts
His snow about me wildly I ignore
His furious onslaught, for of iron frame
Am I, and ready aye to take, I ween,
Whatever rubs may turn up in the game—

I, even I—the flag that marks the
green!

Gay times are mine when in the tourna-
ment
The balls fly fast and far, but hurt me
not;
Forced sometimes out of lies deep in the
bent,
Or taken sweetly from some verdant
spot.
I listen when my betters miss a putt,
Or when an iron-shot is not too clean:
I could tell yards of pretty stories—but
I'm just the little flag that marks the
green!

Lady Players

Yesterday the ladies' amateur golf championship was fought to a finish, and the occasion may be accepted as a vantage ground whence to survey the relation in which women have stood to the royal and ancient game in the past. Time was when woman stood apart from golf, and rated it as that accursed thing which spoiled her seaside holiday by the cleavage it made between the sexes. She adorned herself in vain, for the infatuated golfer obeyed the first of all rules and kept his eye on the ball—not on her. If this be an overstating of the case, and if it be asserted that in bygone days love was not wholly conquered by the game, it is none the less certain

that Edwin—needful of a dose of Coventry Patmore—was liberal enough in love's creed to give only a divided attention to Angelina, who, on her part, had given up for that sweet hour on the grass-bordered road over the moorland all thought of her half-finished sketch of St Regulus Tower, on which the paint was scarcely dry. She may possibly have remembered her embroidery—only, however, like Keats's Isabella, to reflect on her having spoiled it yesterday by thinking of him; while he, in the good old days, strode along easily by her side, and thoughts of yesterday's game—spoiled also, not, however, because of disturbing thoughts of love, but because he lost his temper—skipped over and under what may even have been his fifth serious passion. He may have done his best, poor fellow. Every keen golfer who has reached a certain age would have sympathised with

him, knowing that yonder behind him lay the links with its little groups scattered about here and there, with ticks of red to be detected by the keen eye. But—it was Fate. A cart passed with a load of piled-up brushwood. His right hand drew forth a bit with an acute angle at one end. Forthwith his knife might have been seen to play about it until it and his talk tapered to a point. Then, swinging the roughly-made club in his right hand, every daisy within reach lost its head, and not a stone on the road that could put forward the most incipient claim to roundness but learned to canter along in front of him with a forgivable irregularity of motion. Waxing eloquent once again, he probably described to Angelina how every little bit of smooth grass by their side might make a miniature green. No doubt mild reproof lay in her eyes the while. It is easy to follow in fancy this

vision of the past. The walk becomes too tame thereafter. There is a lark overhead, and under foot the grass is dry and soft. A mountain-ash grows out of a cushion of deep moss—dry as heather. In a moment they are side by side at its foot. (Suppose a few asterisks here, which in reality merely mar the continuity of the type, and afford no single reader the gratification of the picture which I, at all events, have neither the tenderness to paint nor the heartlessness to spoil.) Love is victor for the moment. By-and-by, picking up a few rowans, Edwin is seen to attempt to roll them carefully one by one over a diminutive hill into a tiny rut he has cut with his heel. There is no escape. Instinctively the hand lays hold of a withered branch. The knife is at work again. Ah, it is all too sad! And yet, no doubt, they are married by A.K.H.B. after all. Such days as these

are gone for ever. Woman has best fought her case by a species of capitulation. She, too, has turned golfer, and she has won. Beginning with her toy green, her first achievement was gained therein. Not only did she find pleasure in the game herself, but she found, and that speedily, that husband, lover, or brother betook himself thereto of an evening, after the big round was done, and—shaking the ash from his cigar or his pipe, that the motion might give dignity to his words—even went the length there and then to offer advice, which was not always accepted by the lady. The short green, where nothing but putting could be obtained, has, in many cases, given place to a fairly large round, where all, or most, of the clubs in use among the superior bipeds may be called into requisition. But this has not proved enough. Having once tasted of the joy of the full swing,

the ladies are making good their claim to the larger green, for we are told, on the authority of Mr Horace G. Hutchinson —who wields the pen as well as the hickory—that "she [the lady-player] says—and the worst of it is that she says it with truth—that her foremost amazons are not a stroke on the round inferior to two-thirds of the golfing men in possession." The younger generation at any rate are likely to be able soon to take their place with their brothers, and by the time *their* daughters reach maturity—having been, no doubt, like the historical caddie, "teethed on a golf club"—woman will be found making her way straight for the Open Championship. Everywhere more space to play is the cry. But this difficulty aside, one may readily enough admit that a well-matched mixed foursome will be the game of the future, always providing the *spoon* be not too much in evidence.

Meantime, as we see, the ladies have their own golf championships, and the number of lady-players who assist bravely in "the wearin' o' the green" is a steadily growing one. As to grace of action, there may be considerable room for debate. A critic writing in *The Globe* thinks, for example, "when a lady does play the iron, no finer sight can be imagined than that of her standing poised for a three-quarter shot." And so also as regards putting. Putting, in the male, he thinks, on the other hand, "leads to attitudes of indescribable awkwardness." These statements might, no doubt, be reversed as regards sex without violating fact. There can be no question, at any rate, of the value of the game to ladies as an exhilarating and delightful exercise, which should help to tone the nerves of those who, with a difference, believe in the afternoon *tee*. The time will, no doubt, come when, in virtue

of their all-round excellent play, women will be able to use the words addressed "To Men" by a clever lady-writer who had, when she used them, a larger outlook than the restricted one that now concerns us:

"No, offer us not pity's cup,
There is no looking down or up
Between us; eye looks straight in eye:
Born equals, so we live and die."

Broken!

The game was over; on the grass
Two blue-eyed golfers lay;
One looked through tears out to the Bass,
And one to Canty Bay.

One dropped her head upon her breast—
Hard hit by Cupid's dart!
Charlie, she sobbingly confessed,
Had broken her poor heart.

Her friend's arm stole about her waist;
Cheek came to cheek, and then
The brave one, in contemptuous haste,
Slated the race of men;

Then said (to end my solemn verse !),
In accents soft and meek :
" O cheer up, dear ! it might be worse,
It might have been your cleek ! "

The Ladies' Green

The ladies' green at sunset time
A pleasant place it is;
Where fair sweet maidens in their prime,
Hit—when they do not miss!

There, spick-and-span young fops galore
Make up mixed foursomes rare;
But find, when play is over, more
Fun dogs the single pair

That takes the long way home, and finds
It all too short, I trow,
For Angelina little minds
How slow, or far, they go,

So long as Edwin's flattering tongue
  Woos her enchanted ear,
And leads her fancies gay among
  Hopes promising and dear.

Next spring, poor Benedick, will you
  (When you to church have hied)
Survey, with envy, from your pew,
  Her bridegroom by her side!

An American View of British and Continental Golf

Mr John M. Ward, a Brooklyn attorney, has been recounting his impressions of British and Continental golfing greens to a representative of the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle*. Mr Ward's trip is described as one of the most comprehensive ever made in the interests of golf by any American. North Berwick is the first mentioned of all the courses visited, and Mr Ward calls it as enjoyable and interesting a one as any he tried during his three months' tour. The putting greens he considered unsurpassed, and the whole course as near perfection as the one fault that players going to the fourth hole out cross those

who are negotiating the fifteenth coming in, would allow it to be. While at North Berwick he played with many noted hands, but considered Massey, the Frenchman, the most graceful player he had ever seen. Mr Ward understates the golfing facilities of the well-known and well-worn sandy paradise of East Lothian. There are more than five or six courses in the vicinity, in which figures, it should be added, he includes one so far distant as Musselburgh. He omits to mention Dunbar, Hedderwick, Archerfield, and Kilspindie. Elie is a favourite resort, no doubt, but its votaries will hardly recognise it as "surrounded by an imposing amphitheatre of hills." Of St Andrews the American does not speak with that reverence to which the grey city by Eden's banks has been so long accustomed. His words are lukewarm. He admits, indeed, the fine quality of the turf, but is quite

clear on the point that it would take a stranger three months' play to master the intricacies of the course. He complains of the correct line of play being from fifty to seventy-five yards off the direction flag, and also that a good straight drive on the hole is sure to "wind up in a bunker." Finally, the rubber-cored ball, he asserts, has played havoc with the hazards, which are now "all wrong" in his opinion. Like all who meet "the grand old man," Mr Ward was greatly taken with Tom Morris, with whom he had several conversations. Doubtless "Old Tom" has told the story before, yet it may not have appeared in print. Discussing the play of his son "Tommy," or "Young Tom," the father described him as "the finest putter I ever saw," and continued, "I was playing Ferguson once at Musselburgh, and I made a fine approach putt just short of the hole, when someone said to Tommy,

'Your father is a fine putter.' 'Yes,' said Tommy, 'he would be if the hole 'ud come to him a bit.'"

Troon, Mr Ward thought scarcely a first-class course, although one "very interesting to play." He was evidently greatly taken with Prestwick. He has also a good word to say for the Irish courses—Portrush, Newcastle, and Portmarnock. Of Newcastle, indeed, he says plainly, "I regard the course as the finest I saw anywhere in my travels." Hoylake permitted, in his view, too much latitude for bad driving, and Sandwich had too much sameness about it.

Crossing to France, the American attorney found the Paris Golf Club course "baked as hard as stone, and the putting greens rough and covered with worm-casts." As for St Moritz, it was simply found to be "better than nothing," but, after all, "next to the old course at Spring

Lake, N.J.—about the saddest I ever saw." Other courses, such as Sonnenberg, above Lucerne, were notable rather for scenery than good golf qualities. The last visited was the Berlin course, which is, by the way, in the charge of a son of Ben Sayers.

Summing up, Mr Ward is of opinion that the courses on this side average much better than those across the Atlantic. The present writer had some little experience of American and Canadian greens the other year, and he is bound to say he found them stony-hard and difficult to one accustomed to more than a mere skin of grey grass. After some very sensible advice to those who have the making of courses in America, Mr Ward expresses his belief that his own country's players are almost, if not quite, as good as the best men in the old country—the difference being that we have a great many

more men in the first class than they have. He does not at all share the somewhat prevalent feeling that Mr Travis's great success was due to an altogether exceptional game, even for him, but thinks, after carefully watching our best players —Mr Robert Maxwell in particular— that in a series of matches over different courses Mr Travis would win the majority of games from the well-known North Berwick crack, although, he adds—with something of a sense of grievance— "ninety-nine men out of a hundred of British players are firmly convinced that it [the winning of the championship] was a pure scratch which no one will be able to repeat."

On the Naming of Places

What sentiment is gathered round
That coloured rag in front of war!
The only weapon without sound
Fights best of all in battle's roar.

The banner lifts the wounded up;
And thrills the dying with delight;
Cheers like an over-brimming cup,
And moves—the master of the fight!

Yes! we are weak, and ask a sign,
As in the gospel days of old:
The pomp of place is not divine—
The cord that binds our hearts is gold!

THE GOLF CRAZE

Still through the maze of circumstance
We pick our footsteps with distrust:
We see the symbols of our clans,
And liquid "may" congeals to "must."

A glamour mingles with our aims,
And dignifies our childish laws;
We call our small things by great names,
And fight as for the nobler cause.

So victory the keener seems
When mounds of sand, quite innocent
Of stormy snow, or icy streams—
Bearded with but a little bent—

We call the "Alps,"[1] and clamber on,
With Hannibal or "Nap" again,
To follow where the ball has gone,
That seeks to level scores—not men!

The trench yawns deeper for the name;
More difficult since we began

[1] At North Berwick.

To call it—adding fame to fame—
(When taken) "storming the Redan!"[1]

And thoughts of danger glow and shift,
Advance, increase, like flowing lava,
Because we know one as "Rorke's Drift,"[2]
Another risk as "Balaclava!"[2]

The dullest skies are bright above
The grey grass (always green) it yields—
The flawless stretch the golfers love—
When known as the "Elysian Fields!"[3]

There is no interest on the earth
But gentle fiction blows aflame;—
Ah! we have known it from our birth,
The magic of a sounding name!

[1] At North Berwick. [2] At Macrihanish.
[3] At St Andrews.

The Golfing Bore

The bore is the man who, knowing you play much better than he does, takes none of your advice but goes on his own weak erratic way, using the wrong clubs, and avenging himself for the indignity conferred on him, when you mildly and timidly ask him to play short, by placing you in the sand, in the position of a shrimp which only shows a little bit of head and "two lovely black eyes"! This man spoils the foursome through his "pride and prejudice," which are as dull as Jane Austen's. Yes, he *is* a bore. But he is not the man I am thinking of. Such a one as he may indeed find salvation in his having stimulated you to play the

better because of his inferior work, although in golf, as elsewhere, "evil communications corrupt good manners," and if you are not a particularly virtuous man demoralisation is apt to set in. The bore who is worthy of his hob-nails is a more desperate character still. The want of ability is bad. The want of desire to learn is worse. Worst of all is the ability which turns itself into a Niagara of speech whereby to commend itself. The bore is sometimes an uncommonly good player; but in this case his boredom consists in his goodness ending with golf, and the short work he makes of the endeavours of other men in different and higher directions. He would rather be writ down "duffer" anywhere than after his title "golfer." Nothing else counts.

Again, the golfing bore is he who plays a losing game with clenched teeth and silent, imprisoned tongue. The writer

once (standing *dormy* at the moment, be it confessed!) ventured to draw the attention of a clergyman, with whom he had played a round of St Andrews, to the gorgeous clouds piled up above the sinking sun which turned the waters of the Eden into blood. The man of G—— (golf, I mean) instantly and ill-naturedly said he had no heart for such things, and shut off the subject, inwardly, no doubt, regretting he could not shut off the sunset, which, however, other men continued to enjoy; some of whom, one may charitably assume, were not on the winning side. This is a specimen, and a very mild one, of the negative bore! He is impervious to other and higher impressions.

The man who studies his putt too closely on a full green must not complain if he be included among the bores, however large-viewed he may be on the subject of sunsets, or however pleasantly he

may be able to play a losing game. The word "bore," moreover, would surely require an unduly narrow definition were it to exclude the not uncommon player who cannot go ahead until you have changed your position to one side or the other; who finds your shadow clouding his ball from a distance of, say, fifty yards or thereby—and that at mid-day; whose nervous organisation is so sensitive that your lightest remark puts him off his game, or who complains of a tremor of earthquake if you shake the ash from your cigar. The world is wide, surely, and such men ought scarcely to appear on any links south of Dornoch[1]—and a magnificent green, by the way, they will find that to be, if they get so far. There, the seals that lie on the Gizen Briggs may flap over from one side to the other with-

[1] No longer the quiet green it was when this was written.

out making too much noise for such hypersensitive players.

It is to be feared all golfers are bores, more or less, to non-golfers. It seems that the most reticent of men on other subjects no sooner takes to golf than eloquence descends upon him. As a cure for stammering nothing may equal golf. Let the afflicted one begin the game; let him be gradually and gently drawn into the circle of after-play enthusiasts; let the edge of the larynx be eased by a little whisky and water; let the epiglottis be mildly irritated by a Henry Clay, and a little unexpected friction occur between his partner and his opponents, and assuredly there will be a liberation or loosening of the tongue. His phrases will in a month's time trip as lovingly from his lips as do those of a town councillor after dinner—at the town's expense! Golf, indeed, might make the dumb to

speak, as certainly as it makes the lame to walk :—Is not the church too far distant on Sundays ?

Where all are bores in the club-house none have a right to complain. It is not so outside. You are walking with a companion who, reasonably enough, takes no more interest in your golf than you do in his sketching or amateur photography. He mentions in a modest way a seaside resort where he thinks of going to sketch, and asks your advice about quarters, and so forth. But you do not deal in small proportions; you do not even go halves—you go the whole hog, utterly oblivious of the man's perfectly legitimate demand for information, and his natural appropriation of the claims of friendship. For the name of the place has conjured up a vision of the links hard by, and, overcome with the remembrance of some splendid play of your own, you rush into elabor-

ately detailed accounts of certain interesting foursomes, and one peerless single when you broke the record—magically avoiding all the bunkers, and never missing a putt. Your friend looks at you from time to time, and with the blindness due to love of the game, the sneer on his face you mistake for a lively sign of interest in your story, until you are pulled up suddenly with his "Confound your golf! an infernally stupid game it all appears to me." It is well to admit that you have written yourself down a bore, in his sight, and you ought to ask his pardon.

Perhaps of all golfing bores for inappropriate persistence there are none who come near the caddies. Their thin whisky-dried shanks carry them to street corners in the city, where a man may try to forget he is a golfer, and pretend, at least, to have an interest in other things—al-

though, of course, the main current of his life flows with what *Mr Punch* once called the "Golf Stream." He is watching for you at the railway station. If you go to business one way, he chooses a point whence he commands at the same time your possible and pardonable choice of another. He meets you at lunch-time, by chance, and begs you will remember that "things is dull down the way." The strong boots you gave him a fortnight ago have been exchanged for a pair of nondescript slippers high at the toe and heelless. Whisky and cold have blown his nose to flaming point, and one can scarcely refuse the poor wretch his railway fare back to the miserable lounging outdoor life he dignifies by the name of "home." One knows all the while, of course, if he ever gets there, it will be by help of some other victim's coins—found between the nearest drink-shop and the railway station.

THE GOLF CRAZE

The natural history of boredom has yet to be written : when it is, golf will, I think, be found to give way to no other amusement, either in its supply of quality or quantity of the article in question.

The Golf Mania!

From a Whitmaniac Point of View

It has been argued, in a well-known brochure called "Shakespeare on Golf," that the great dramatist could wield the club as well as the pen. Emulated by a like desire to penetrate, in his turn, the dark land of Whitmania, Mr Cleeke Shotte has made diligent search among "Leaves of Grass"—no doubt uncommonly rank—without finding any sign whatever of a golf ball. Failing the original article, he has endeavoured to sing in praise of golf as he conceives it possible Walt Whitman might have done had he known the divine exercise,

making use of what he has with marvellous candour called his "barbaric yawp"!

It occurred to me to think of all aerial things of which the profound sky has knowledge and appreciation:
From eagles to bats, and all down the gamut of flight.
Then I saw clear, self-reliant, more or less feather-fringed rotundities in air;
High, low and medium—there are more between high and low than high and low a thousandfold!
Fixed on some invisible pole the eagle stood still in the storm-swept vast of the heavens;
Sea-gulls circled below; pigeons turned somersaults lower still; while the thrush, like a finishing ornament, topped the tall pine tree and sang.
Crows, starlings, blackbirds, red-breasts, finches, wrens—all in their set places fulfilling their conditions,
Also the curlew that crooned as it swept the lone waste of the moorland!
Clouds, well-developed and buxom, dearly loved by me, and reciprocating my good feelings towards them,

In some respects greater than any, yet I leave them out of my exhaustive intricate catalogue—

All these I saw, and loved and rejoiced with, believed in, and made my religions and my philosophies, and the strength of my miraculous song.

O, my featherless red-jointed elbows! O, my fierce longing to fill up the heavens with my venturesome wag-tongue!

(Why, brothers, should a bird wag its tail like a dog, and man not redeem his silence by setting his tongue fondly a-rolling?)

O, my delight in the air, sun, trees, streams, day, night, gymnastic men, big-breasted women, and superb children—minimising my interest in all that other men worship (investing crude sounds and cruder shapes in the cast-off clothes of the ancients, under the very whirr of Time's jocund devourings of Kosmos!)

O, all that stirs and palpitates in air, I thee ejaculate!

But, beautiful and bright things shining in solar iridescence, and bending on me your well-favoured hilarious but impenetrable countenances,

Superber to me than all is the small white antiseptic sphere with its tell-tale indentations,
That flies (and I for one will hold that it sings sweeter than bob-o-link in the springtime to those who have sensitive hearing) on its way through the air to its limited quarters thereunder.
O, out of the incalculable masses of beautiful youths that fill up the cities; out of the cot-speckled valleys; out of the sea-ships at anchor; out of the soldiers on furlough,
Come the golfers—the unforgettable, valiant, hasting in currents, north, south, east, and west, all over the world and behind it!

To Mr W. J. Travis

Amateur Golf Champion, 1904

The cry is still "They come!" for we may say
The lust of conquest reigns in U.S.A.
Another Cup goes Westward: 'tis a shock
We owe, sir, to that aluminium block
That taught your golf-ball all roads lead to Rome,
And sent it straight, and far, and surely home.
There is no name whereby to call the utter
Amazement that we owe to your strange putter.

THE GOLF CRAZE

It was not thought that in our chosen game
A foreign player could make good his claim
Against the prowess of the Britisher,
Without whom neither golf nor golfer were.
Forgive me, for you know the game is ours;
We sowed the seed: the world has reaped the flowers.
Yet, after all, no grudge we owe you, for
The mimic helps to stay the mighty war.
No Frenchman are you, German, or what not,
But of our generous cousin-blood begot—
Nay, I forget, for closer still the ties,
Were you not cradled under Austral skies?

A Lay-Sermon on Golf

The following "Lay-Sermon," with its lengthy introduction, was found under lee of a bunker on the links of a northern town. The edges of the sermon were frayed, and it bore evidence of having been previously carried a good deal in a pocket whose shape, or contents, gave it scant hospitality. To me it was no stranger. I recognised it as the work of an odd man of more than middle age, who, having no known relatives (the reference to his "wife" in the sermon is a harmless fiction), was nevertheless of an order that can never be friendless, even in a world like this, be their lot cast where it may. More than one had seen the MS. He evidently meant it for a larger gallery still. He was a waif—properly so called—whence, no one knew; whither, all saw, for last year he added his dust to that of those laid to rest near the church of which he writes. He was not without means, not without manners—even on a crowded green—and not without skill as a golfer. Like one who had seen the world, he was,

at the same time, like one with whom the world had dealt hardly. But no one cared to question him, somehow. A gentle vanity was in him the only foster child of a simple goodness of heart that had a numerous progeny showing strong family resemblances. Such blemishes as his MS. has he had. Such virtues as he had no MS. may set forth, were it lengthy as the longest stroke from the lay-preacher's supple driver. C. S.

The church of —— stands close to the seashore. When there is a swell rolling in—not an infrequent occurrence in these parts—there is a fine reverberating bass to all that goes on inside. What went on inside on this particular 20th of August 18—was something like this:—The pews were well lined, for the most part, with drowsy-looking men, whose faces as they leant over the book-boards were framed between enormous hands which had en-

larged themselves—who can doubt it?—for behoof of landlords and superiors without the most incipient suggestion of self-seeking in the matter of the improvements carried out. There were any number of cheerful-looking children about, with broad white collars round their russet necks. Now and again, a collie dog's tail might be seen above the deal partitions, as the creature leisurely paced to and fro, the pat of its feet sounding softly along the uneven stone floor.

The day was breezy, but fine, yet there lay about a number of umbrellas, mostly of a green shade, tied loosely in the middle. Some of them had curiously carved bone and horn handles. The bell was set a third below another which sounded in the far distance, and was thus giving out harshly what, in tonic sol-fa phrase (if I remember rightly) is called "the sorrowful or weeping tone"! A sense of justice re-

quires me to set down also the fact that the sorrows of the bell were further expressed by a little shriek for oil each time it reached its highest point in flight; which point, I may say, was still further emphasised by an occasional thump against a wooden rafter, whose spiders, doubtless, oscillated on their webs in consequence. The persuasive amalgam of these sounds had just ceased to call in those who were still lingering outside when the waited-for inmates of —— Hall and —— Tower, with their complement of visitors (principally ladies) moved forward in single file and sat down in those seats which seem to me always to argue mildly, although perhaps not quite conclusively, that in respect of the date of their erection "there were giants in those days." It may be, indeed—although it were a bold venture to state as much authoritatively—that even then length of purse procured large

space, in spite of shortness of leg. Here, for instance, was the Squire—broad in body and short of limb—and his pretty daughters, who were like their father in one particular at least, all dangling their limbs—as one sees children on the seaside form yonder—in their wide, square box of a seat, while the really great-limbed sons of the croft, almost equal in bulk to Lorna Doone's large admirer, were obliged to economise space by coiling their legs round each other, after the manner of some pocket corkscrews you may have seen (but not used, of course) at hydropathics and similar places, where it is expedient to have such things, although it is not lawful. Howbeit, this is not the service. That was the hardest of all to find sympathy with. It is not known to me at this date what the reading consisted of. It was from the "Song of Solomon," however, and the full love-lava which flowed from the heart

of the king seemed in the reader's mind (inspiration notwithstanding) to require that kind of protest which dwells in tone rather than in words, but does not refuse the aid of facial expression as emphasis. It seemed that one might read in the hard lines of the face that moved (negatively) to and fro, rather than (positively) up and down—"You must wait until I unveil it for you!" Nor did the parson seem to think that there might possibly be many, probably a few, certainly one, who found it necessary to consider the proposed unveiling nothing less than a very flat misuse of English, and an impertinence offered to the memory of the proud singer who has been asleep in Jerusalem for twenty-eight centuries. Besides, is not Solomon's own question, "Who can come after the king?" the ancient way of saying "All rights reserved"? When one thinks of it, too, is it not a process of

veiling instead of unveiling? Cupid is generally drawn naked, and in the Royal Lover's Song he is surely as naked as circumstances will permit. Unless you skin him, in fact, you cannot further unveil him, and he is surely much too pretty to suggest that anything so cruel should be done to him.

Some psalms were sung, and lustily, too, to minor tunes, which dragged their "slow length along," like the false Alexandrine of which Pope complains. The prayers were not upliftings of heart to the Majesty in the heavens, but consisted of certain doleful petitions, during the recital of which the petitioner looked as though the heavens themselves were about to fall on him for his pains.

The sermon I can tell you nothing of —not even the text. Is it wonderful? For after the first few sentences were uttered my spirit had leapt through the

high diamond-shaped astragals into the sunshine, which seemed to me to rebuke the whole service. And although I sank back into my corner out of the shaft of dust-filled sunbeams, I presently remembered the psalms we had been singing, about the Amorites and Hittites being smitten as only symbols of the really less unchristian, and, to me, less remote smiting which had taken place yesterday on the links, a little distance beyond the bay, yonder. I remembered nothing more of the Rev. Mr —— until the parting psalm came. What had I been about? Well, the fact is I had put down the notes of a sermon of my own. Married readers may think it necessary I should explain that my wife had been brought to bed of twins—a bad headache and a good novel! I extended these jottings while I lay on the grass facing the salt-scented sea, on that loveliest of Sunday

evenings, with the suggestiveness of an Intimidad at work in magic flights between teeth and brain. They took something like the following form. The text, or rather motto, which headed the sermon, was distinctly put down in capital letters, thus :—

THE LINKS IS THE WORLD

When Shakspere likened the world to a stage, he took the liberty genius is generally allowed, but which it takes all the same without asking. It is an odd inversion of the just laws of latitude, however, to give most to him who needs least. How many poor brains there are whose productions are dry and wizened for no reason whatever in the wide world, of course, but one —namely, that they are not allowed to do as others do. How just was the complaint, for example, made by such regarding Beethoven, who, when he was told that he

was breaking an accepted law of composition, which was not allowable, stamped furiously with his foot, exclaiming, "I allow it!" What chance have those who are coming up behind our front-row men, in literature and music, unless they too are laws unto themselves and are thus enabled, in the bracing atmosphere of liberty, to give us of their best? Say you so? Come, then, trot it out, old fellow, we cry—we who are only among the crowd of those who love good things but cannot produce them, and you shall stamp as furiously as Beethoven, if you please, when we have seen your work and approved—not before. It is not a far cry, my brethren, from Beethoven to Shakspere. They are kings on speaking terms with each other. I talked of Shakspere's Jacques but a moment ago, and the very improper way in which he compares the world to a stage instead of a stage to the world, although,

no doubt, in doing the latter he would have touched dangerous ground, for our captious critic might just then, after tentatively sliding his hand into his empty breeches pocket, have asked a (permanent) loan wherewith to buy a microscope, that the resemblance might be detected therethrough. There is not much resemblance nowadays, in truth. The boards are barren, and do not grow nature-blossoms. Surely, however, Shakspere has here placed himself in line with those who describe a fine natural scene as "like a picture!" If he had said "all the world's a stage-coach," it might have been a little better. Perhaps some future contributor to "N. and Q." will lay the world under obligation by finding that very old MS. (supposed to have been burned in the Globe Theatre of those days) which runs to this effect. Such a finding, after all, might be a "bringing of coals to New-

castle," by adding further complications to "the great cryptogram." Still, the invisible coursers that go pawing up the stellar spaces, with the world behind them, where we mortals have outside seats above our occasionally combustible luggage, would have been a sublime enough spectacle to that kingly sense that "gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name," and would have added something to Doré's picture-scheme as well as furnished foundation for many a brave and popular piece of declamation.

Avoiding this common blunder, then, I do not say the world is the links. It is a great deal more than the links, but the links is the world—as far as the little fellow can stretch his head and rise on tiptoe to imitate his superior. The measure should exceed the thing measured, surely.

There is, doubtless, a considerable resemblance between all, or most games, and

the larger life of each of us, but none, so far as I know, has so many points of resemblance as the Royal and Ancient game. Why, from the beginning to the end (to give Tennyson's lines a new application; and he himself pleads for "liberal applications")—

> "From that first nothing, little worth,
> [a topped ball]
> To that last nothing under earth"
> [down in two more while your opponent is unquestionably dead]

—the similarity is not less than a striking one. Indeed, life may be followed as by numerous milestones and resemblances. In life and golf alike the race is neither to the swift nor to the strong, but to the man who holds himself in check while he holds his opponent in fear; who, with regularity and certainty, keeps "the course" —which is often, be it remembered, a "narrow way." To have finished the

course and kept the (golfer's) faith—that is, realised the ideal—it belongs not to any score-book to record. Then the player himself goes on a journey. Golf is not like tennis, a running here and there; nor like cricket, a running to and fro—both games not infrequently presenting a deal of "beating the air."

Yes, the links is the world—look at it from what point we may—

"The tee the start of youth—the game our life—
The ball, when fairly bunkered, man and wife."

The ball itself is a picture of life outside matrimonial resemblances. It starts clean and unmarked, like a child, but returns worn with the strife—if not broken, at least wrinkled and rheumatic in the running, requiring, in short, to be remoulded and repainted, as we do at our close, when the Home Hole has been played out. The very score which is reckoned perfect

answers somewhat to the threescore and ten years of life. It is true this figure may be more in keeping with a professional point of view. At any rate, even if the fairly good amateur asks a dozen more strokes, the picture is not a whit the less true one, seeing it is "by reason of strength"—gathered on the breezy links—that the golfer adds a like number of years to the allotted span.

There is great width (in many senses) about the game. Are not the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms represented in every single play-club? In most of the other outdoor games there is comparatively little space required, and that little is too regular in outline to admit of much similarity to our up-and-down existence here. Of all games, golf, on the other hand, requires the largest surface. It has the most lasting claim on the individual—extending as it does from first to

second childhood. The late Sir Alexander Grant, Principal of Edinburgh University, said on one occasion that no one under forty years of age should be allowed to play on the links; but this is manifestly a statement unworthy of a commentator on Aristotle, inasmuch as the golfer deserving of the name would be hard to find, comparatively, who began at that age. Even when such a one was discovered, who in himself satisfied modest demands for excellence, his style, it is safe to say, would be found to bear no resemblance to that of the little tatterdemalion who swings on every public course his scrap of a club between the short-stalked daisies and the grass. The desire to mitigate the suffering due to overcrowding is, in short, expressed by Sir Alexander Grant, as it were, in a law which it is to be feared bears no very remote resemblance to an imaginary case

where, say, an Act of Parliament is drawn up on behalf of an uninhabited island! Golf has to do with the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the golfer is best content when he is under the earth in less than his opponent! It is amphibious: always (at its best) played close to the sea—sometimes into it. All round, it is a game that is difficult to beat, for is it not a case of thrashing all the way? And yet, after all, the quality of mercy is not strained by the golfer's singing, with lusty lungs —

"From vig'rous exertions our pleasures arise,
And to crown our delight no poor fugitive dies."

The risks, considered one by one, help the general likeness to life, like warts and lines in a photograph that has not been stippled up to the mark of vanity so much as down to the level of truth. There are tangled grassy thickets to right and left, into which the winds of passion may carry

one. There are streams to get over, and many a hill Difficulty to climb. Intersecting roads, walls, and fences must be crossed. What a great directness there is in good golf, and what absolute independence of footways! What safety there is in height! Then there are bunkers yawning—from "Hell" or "Pandemonium" down to the shallow sandholes from which the niblick or mashie extricates the ball with ease. But why dwell on these things each by turn? They strike us all. Certainly life would not be worth living, as a game is certainly not worth playing, without its risks, for

> "No game was ever worth a rap,
> For a rational man to play,
> Into which no accident, no mishap,
> Could possibly find its way."

There are advantages in our introducing in play what in life are regarded as the chief charms of character. The calm with

which we meet our reverses — whether these come to us on account of our own carelessness, or belong to that economy in which our ends are persistently regarded from the other than usual—no doubt the higher—point of view stationed opposite our individual private mason works where the most of the rough-hewing is done. Is there not a true picture of life's finer adjustments, if we spell but one word differently, in the bit of good advice to keep the sole of the club above earth (souls cannot stand burial: Socrates had his dying joke on the subject, you will remember!), but at the same time, not above the object aimed at. Are not all our duties on the earth capable of being lifted into the higher atmosphere?

But the subject is endless—like the enthusiasm of the winning man, whose cigars and punch are likely also to be, as he outdoes Goldsmith's lame soldier, and han-

dles his cleek to show how holes were won. Not to the degenerate laity only are such lengthy recitals invariably made. It would seem that even the clergyman's precious leisure has been so taken up. "Tell Maurice golf is the queen of games, if cricket is the king; and the golfing gentlemen as fine fellows as ever I saw," was the verdict of one whose patient ears must have undergone severe trials in the clubhouse at St Andrews, but who could, nevertheless, speak with becoming self-forgetfulness and generosity, because he was himself the king of good fellows—a Christian, and a gentleman to boot—Charles Kingsley!

. . . . . .

There was no peroration. The sermon ended here. I took it down in decent black covers to the manse, and begged an early Sunday on which to deliver it in person; but the parson, eyeing me strangely

for a moment and seeing nothing but seriousness in my face, said gravely, "There is a want of faithfulness in it, sir." So say you too? At any rate, there is no after-collection.

To the Manner Born

Vexed hub,
Sans club,
Leaves wife,
Home strife ;
Stalks off,
Tries golf.

Blythe he !
Makes tee,
Neat, tall,
Tops ball :
Great wax ;
More whacks !

Breaks shaft ;
Looks daft.

THE GOLF CRAZE

Once more
Cries "Fore!"
Lost ball;
Sings small!

Not done;
New one;
Smites hard—
Bunkered!
Sweats, mopes;
Then slopes!

To the Love-Sick One

When Phyllis is your only joy,
And Phyllis comes to love another;
When with your stubborn fate you toy—
Uncertain as to what to smother—

Her lover, or your full-blown grief;
Be stoical, and leave the lass:
Let not your spirits down—in brief,
Take refuge in a *sole* of brass!

Do *him* no damage, only let
Your Haskell run straight, smooth, and clean,
Hole in the like, and leave, I bet,
Your rival *dead* upon the green.

THE GOLF CRAZE

The air is good, kind is the sky ;
Go, though your Fitzroy's mercury shifts ;
A perfect quarter-shot your sigh
Will fell even when your iron *lifts*.

Give her up boldly ; what was yours,
Of that which came from joy's left hand,
Was never born of what endures,
But, like your tee'd ball—built on sand !

Cease to look *blue*, take to the *green*,
When sorrow round your heart and rib licks ;—
Come try your *mettle*, bright and keen,
Take down your irons, cleeks and niblicks.

Take twice a day—like Beecham's pills—
Before your meals a round or two ;

And, as you tread the thymy hills,
  Your lips, and melancholy, dry like dew.

But if your memory, suppler still
  Than lance-wood, *must* dwell on her mean heart,
One hope remains—is sure to kill—
  You'll thrash it if you try a *green heart!*

The Scot Abroad

The Cry of the Golfing Alien

Doubtless long before John Payne made vocal in "Home Sweet Home" the *Heimweh* of the heart, the sentiment had other interpreters, or even failing such, held dominant, though more or less silent, possession in millions of human breasts. Inhabitants of the northern portion of this island have felt the sentiment in the form of Robert Gilfillan's song, "O why left I my hame"; while those of the sister isle have been fain to cry, "O steer my bark to Erin's Isle: for Erin is my home." In their dreams the aliens "behold the Hebrides," or other islands—or counties—of the blest.

It is a big world, and all of it is beyond a man's compassing, either by brain or heart. Hence the pith of Kipling's lines—

> "God gave all men all earth to love,
> But since our hearts are small,
> Ordained for each one spot should prove
> Beloved over all."

But what has all this to do with golf? Much. *Heimweh* may be occasioned by the felt loss of many things. Of these, generally, it is not now the intention to speak. Now and again one hears a sigh from abroad, "O, for one hour on the breezy links at home!" For the sea-links at home is the ideal golfing ground. The heart of the alien leaps towards it from the clay putting-greens of India, or the semi-jungle of Africa, where men madly in love with golf try their luck and temper. But, after all, the jungle should be shot over, not golfed over, and a true golf course, in its turn, should present no more

tender quarry to the shooting Haskell than the firm responsive turf and the hospitable, though well-guarded, hole.

The present writer's experience of far distant golf courses is confined to two of them in the great western world. One lies among the green hills of Connecticut, U.S.A., and the other spreads itself over braes outside Toronto, Canada. Neither of these courses can be described as affording what we can find readily enough in this country, in many a place betwixt Westward Ho and Dornoch—that is, good golfing "*turf*." I emphasise and quote this word because of what is to follow. If this be true of America and Canada (and I speak with diffidence on the point because of very limited experience) there are, without doubt, other places on the surface of the earth where "turf" is still less to the fore, and where things (animal, vegetable, and mineral)

that one would rather not associate with golf, are very largely in evidence.

The cry of the alien, then, is a legitimate one, even if he be a golfer. What Scott called "the filial band" that knits a man to his native shore may well have in it a strand which has for symbol the blue bent that grows and waves about the mouth of the Eden—and many another golfing paradise.

These remarks have taken their rise out of some rather striking verse that appeared the other day in the *Spectator*. The lines are headed "Alien," and are evidently the work of a wanderer. There are many things which the "Alien" misses where his lot is cast. He misses his salmon, and he misses his grouse. What concerns us more nearly, however, at the moment, is that he misses golf—worthy the name—and this is how he (Charles Murray by name) words his complaint:—

"In hot December weather when the grass is
'caddie' high,
I've driven clean and lost the ball and game,
When winter veldt is burnt and bare I've cursed
the cuppy lie—
The language is the one thing still the same;
For dongas, rocks, and scuffled greens, give me
the links up north,
The whins, the broom, the thunder of the surf,
The three old fellows waiting where I used to
make a fourth—
I want to play a round on 'turf.'"

God give him safe passage home! Mark Twain, at the great gathering at Delmonico's, New York, a short time ago, held in honour of his seventieth birthday, said towards the end of his rather elaborately humorous speech—"I am seventy, seventy, and would nestle in the chimney corner, and smoke my pipe, and read my book and take my rest." Let it be otherwise with "Alien." When he returns and finds "turf" waiting for him, he will doubtless be found, even at seventy, with

three others like unto him, making merry on the greens and renewing his youth. May he be able to sing between his rounds —to parody the delightful old "Autocrat"—

"'The boys' we were, 'the boys' we'll be
As long as four or two are creeping;
Then here's to him—ah! which is he?
Who lives till all the rest are sleeping.
A life with golfing comforts blest,
The young man's health and strength in plenty,
A cottage where the turf is best,
And heaven at four score years and twenty."

The Golf-Balls and the Cheat

I drove a golf-ball in the air,
It fell to grass I knew not where;
For straight into the sun it soared:
"Lost ball, lost hole!" my rival roared.

I drove another in the air,
It fell to grass I knew not where;
Like fate befell it: when I sighed—
"Lost ball, lost hole!" my rival cried.

The club-house reached after the game,
From out his tossed-down jacket came
One—two—upon the floor, and so
I found them again in the pouch of my foe.

North and South

I

Golf at Dornoch in 1617

If the presence of a cathedral is that which entitles any collection of houses, large or small, to be called a city, then, probably, is Dornoch, on the east coast of Sutherland, the tiniest city in the three kingdoms. The cathedral is not simply there, but it is in good preservation, worshipped in every Sunday, and, it may be, is none the worse of having, in lieu of the customary bishop, the Rev. Donald Grant, of the Established Church of Scotland, to minister within its walls in holy things, and outside its walls in the lesser but

necessary concerns of human life, which lose nothing from the genial and hearty atmosphere in which his personality wraps them about. It will always breed a grumble that, looking over from Tain, Dornoch appears so near and is yet so far. However, the Dornoch Firth is inexorable, and one has to sit, not wearily indeed—for the route is not without charm—but just a trifle impatiently perhaps, while the train moves, none too swiftly either, round the estuary, then over the Kyle and away by the edge of Loch Shin, to drop one, after all, at the Mound Station, eight miles west of Dornoch, whence one must drive or walk.[1] When all this is over, however, and one has time to look about, Dornoch turns out to be a delightful enough little place, and as for its links, it is a fine big stretch of turf of the authentic stamp, while not

[1] Now a thing of the past.

too many of the inhabitants will be found to add, with cleek or iron, stamps of their own to its unusually smooth surface. The kindly minister of the parish, already referred to, has had no little share in the development of the green as a golfing—well, it cannot be called *centre*, but it is certainly not now outside the widening line of circumference which rings what may be called the golfer's territory. It has, in fact, acquired the dignity of mention by Mr Horace G. Hutchinson in his article on "Some Celebrated Links," in the Badminton book on *Golf*. It is but recently, however, that Dornoch has been spoken of in connection with the game, and yet it is an old story after all. One of the favourite items in the history of the game is the fact, as everybody knows, that in 1592 and 1593 the Town Council of Edinburgh forbade the amusement on Sundays. This restriction Mr

Andrew Lang has commented upon with frank regret. He mentions as "early martyrs" those who were prosecuted for playing "gowff on the Links of Leith every Sabbath the time of the sermonses." At Perth another "martyr" suffered in the same cause in 1604. In 1603 James VI. appointed one, William Mayne, to be Royal club maker, and in 1618 he gave James Melvill a monopoly of ball-making at four shillings each ball. These are interesting particulars, both "Royal" and "Ancient." Hitherto Dornoch has had no such story to tell. I have, however, just perused satisfactory evidence that golf was played in the vicinity of the county town of Sutherland as early as 1617. We know that golf had reached the Orkneys as early as 1585, and the "golf-stream" may, for aught we know, have flowed across the Pentland Firth and come south *via* Dornoch. At any

rate, the following entry from "Tutour Accompt-bookes" of Sir Robert Gordon, curator for his nephew, John, Earl of Sutherland, is well authenticated:—

"*Dischargc of Silver* (1617).

"Item of twelf pounds this yeir given to my Lord for bowes, arrowes, golff clubbs and balles, bookes, paper, and other necessaries for his exercises."

The MS. from which this entry was copied is in the ducal castle at Dunrobin, and it may be mentioned that the particular Earl referred to was he who afterwards became the Covenanter, and who was born in 1609 and died in 1679. He was, therefore, but eight years old when he swung his short club above the grass—and no doubt sometimes under it—on the fresh downs that skirt in ample acreage the little but Royal Burgh of Dornoch.

II

Golf beyond Land's End

All that remains of the fabled land of Lyonesse—the jagged rocks and little flower-growing islands, frilled with silver strands and whitening waves, known as the Scilly Isles—was thrown into unusual excitement the other day by the Open Amateur Competition, which began on Easter Monday 1905, and ended on the following day.

The small nine-hole course has been laid out by Howell, of Wimbledon, and has cost the islanders something like £300, including the club-house. The soil of Scilly is, generally speaking, of the thinnest, and much was necessary to be done before the course could be made even as playable as it now is. Rocks had to be removed, and endless quantities of whin

cut down. While still a rough little place, with ticklish holes well on the slant—with perhaps small prospect of much improvement in time—it will doubtless afford, as Mr Horace Hutchinson said to the present writer, "good fun" to islanders and visitors alike. The former are in some respects a primitive people, holding themselves, however, in high esteem.

Scilly is so far removed from the mainland that it is practically a little kingdom in itself, where neither income nor property tax is collected. It is easy, under these circumstances, to understand that there is a certain air of condescension shown to foreigners, as the inhabitants of the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland may be called. Only a small proportion of the inhabitants—2000 all told—have seen much of England, and the most of these have probably penetrated no further than Penzance. They labour

under many delusions in consequence, but these need not now be described. It is enough here to say that their views on golfing subjects are a little peculiar. For example, a sagacious-looking old Scillonian remarked, when Mr Horace Hutchinson's rival—who waged very unequal war against the ex-champion—happened to hole out before his opponent, "Eh! the Doctor's in first. Did you see that?" Others remarked more than once when the same player was giving Mr Hutchinson five more, "He's keeping well up to him; isn't he?" The fact is, little or nothing is known of golf, but, doubtless, time will cure all that. They are a fine, hearty, self-respecting people the Scillonians, with a kind of quaintness about them which is not unattractive.

The course is on what may be called a table-land high above the waves that break on the cliffs below. The Scilly Marconi

station is close by, and superb views are attainable from almost any hole or tee. Easter Monday was a day of days. Far below lay the water, marbled as it were with pale greens and purples. Looking away over Samson, where Sir Walter Besant's "Armorel of Lyonesse" was supposed to live, the Bishop lighthouse was to be seen; farther to the left lay the green little island of St Agnes, with its old white-washed light-tower; while to the right appeared the wooded portion of Tresco, on which the "Lord of the Isles"—Mr Smith-Dorrien Smith—holds castle and court. The Round Island lighthouse stood well above the waters a little beyond, and farther to the right lay the sun-steeped island of St Martin's. Numerous sailing boats were moving out from Hughtown, the chief town in Scilly, situated on the best and largest island—St Mary's. Over all bent the blue, unclouded sky.

Quite a tiny crowd wandered about among the players as sheep having no shepherd, not knowing where they went. More than once a young islander picked up a ball and presented it politely to the player, who could scarce do anything but smile at the sunny, bronzed face of the donor. It is a far cry to Scilly, and the result appears only after many days in the Plymouth papers. The first prize was a handsome silver cup presented by Mr T. A. Dorrien Smith, of Tresco Abbey, for the best two rounds. The captain's prize was a silver tea-caddy for the best nine holes, and there were other prizes, including a ladies' prize. There were about twenty entries, including Mr Horace Hutchinson,—who was the Governor's guest,—Lord Valentia, and the Hon. Kathleen Annesley.

It will be seen that an air of simplicity characterises the office-bearers of the

club, who have allowed the following particulars to appear in the newspapers:—

	Gross.	Hcp.	Net.
Mr Horace Hutchinson .	166	+12	178
Mr ——. . . .	194	−16	178
Dr ——. . . .	201	20	181
Dr ——. . . .	207	22	185
Mr ——. . . .	222	36	186
Mrs ——. . . .	218	32	186
Mr ——. . . .	235	48	187
Mr ——. . . .	235	36	199
Mr ——. . . .	251	48	203
Mr ——. . . .	264	48	216
Mr ——. . . .	256	34	222
Mr ——. . . .	279	48	231
Mr ——. . . .	340	48	292
The Honourable —— .	341	48	293
Mr ——. . . .	348	48	300

Tyrant Golf!

Yes! 'tis a tyrant of a game,
  Which entering once the forehead
Swift sinks its way down to the heart,
  Till ladies vote it "horrid!"

For Mabel, Nell, and Eglantine
  May make themselves as fetchin'
In pale sweet pink, and blue, and white,
  As beautiful Miss Detchon.

In vain the fresh face blossoms out
  Of jackets, starred and streakëd;
The player's breast to all but golf
  Is cool as is his cleek-head!

THE GOLF CRAZE

A golfer's eye is on his ball
(Spelt sometimes with a big B);
And little recks he, as she comes,
What Polly's pretty rig be.

Even if you fondly hope to preach
The love of *Alma Mater*,
You'd better see the season past—
Come down a little later.

Now, when the rage is on the green,
All other subjects kindle
No more emotion in the breast
Than in yon "Rock and Spindle!"

The day is sacred to the game;
The night the game is talked of,
Who is, and who is not in form,
Who lagged behind; who walked off!

And, sad to say, when Sunday comes,
And eyes no more the ball see,

THE GOLF CRAZE

In dreams the muscles' work seems not
  Indicative of palsy:

For still kind slumber prophesies
  Who will in burn or ditch be:
Golf balls run out and in between
  The I's[1] of A. K. H. B.!

[1] It is an old story that compositors used to run short of the letter "I" when printing A. K. H. B.'s essays.

Pests!

Golf is assuredly not in itself a pestilence that walks in darkness. Although matches *have* been played by moonlight, and the ball, like other "varmints," has been sought for by lamplight, it is generally supposed that there is plenty of room on St Andrews, or even Musselburgh links, any time between night and morning. During such hours these places are believed to be, like other idols mentioned elsewhere, relegated to the moles and to the bats. Sleep ends idolatry for the nonce. But although the game itself is in no sense a pestilence, golfers who are over-anxious to engage in play when most men are otherwise employed, who

itch for the moonlight foursome, for example, may assuredly be set down as pests. So also are those whose only talk is of golf.

"Golf, golf, golf—is all the story!
In despair my overburdened spirit sinks,
Till I wish that every golfer was in glory,
And I pray the sea may overflow the links."

Golf is, no doubt, a thing that sticks to one with strange persistency!

When one comes to think of it, there is a good deal of sticky *media* employed in golf: from the glued head and tarred whipping to the ball itself, which shows some memories of its earlier "gutty" days when it sticks on a stiff green. But even admitting that it is not so easy a thing for an enthusiastic golfer to free himself from golf, when a man can talk of absolutely nothing but golf,–let him be open champion the while, if you will, frankly, now, is he anything else than a pest? There is surely something, after all, to be said,

however little, even to a golfer, one may be permitted to hope, on behalf of certain things more or less intimately connected with man's estate, although clearly having no bearing on the fascinating narrow course of down-trodden grass.

It is permissible to be a man while a golfer, although, it is true, there is no such permission indicated either in the old or revised St Andrews rules. A golfer who is without additional pleasure because the common over which he plays is beautifully situated, and who meets your admiring words with chill silence, is another kind of pest, negative and positive alike—being empty of one thing because filled with another. I believe it was Mrs Craik who said that envy and contempt are two sides of the same sin—the words standing for the inside and outside. When we envy a possessor, and cannot get the thing possessed, we often content

ourselves in time by making it appear as though we had a contempt both for him and it. The "coincidence-hunter," by the way, may take note that twenty-five centuries earlier Æsop came to a like conclusion, and epitomised his impressions in two words, "sour grapes!" So, this case of negative and positive seems to me to stand in precisely the same position. To the man with what may be called a generous and multifarious appetite for life, the pest (negative) appears empty of one thing because he is filled with another, like a blown bladder tossing on waves! "So absorbing," wrote some one in the *Spectator*, "is the one topic of the golfing deeds of the day, that if a messenger were to enter the Royal and Ancient Golf Club at St Andrews about half-past five on the evening of a fine golfing day, with the intelligence that the united Powers of Germany, Austria, Russia, France and

Italy had declared war against England; that Lord Salisbury and Mr Gladstone had fought a duel, in which both had fallen, and that the Queen had sent for Mr Parnell, we believe he would be heard with but languid interest." This may, alas, be true enough, if at this time of day we make a possible exception among the "languid" ones of Mr Balfour. That is, if the *Spectator's* picture fits conveniently into a *Recess*! I once heard Principal Caird, in one of those inimitable touches of his, speak of the chief characteristic of the aristocracy as consisting of a "languid imbecility." Such a phrase recalls the single line by means of which, in a very different sphere, Caldecott gave us fire, fury, and one might also add fun, as though the creature were laughing at itself withal, in the eye of his "Mad Dog." One should venture to mention, however, that even this "languid im-

becility," which is generally clothed in what may be called a *copper* silence (using the lower value, so that Carlyle's favourite maxim be not outraged), transmutes itself, where golf is in the question, into a quiet plebeian activity, whether on the green or in the club. Nor is it really beyond credence that the clerical golfer may be, in the midst of the Philistines, playing successfully the part of "old man eloquent" on golfing topics to a most alert audience, while the day after to-morrow his hearers may be swayed to sleep by seesaw platitudes, his best efforts on subjects which are supposed to be of the supremest moment. It is, after all, not merely a figure of speech that in golf the ball comes to be spoken of as the globe. Such is the power of the game that the eye engrossed therein loses the correct focus. To vary the image, the ponderous world, with all its manifold

concerns, high and low, dwindles down till it kicks the beam when a round piece of painted gutta percha, weighing twenty-seven drachms or so, is placed against it in the magic scales of passionate interest. All this being so, makes the pest a somewhat numerous quantity.

I am afraid many caddies are to be described in no other way than as pests; and happy shall he be who can do without them. There are exceptions, no doubt; but in spite of Mr James Balfour's charitable words in his *Reminiscences of Golf on St Andrews Links* (David Douglas, 1887), one cannot regard the trade on the whole in any other way than as a system of lazy debauchery. Then, again, I should like to know what else the golf patentee is but a pest? Is he not the man who is for ever enticing you, when you are playing fairly well with "the boys of the old brigade," as your

bag of clubs may be called, to purchase fearfully and wonderfully made instruments, with the result that demoralisation sets in, and there is no more joy in play until you return to your first love, after a most violent flirtation with many strange gods? Minor pests are, of course, as numerous as minor poets. Among these may be mentioned men who move too fast, men who move too slow, men who study their putts too long, and, if I were a worse man, I might include women-golfers!

There is another, perhaps the chief of all, whom I have not mentioned. I am indebted to a non-golfer for the reminder. My omission is, he says, the golf pest who publishes. To this latter statement the present writer would add, in conclusion, that he claims for himself a special dispensation for turning what is known as King's evidence.

The Golfers

(With Apologies to the shade of William Allingham)

Up the airy mountain,
  Down the sandy glen,
We daren't go a-courting
  For fear of golfing men:
Wee folk, big folk,
  Trooping all together;
Red jacket, grey cap,
  And bag of cloth and leather!

Down along the rocky shore
  Some make their home,
In among the seaweed,
  Or yellow tide-foam;

THE GOLF CRAZE

Some in hollow bunkers,
  Delving there like mad,—
Their rivals standing smiling,
  Learning how to add.

High on the hill-top
  The king of golfers sits,—
Twisted irons for a crown,
  And handles all in bits:
With his heavy hands for eaves,
  There on sunny days
He marks the man who lifts the turf,—
  Lifts, but never lays;
Or him who tees his Haskell brave
  When hidden by a knoll;
Or such as tamper with their scores,—
  And they all pay toll!

By the craggy hill-side,
  Through the waste-lands bare,
They've levelled up their putting-greens
  For pleasure here and there.

THE GOLF CRAZE

Are any girls so daring
  As picnic near the pin?
They shall have hailstones in their tea
  Before they well begin!

Up the airy mountain,
  Down the sandy glen,
We daren't go a-courting
  For fear of golfing men:
Wee folk, big folk,
  Trooping all together;
Red jacket, grey cap,
  And bag of cloth and leather!

Valedictory Sonnet

Played Out

The yellow shore with passion pure and warm
For the great sea makes light of other loves;
Bearing no rival imprint when the storm
Sends forth foam-kisses like a flock of doves.
A king's name, traced in capitals, receives
No more respect than lame crab's crazy trail;
The sand sinks level when the water leaves,
And all the signs of man's recording fail;

So, proud Death knows no victor: nears the day
When this—our painted grasshopper—becomes
A burden which we, sighing, put away,
Or place on short allowance, mere golf-crumbs!
Ah, that, when we lie *dead*, earth's hazards past,
We, like our Haskell, may steal *home* at last!

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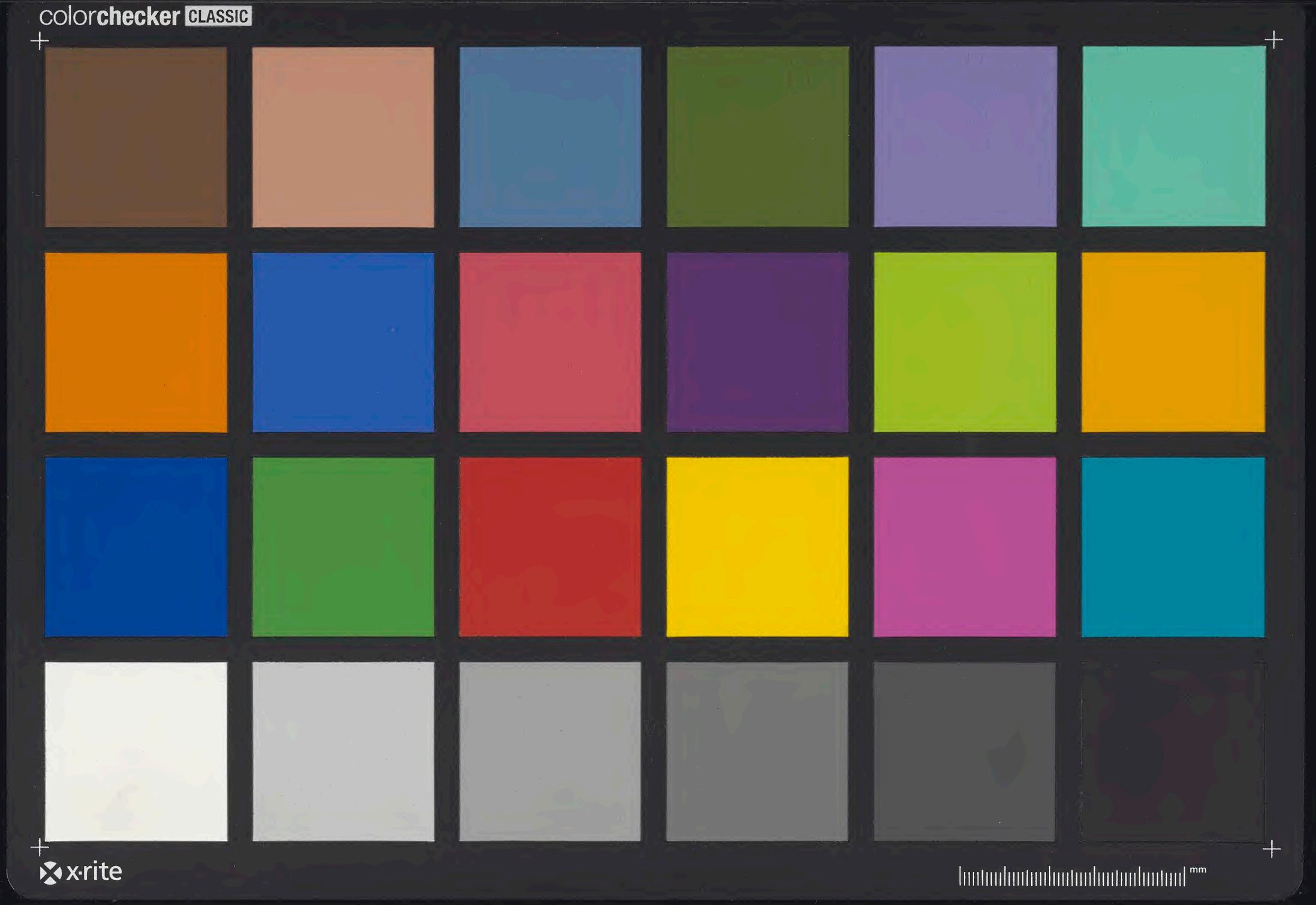
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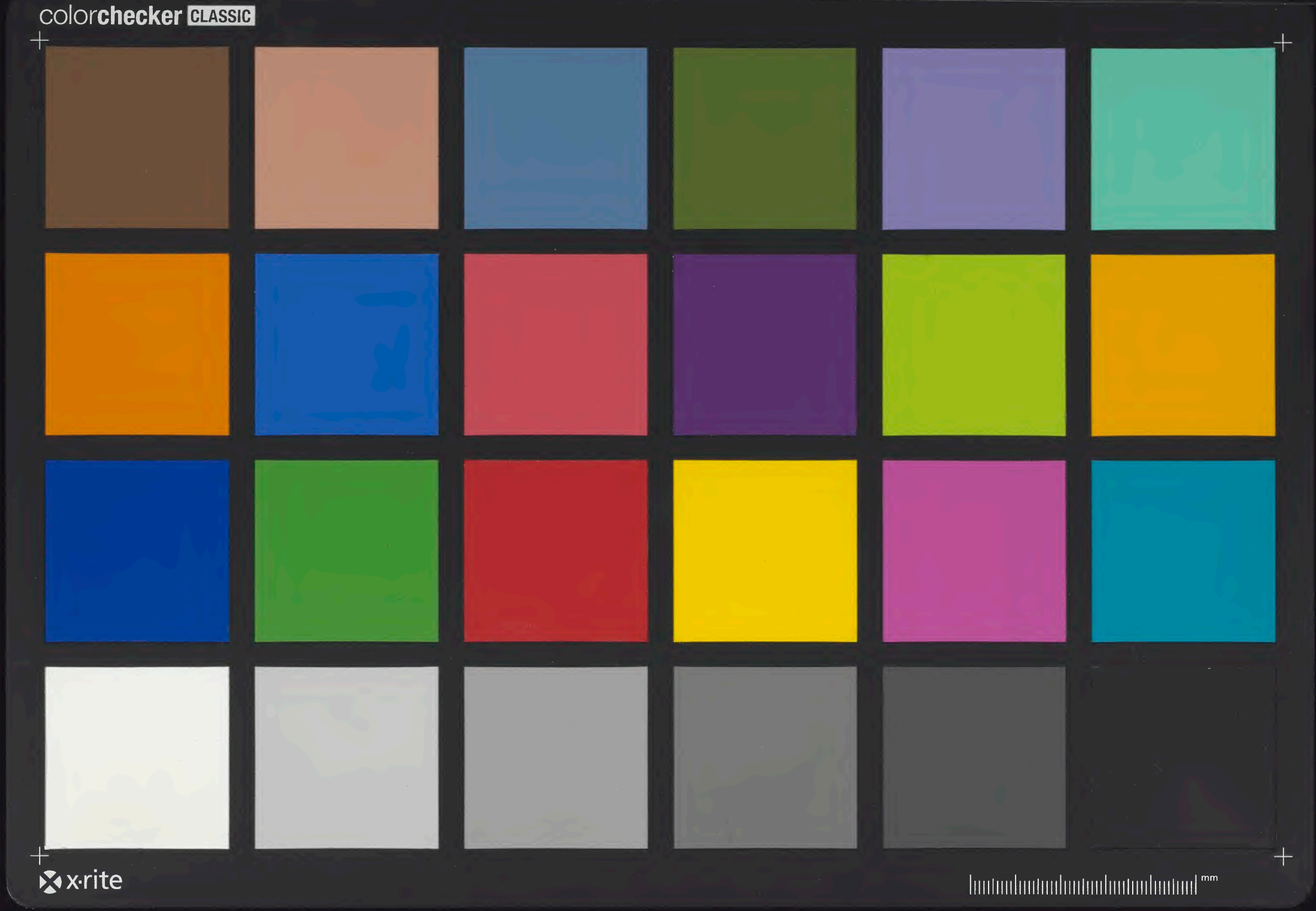
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