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PLAYERS OF THE PERIOD*

AN INTIMATE STUDY OF THEIR EXPERIENCES, CHARACTERISTICS
AND METHODS

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VII.—ARNAUD MASSY.

I

WHEN THE Great War had borne upon Europe for one painful year a postcard was despatched by a French golfer, now a soldier in the trenches facing the German enemy, to some friends of his in England, the friends he had made and played with in the days of careless peace and such prosperity as we may not know again for a long time. The postcard had emblazoned on it the flags of the fighting Allies—the Union Jack of our dear England, the tricolour of glorious France, the banner of noble Belgium, the blue cross of determined Russia, the red white and green of Italy who would only fight for right, and the badge of our brave little Servia. Never did nations make up such a band of brothers since the world began as this, but it is natural that the warming, the kindling of affection between peoples should be keener, tender, as between ourselves and France than in any other case because we have come to understand each other so well and to appreciate each other, with our wide differences and

contrasts, so perfectly. It has come to seem to us that only after these many hundreds of years of misunderstanding and jealousy, when we both falsely conceived that because a strip of blue water separated our shores we were therefore, by some inscrutable reasoning natural enemies, we are in reality by our capacities, our temperaments, tastes and dispositions, the true complements of each other. So in any little collection of the national standards of the Allies, good and faithful as they are all to each other and have sworn to be, the Union Jack and the French tricolour seem to stand out for more and grander significance when they caress each other in the breeze than any other bits of cloth or silk could do that ever have been or will be woven. And in a good bold hand there was written on this postcard that was sent from the trenches in France to a links of Surrey the heartening cry—"Vive l'Entente cordiale!" It was Arnaud Massy who sent such a splendidly appropriate message in such perfect good taste—Massy the golfer of southern



ARNAUD MASSY, at top of swing for full drive. Note how high the right elbow is and also the extent to which he has come around on his left toe....reminiscent of the golf of a generation ago.

France, the only man not British, who has ever won our Open Championship since the days when it was established in 1860. It was to an English champion that he despatched this happy greeting.

When I came to know of it a stimulating memory was awakened in my mind. I went back in thought to 1907, and I was no longer in suffering London, waiting for the great victory that was coming, but on the fine golfing links of Hoylake where so many worthy men have been raised to championship. We had had a week of severe stress and strain, with such lashing weather as we frequently get in championships on that spit of Cheshire land that runs out between Dee and Mersey towards the sea. The harshest trial was made of the

quality of the candidates for the highest honours of the game, and on the last day, with wind and rain, the test was keen. The real contest, when the championship was more than half way through lay between Massy and our very English, Devonian Taylor, and at the end of the third round, bringing the affair up to the end of the noon of the last day Taylor had what seemed a most promising lead of his nearest rival. Yet it was known Massy was in his finest form and was most threatening. I remember watching him setting out on his fourth and last round, marching along after his ball as he had driven it to the point by the corner of the enclosure which has such a frightening way about it when the game that is being played is of more than usual importance. I say I saw Massy marching, and marching is the only word. "There goes the soldier," said I to myself, and others also, taking the utmost interest in him now as a prospective champion, observed his military bearing, the walk and deportment of the man who was brought up in France. Erect, firm, with a right-left sort of well timed tread, hands at the side, club carried as if it might have been a gun, head up, eyes right—there was the Massy who sent the postcard from the trenches, and who on this stormy day of June in 1907 marched along the Hoylake fairway with such a confidence and resolution as he might display if now he were marching towards Berlin. There was no trace of nervousness there, and I have always felt that Massy's confident driving, with a good length and fine straightness in the difficult conditions that prevailed that day, was among the best things done in the history of the championship, while his splendid putting—Massy to my mind being un-

equalled at the most fateful putts of two to four yards—was doing him its best service. He won that championship, with Taylor second to him, and, in passing, one recalls that it was at Hoylake again six years later that by a magnificent display of the best golfing virtues, especially superb driving in a gale, Taylor won his fifth championship. But the victory was not the foremost picture that arose in my imagination when I was reflecting on the postcard that came from France. It was a curious and wonderful scene that was enacted an hour later when Massy and some others had changed into dry clothing and were becoming fairly accustomed to the historic decision that had been reached. In front of the brick clubhouse of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club, with its tower and clock commemorating the great achievement of its greatest golfing son, Mr. John Ball, in winning the amateur and open championships in the same year, there was gathered a large number of golfing persons who by their manner suggested that there was some unreality about the present occurrences. It was somewhat difficult to absorb the fact into the mind that a foreign player had won the Open Championship that seemed so well rooted to the soil of Britain, and that presently the old cup that we saw glittering on the little table would be carried away across the English Channel to France. Massy, as we had seen, was a fine golfer, and there was good reason to believe he was a fine fellow, yet was it a proper truth that this strong bonily built Frenchman, attached to the leading golf club of Paris, should be the king of golf for the year and reign as champion over all who were of the native land of the game? If we did not say all these things on that afternoon most of them

were thought. Professor Paterson came out from the clubhouse, made an appropriate speech, gave his well deserved congratulations to the victor and handed him the cup that had been held by a long line of champions, young Tommy Morris being the first of them. Massy came forward to make his response, the gold medal having been delivered to him. His big face was smiling, his great round eyes were bulging with gladness, and he muttered a few incoherent phrases which were neither better nor worse than champions make on such occasions. Then there was a momentary pause, and this magnificent Massy flung his hands up into the air, and with a loud blast from his spacious lungs he cried—"*Vive l'entente cordiale!*" That is what I shall not forget. Was it not splendid of the man? Here indeed was the sentiment for the moment! The inspiration was perfect, the good taste was sublime. Not for another moment was there any doubt about the utter worthiness of this Frenchman. He was cheered whole heartedly; he was accepted as the true and proper successor to James Braid in the championship, and everybody wished him well. From that time Massy has had his own place in the good appreciation of the British golfing public. He has been very near indeed to winning the championship again since then. With no doubt whatever he is one of the greatest players of the time, with a strong and peculiar individuality. In the gallery of great golfers there is hardly a portrait that is more interesting to dwell upon. Let us then consider it for a while.

II

PERHAPS this Massy is not the most absolute Frenchman in the blood,

though in spirit, loyalty and manner there is nothing in Paris or Rheims or Rouen that is more French. The truth is that he was born at Biarritz, and that windy corner of the Bay of Biscay is in the old country of the Basques. Massy is a Basque. These are a people, gathered to the French as they have been for a long time, who are clannish and peculiar to a degree. Their country is about the Pyrenees between France and Spain, they are a race of themselves, have their own language and customs, have a char-

game of pelota which in some ways is to my mind unequalled as a test of the athletic qualities of a man. I have seen the Basques in their own country and have watched them at their pelota and long ago I came to the conclusion that if ever a race of men possessed the most desirable qualities for assisting them to be champions of golf it is these Basques. Of course, round about such places as Biarritz so much frequented by English and French holiday makers, the clannishness is not very pronounced, and such



The training school of the great French player—a corner of the course at Biarritz.

acteristic physiognomy, and among other peculiarities they play their own games and have their own amusements in the way of special dances and so forth. In their diversions they exhibit special qualities of temperament, a marvellous capacity in sight, magnificent judgment of distances and great dexterity and appreciation of the advantages of balance and poise in the production of the best results in physical exercises. Their knowledge and ability are splendidly exhibited in their own

as Arnaud Massy may be taken as simply French and regard themselves as such. But in his blood and in his limbs and eyes and instinct there is the Basque and that is very good for golf. Jean Gassiat and practically all the other great professional golfers of France are Basque also, and this coincidence is not wholly due to the circumstances of the popular winter holiday course, so much frequented by good British players, being at Biarritz. How is it that the French Riviera, which has so many more

courses than the *cote d'argent*, as the corner of the Bay of Biscay containing Biarritz is called, has not produced any great players? It is clear that the Basques have a special fitness for the game. So it was at Biarritz in the summer of 1877 that Arnaud Massy was born, and here the days of his boyhood were spent—many of them on the sea with the fishing vessels; and in the Massy we see to-day there is still something of the fisherman left in appearance, a suggestion of breezes and salt water. At twelve years of age he went, like many others of the boys of Biarritz, up to the high land on the cliffs beyond the great lighthouse that is famous in these parts and sought work as a carrier of clubs for the English golfers, who had now begun to play on the new course here in a fair number. The "golf boom" had hardly begun, but Biarritz was already achieving a quite sort of reputation for its course. It was not a fine one, architecturally. In some respects it was almost absurd, and yet it was peculiarly interesting, and holes which, architecturally, ought to be most condemned somehow became most popular and gained a world-wide reputation for themselves. Such was—and is—the celebrated Cliff hole, a short one where the player has a high and steep cliff in front of him at the tee and a putting green beyond the summit of it. And golf at Biarritz was never so easy as some might think, for here there are frequently high winds, and some have ventured so far as to say that men who can play well at Biarritz can do so anywhere. But that is said of many courses, and of courses of all kinds, and perhaps the truth is that those who can golf really well in one place can do so at nearly all. However, be

these things as they may, Biarritz attracted to itself a larger number of the better players from Great Britain than any other continental resort, men of the championship class visiting it in goodly companies, and to this day it shares with its inland neighbor, Pau, the best patronage of this kind, while, in general, the course is so popular in the winter season that the amount of money taken by the club in subscriptions and green fees is prodigious, despite the fact that such fees are in some cases made almost prohibitive in order to keep down the congestion of players. Here Massy, in the young days of Biarritz golf, first saw the game played. The inevitable happened. Boys of twelve are not indifferent to exercises of this kind pursued by their elders. They wish to do the same thing themselves, and so they watch and imitate. That is how most of the great professionals have been made. Imitation—it is clearly the secret of greatness in golf. Massy's interest in the game was fired, he was a good imitator; he practiced whenever he had the chance and soon the British golfers begin to understand that one of their caddies showed signs of being something like a golfing genius. The family of Hambro has always been closely associated with Biarritz, and Mr. Everard Hambro is a great and respected leader of golfing and other things in these parts. He gave great encouragement to young Massy as he grew up; and, as it appeared that with a proper golfing education there were great possibilities for him, Mr. Hambro assisted him to go for a summer season to Scotland. He was sent to North Berwick, and, approaching there, was met at Drem station by the late Davie Grant, a great golfing character in those days and an excel-

lent teacher of the game. Mr. Hambro had made arrangements for Massy to learn the craft of clubmaking in the shop of Hutchinson at North Berwick, and he was soon comfortably established in the place. He saw golf and links very different from anything he had known before, his game improved, and when he went back to Biarritz in the winter he had a more definite object before him. After an interval he returned to North Berwick, and subsequently he made a practice of visiting the famous east coast resort every summer, and going back to Biarritz in the winter. It was a good arrangement and it did well for the man, whose game soon improved marvelously, until it was apparent that he would enter into the championship class. He made good use of his time in England and Scotland, studying our best players closely. He was enormously impressed with Harry Vardon. He saw him play in his great match in 1899 against Willie Park, and it thrilled him. "Vardon! Vardon!" was all he could murmur afterwards.

III.

HE MADE his first appearance in the open championship when it was played at Hoylake in 1902. It was a peculiarly interesting debut. This was the first time that any foreign player had ever entered for the great event, and the people were curious to see what he who promised so much was like. They sought him out on the links out of mere curiosity; but usually they went to watch him a second time because they recognized that he was a fine player, with some special accomplishments, and also that if things went his way there was a possibility that he might even win the championship or come near to doing

so. So he had a little crowd about him when he was playing, and Massy showed them that he had much to learn in the way of going about winning a championship. His temperament was not so steady as it should have been; but apart from that he displayed a want of concentration, and an utter inability to ignore the sightseers who honoured him with their attention. When his strokes were attended with bad luck, he looked appealingly to the people as if to say he would be glad of some expression of their sympathy, while when anything especially good came his way, he was apparently ready for a sign of admiration. He seemed a too susceptible Massy at that time. But his play was really good, and he finished in a tie (with Andrew Kirkaldy) for tenth place in the championship, which was highly creditable for a first appearance. That was the championship won by Herd, who had the advantage of the rubber-cored ball, used for the first time in that event, as most of his rivals had not. At St. Andrews' in 1905 he entered the prize list, being fifth from the top, and in the following year he was sixth at Muirfield. By this time he was clearly one of the men to be reckoned with in the foremost event, and he had become a more prominent figure in the golf world generally, for he had assumed the position of professional at La Boulie, the headquarters of the Société de Golf de Paris, in many respects the foremost club of France and that which always took the initiative in French golfing affairs. Here he had a position and some freedom and was within what might be called the general golfing zone, and so had opportunities of developing himself.

In the winter season of 1906-7 he

showed that he had developed. A great professional tournament was organized at Cannes by the Grand Duke Michael and to it were invited Massy and seven of the best British professionals, including Braid, Vardon, Taylor, and the whole of the championship crew. Massy beat the lot of them and won the tournament. In a general way these continental tournaments, which were common things in the winter a few years ago, were not regarded as being of much importance. They served as a little advertisement for the courses out there and were the means of giving the professionals a pleasant holiday; but nobody cared very much who won them, nor thought any the worse of a player because he did not win. But this one was rather different from the others. The players were keen, and they felt a collective sort of rivalry between them and Massy. When, therefore, the Frenchman won, as much of a sensation was created not only in France, but in happy England, as is possible in the middle of winter. It seemed a distinct threat. Massy at that time, too, was the holder of the French Open Championship, which had been established a few months before. We determined to keep our eyes very closely upon him. The great professionals felt a little uneasy. They had reason. From this time on Massy exhibited the most consistent form, and even those who made allowances for the superiority he had exhibited in France over our own best men, suggesting that light and climate were in his favour, began to understand that he must be one of the best favourites for the approaching Open Championship at Hoylake.

Those days of June in the championship of 1907, when Massy strode again on the links where he made his

first appearance as a championship competitor will be well remembered. It was Massy's championship all the time. Hardly ever has a champion made the running all the way through, to use a racing phrase, as he did on this occasion. He headed his qualifying section, and then with a 76 took the lead in the first round of the championship proper, his place at the top being shared by Walter Toogood. His second round, of 81, was the worst he did in the championship, but still it was good enough to place him at the head of the list alone, Toogood having dropped away, while J. H. Taylor was now up in the second position, only one stroke behind. That was the state of things when the players went to rest that night with the championship half over, and, near as Taylor was to the Frenchman; and little enough as one stroke is, there was a deeper conviction that among the golfing people generally at that stage of affairs that it was to be Massy's championship, than I have ever known to exist in respect to any competitor. Braid and Harry Vardon did not appear dangerous, and it looked as if the full burden of the British defence must rest on Taylor. As it happened on the morning of the last day Taylor did get his nose in front, for with a 76 against Massy's 78, he led by a stroke at the end of the third round. The conditions were very difficult on that last day; wind and rain were lashing round the Cheshire links and setting the supreme test to the players. In such circumstances Massy exhibited the full strength of his game. His driving was excellent, and he was doing wonderful work all the time with the driving iron that Andrew Kirkaldy once gave him, while nobody could wish for better putting than his on that day. Taylor



A characteristic photograph of ARNAUD MASSY taken at the finish of his swing.

played well, but he had accidents, and as Massy did the round in three strokes better, it was Massy's championship. Nobody begrudged him it. The best professionals, one and all, freely admitted that he had played the best golf and deserved his victory. Braid had been almost inclined to forecast his victory beforehand, and I well remember a conversation I had with Taylor on the night before the championship began in which he said that the more eminent professionals

had a very pronounced apprehension of a French victory.

But "*Vive l'Entente Cordiale!*"—that ringing cry—removed the last shade of regret, and it almost became a pleasure to reflect upon the fact that the old championship cup that young Tommy and the other weights of early days had captured was to be interned for a year in the vaults of Versailles. Arnaud Massy, golf champion of Britain and the world, went from Hoylake to North Berwick, which had become in a very real sense his British home. The Scots of that part of East Lothian had taken him to themselves, feeling perhaps that, if he was not real Scotch, at all events he was nearly as much so as the English, and he was now speaking English with something of a Scottish accent, which was all to the good. So when he arrived at North Berwick station he was given a municipal and public welcome with brass band and all complete. The town turned out with cheers and speeches, and Massy felt he had reached home. As indeed he had. He had married a North Berwick lassie in Miss Henderson, and Fate, whose inscrutable workings are a source of perpetual wonder to us, had prepared a most magnificent celebration of Monsieur Massy's championship. Just while he was winning the Cup and the gold medal at Hoylake, a daughter was born to him.

It seemed incumbent upon the champion to make some respectful recognition to the gods of the blessing that had been vouchsafed to him and which had filled his cup of happiness to overflowing, and so he christened his little girl Margaret Lockhart Hoylake Massy. He derived the fullest advantage from having his two homes, the land of his birth and the land of his golfing adoption and training.

When he went back to Paris another great welcome was ready for him. The committee of the Société de Golf de Paris awaited him at the railway station, and great celebrations followed. Monsieur Massy did everything to justify them all. The French Open Championship was coming on at La Boulie. It seemed too much to expect that he could keep up his winning sequence and achieve this crowning triumph. His skill was enough, but there is the luck element in golf to be considered always. Partly because they felt their high pride had received a little shock, but at least as much because they liked Massy and wished to pay him the best compliment in their power, the great British professionals, all the champions among them, determined to cross over to Versailles and take part in this championship. They would try to win it from Massy; if they failed they would give their friend the best reason for even more exalted pride. It was an arrangement by which Massy had everything to gain and practically nothing to lose. Over the Channel they came, the British champions, and Massy beat them all. He became a universal champion. If the rivalry between Europe and America, that became so definite a few years later had been established then he would certainly have crossed the wide ocean and I should have wondered if he had not then gained further honour at Chestnut Hill where Alec Ross that summer won the crown of American golf. The fathers of French golf at La Boulie were overjoyed. They were inspired to such ringing proclamations as only seem quite right in glorious France of the splendid emotions. M. Pierre Deschamps, leader of the French golfers, fine gentleman and excellent sportsman, was moved to

write a long and happy preface to the first book on golf written in French that was ever given to the world, a book by Massy himself. At the end of this sketch of the progress of the game in France and the rise and conquest of the invincible Massy, M. Deschamps addressed himself to the champion in these glowing terms:

"Et maintenant, a vous la parole, mon cher Massy; continuez votre brillante carrière, jouissez de votre belle gloire dont nous sommes tous fiers, comme Golfeurs et comme Française a cette heure, ou tant de links s'ouvrent chez nous, pour répondre aux besoins d'enthousiastes sportsmen, puissent d'autres professionnels de notre race suivre votre exemple, unique encore dans les fastes du 'Royal and Ancient game,' et contribuer a faire de ce sport un jeu national dans notre beau pays de France."

So golf was to be made the national game of France, and it is going on that way. I remember that the first American newspaper that I bought on making my first landing in New York some years ago had a full page picture of a golfing girl and some words of explanation to the effect that golf was established as the national game of the United States. It is so in many other parts of the world. I have heard of them playing golf in Russia, and there is no mention of any other game. It is coming on in Spain. The black kings of countries in central Africa play it. Up in Uganda King Daudi Chwa, a young monarch who is anxious to become fully enlightened, is an enthusiast, and is said to drive, play his irons, and putt well on the nine holes course that he has made for himself, and he has welcomed many British people to it including a bishop and an eminent actress. In honour of Miss Decima Moore he called one of the fairest holes of the nine by the name of Decima. But ought he not to have made a new hole, a tenth, for that? Golf has become the national

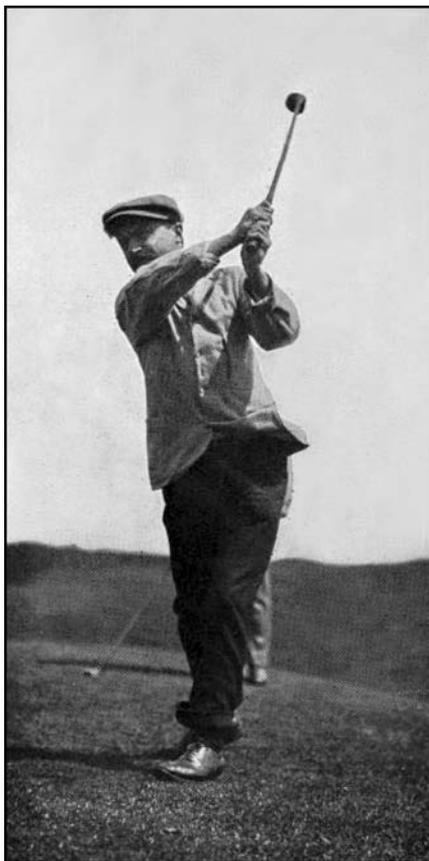
game of Afghanistan, being the only one and is played chiefly by the Ameer in whom the fever fiercely burns. Once it was all our own. We huddled it to ourselves and were proud and even jealous of it. It was our game. We let it venture forth to our colonies and dependencies. You seized upon it in America. And now it is no longer our own; it belongs to the great world, and different nations are claiming it as theirs. It is doing good. It is not the most insignificant of the forces that are quietly at work for the joining up of the peoples of the earth in a better understanding of each other than there ever has been in the past.

IV

SINCE THOSE thrilling days of 1907 Massy has been tolerably happy and successful. In the next season, when he was the lion of golf, he won many tournaments, those at Blackpool, Turnberry and Pitlochry among them. He was playing so well that when the championship began at Prestwick, Braid, an exceptionally good judge of form and probabilities, told me he feared Massy more than anyone. However he did not become really dangerous for the championship again until 1911, when the long prophesied tie at last took place, the first there had been since Harry Vardon burst upon the world at Muirfield in 1896 and won the championship after playing off with Taylor. It was Vardon again at Sandwich, and Massy was with him, the two having come out on top in that strange scramble at the finish of the fourth round when for an hour or so everybody was bewildered and it seemed that any player of half a dozen or more might win. Ties are poor things; the playing off seems such dead stuff, such a hopeless

sort of anti-climax. It was a weary business watching Massy and Vardon settling the issue between them on the following day, and a more dreary Saturday I have never spent at Sandwich. Both Vardon and Massy themselves seemed sick of it all, and at the beginning of the duel the great Harry showed a most pronounced tendency to slip back to his old fault of missing the very smallest putts, a fault that had cost him some championships in previous years and which had been kept in chains during this week only by the exercise of the greatest determination and will power. It was ominous when he was seen to change his putter once. However he steadied and won. It seemed with Massy that he did not care. He was in a losing position at lunch time, and in the afternoon when the thirty-fourth hole had been played he was, I think seven or eight strokes to the bad. Vardon had done his approaching and putting to the thirty-fifth and Massy went to his ball to give it a run up to the green when an impulse seized him, he turned round suddenly, abandoning the contest, and offered his hand in sincere and cheery congratulations to the conqueror. It was nicely done, in the way of a good sportsman. One quality Massy has in which he cannot be excelled, and it is a valuable attribute. He is a magnificent loser. I know no player who tries so well to win, and, when the effort has failed, seems to derive so much real honest joy from losing because of the happiness that is yielding to his victorious opponent. He enters into that happiness with him, and you can see by the open manner of the man that it is real, that there is no feigning, no hypocrisy. One might make up a list of a hundred fine golfers who would not have yielded to Harry Vardon at the thirty-

fifth hole when playing off a tie for the Open Championship. They would be inclined to grasp hard at the very last chance, however small it might be, and they would play on to the end, even though on going to the last hole they were not eight but eighteen strokes behind. They would hold fast to the great mainstay of the golfer in his trials and tribulations, and they would hope on. They would have a clear justification. They would put it to themselves that still anything might happen—as it had often happened before. Even Harry Vardon has found himself in places his ball in situations that demanded more skill from him than he had available for immediate use. There was possibly one chance in a hundred millions that Vardon might do something unwittingly to break the rules and become disqualified. Or, as the players of this gentle game put it to themselves when the enemy is unsparing, he might drop down dead before the game was ended. The rules make no provision for the death of either of the opponents, but it is assumed that the one who survived would become the winner. Harry Vardon seemed well and strong at the time, and by no means likely to fall seriously ill within the next five minutes. Still, there are men, keen on winning a championship, who would have considered, subconsciously and not seriously perhaps, that with all the other chances that it was their duty to themselves to take, there was this one that at the very last hole the greatest golfer of modern or any other times might suddenly expire. Arnaud Massy treated all these considerations with the finest contempt. He had no use for them, and, viewed aright, it was a pretty compliment that he paid to the great master of the game who had worn him down



Another picture of MASSY at the finish of his drive.

that day, when he abandoned the play, and offered Vardon his hand in token of his belief that on earth there was no power that could make the champion waste eight strokes at one hole, and that if there were he did not wish to see it in execution. Since those days, not so long ago, Massy has been less prominent in the big affairs, for he has suffered somewhat with his eyesight. But he will always be a happy man, and in the peace after the war, as in the peace before it, he will rejoice in the life and golf of his own country, for some time since he moved from Versailles and went back to the south, to the charming course of Nivelles, St. Jean de Luz, one of the finest in all France. Here you see this

man at his best. Let Andrew Kirkaldy, his old comrade at whose expense and to whose face he will make the most terrible jokes, come along from Scotland as he does at times in the dead of winter when the sunshine glows upon and warms all the beautiful country of the Basses Pyrenees, and Massy feels that life has not much more to give. One day when lingering at San Sebastian a kind friend at St. Jean de Luz sent his big car for me over the Pyrenees to Spain and transported me for the day to the banks of the Nivelle for the purpose of taking part in a foursome with Massy and Kirkaldy. If much of the golf was bad the experience was peculiar and interesting—from Spain to France, twice across the frontier, for such a purpose.

V

AND AT THE END, as is our custom, we must consider this good man in a practical sort of way. From his many qualities and characteristics I would select four as being those which have most to do with the strength and attractiveness of his game. They are good style, power, confidence and pretty putting. Massy's style is to a large extent what is embraced in that convenient but much misused term, orthodox. It is free from pronounced peculiarities—no strong mannerisms are attached to it. He conforms to most of the rules, and there is little in his methods that is not to be found in one or other of the great players of the time. He is a driver of the headsman class; all the influence of the east could not make him a flat round-the-body swing. A big man, he is very solid on his feet, and there is less leg and knee movement when he is driving than one commonly associates with the great players. His

wrist work is excellent, and it is believed that he gets in some of it at the top of the swing which is of special service when the ball is being dealt with. So we may say his style is good, even if it is without such artistic grace as belongs to that of Vardon. Massy's physique is not one that lends itself well to the most graceful attitudes, such as inspire emotion in the mind of the aesthetic golfer. Yet again one insists it is a splendid style, and what it loses in art it gains in the fine sense of power well and not clumsily applied. Here you see the big strong man at the game, and yet not hurling himself in the manner of brute force and stupid ignorance at the ball, but deftly, with cunning and calculation, and proper golfing method. It is well done, and it is good to watch.

The confidence is exhibited in his lack of hesitation. He is one of the quickest players we have on the links; I suspect him of being the fastest player who has ever won the championship. He is nearly as fast as George Duncan in some ways, and he is faster than him in others. If you started this pair from the tee together, with a commission to each to play his own ball right round to the eighteenth green, just as he pleased without any waiting for the other man or regard for what he did, I am not sure that the Frenchman would not be the winner, though the multitude would make Duncan favourite at the start. Massy does set such a cracking pace in his marching through the green. Spectators with short breath do not follow him, and when he has hit a long ball from the tee or with his brasse through the green there is nearly three hundred yards of very quick marching to be done by all who are concerned with what is going on.

Some of the people have to do it at the double. That is where Massy gains. On arrival at the ball one good look at it and the situation generally, a taking up of the stance, firmly and definitely with no shifting about of the feet as if in much doubt as to whether all was well, and then, with a very minimum of wagging of the club, away goes the ball, and the quick marching begins again. Here is a fine healthy confidence. It is excellently displayed on the putting greens, where confidence is so rare. Arnaud Massy was never afraid of the hole, and his putting is as beautifully done as ever by any other. He stands with his feet close together, the stance being an open one with the left foot behind the other and the legs hardly bent at all. Using a plain iron putter he swings the club slowly, easily and a full measure of distance back from the ball and goes through with a nice flowing stroke. There is nothing of the hitting or jerking about it. And the result is that not only is his putting generally steady and reliable and excellent, but at the distances of two and three yards I do not believe there is any man playing the game who is so good as he is, and to be good at that distance is an enormous advantage to a man. He who misses putts of a yard must lose holes thereby, but he who holes at two and three yards wins them as the consequence, for the one is the distance at which a man must not fail and the other is that at which he is hardly expected to succeed.

LET US NOW consider a little more in detail some of the points of the teaching of Monsieur Massy as he has presented them to his friends and pupils in France. In the matter of clubs he is a firm believer in simplicity and the medium which is considered



Old friends of the links—MASSY and ANDREW KIRKALDY at Nivelle, St. Jean de Luz.

happy. His driver is a little short of 43 inches and weighs barely 12¼ ounces. It has occurred to me that his wooden clubs are a trifle deep in the face. He believes in the square stance as against the open one, and he does not account it a fault in a man if his right toe should even be the smallest bit of an inch behind the other. He says that many years of watching, trying and thinking have taught him that it is better for the beginner to learn to play from the left foot, having both feet nearly in line with each other or with the right a shade behind the other. But Massy is never dogmatic. One is a little surprised to find that, very modern player as he is considered to be, he is addicted to the two-V grip of the hands on the club, instead of the overlapping one. He and Alec Herd are the only two great professionals of modern times who grasp the handle in this manner. He says that he thinks the overlapping grip presents no substantial advant-

ages over the other, and that it must necessarily be more tiring. Few will agree with him, and I have noted that when it comes to putting, Massy is an overlapper like the rest. He accepts the old axiom that the eye must be kept on the ball, but for his own part he believes that not more than one shot in a hundred is spoiled because of the failure of the player to obey this injunction, the most frequent cause of trouble being movement of the head. He insists, therefore, with all the emphasis at his command, on the golfer practising the preservation of the motionless head while the stroke is being made, agrees that it is not an easy thing to do, and suggests that a good player is badly off form, it will often be found that his trouble is caused through careless ways of head movement into which he has fallen, amounting often to a variation in position of some six inches during the progress of the swing, in which case no good can come from this drive. He also utters a warning against being too soon with the leg movements, especially the bending and twisting that are done at the finishing of the stroke. He is right when he suggests that the player is too much inclined to anticipate in these matters. Like others, he says that the position of the head, body, arms, legs and the entire human arrangement should be precisely the same when the head of the club makes contact with the ball as it was at the moment when the address was made before the swing was begun. That assumption is evidently theoretically sound, it represents the ideal, but the other day I had the opportunity of examining a cinematographic film of Massy making his drive and I found that at the moment of impact his hands were behind to the extent of

four or five inches, late as it were. Here he was carrying out very thoroughly his own precept against being too premature, and of the two things there can be little doubt that a trifle in tardiness is much better. Indeed one suspects many of the best players of it, and, considering the thing in a theoretical way, one might imagine that by this means the follow through is better encouraged. At the same time he is urgent in warning those who seek his advice that, in finishing their swings, there must be no hanging back of the body but that it must go forward with the rest. He thinks that teachers of golf have far too much to say about different ways of mastering wind difficulties, and holds the opinion that it is a mighty wind that does so much as move the ball even two or three yards out of its proper line. He says that it is only on the very rarest occasions that he makes any allowance whatever for wind, or pulls, slices or makes any other modification of his stroke to suit the circumstances. But Massy drives a ball with a low trajectory and it starts rapidly and with a tremendous lot behind it. I think his suggestion about the wind not affecting the drive is somewhat exaggerated, but anyhow it is not so much exaggerated as the ideas of the majority of golfers about the wind playing havoc with their strokes, and the intricate corrections that have to be made in consequence. In most other matters his teaching is of no very exceptional kind. He repeats old maxims, believing in them and acting accordingly.

And so at the end, in wishing good fortune and a safe return to his links by the Nivelle of this good French golfing champion and soldier who is now in the trenches in western France, we will, in saluting him, bring

his own excellent exclamation quite up to date. The *entente cordiale* is no longer. It has advanced to the ultimate stage. So now, my dear Massy, we will shout with you *Vive la Grande Alliance!*

(Next—Mr. Jerome D. Travers.)

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