GOLF CLUBS AND HOW TO USE THEM

BY EDWARD RAY

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PREFACES are often boring, and so very seldom touch upon real issues, that I make no apology for the brevity of mine to this work. But, I would like to emphasize that when all our leading authorities on the orthodox in golf disagree here and there in little matters, then surely the unorthodox golfer is entitled to his opinion or opinions. Suffice it to say that I never was orthodox even as a small boy in Jersey, and one may say that either because of, or despite, this persistence of mine in keeping away from stereotyped golfing methods, I have attained a small measure of success in that Royal and Ancient game.

On each of my tours in America, and very often in this country, I have been asked how I accounted for a player of my style—a style in many ways breaking the canons of golf—achieving success now and then, and I have invariably indulged in the Caledonian characteristic of answering one question by asking another: "How do you think I would fare were I to drop my present style?"
GOLF CLUBS
AND HOW TO USE THEM

CHAPTER I

MISTAKEN IMPRESSIONS OF BEGINNERS

No doubt when the man who has never played golf in his life sees an expert for the first time, he is struck mostly by the apparent simplicity of the game, and times out of number I have heard great exponents of other ball games argue that a game in which the ball is stationary must be much more simple than games in which a moving ball has to be dealt with. But it is a singular fact that of all the Masters we have had of golf, there never has been one who did not have his little mental trials on top of his little golfing mistakes. There are styles among our leaders almost too numerous to think of. We have the "Sandy" Herd type of player who is almost mentally argumentative in the studiousness of his play, and we have the cold and calculating Braid. We have the express-like George Duncan, and we have the dogged
J. H. Taylor. Ask any one of these players if he has ever played a round in which everything to a detail went just as he had wished it to go, and I am afraid that the answer will come as a rude shock to the fellow who sneers at golf simply because there is employed in the game a ball which has to be stationary before being manipulated.

When the beginner first takes a tangible enthusiasm in the game one can assuredly reckon that his chief difficulty will be in the matter of the choice of clubs.

One huge mistake must be avoided, and that is the error of going on and on until you have a bag so full of clubs that you cannot get the proverbial cigarette paper into it. Do not worry if the champion of your county insists upon having a score of clubs wherever he goes, and always remember that one good club in which you feel that you have confidence is worth three clubs concerning each of which you are in doubt as to comparative merit. More than once I have observed a golfing beginner stroll out upon the course and proceed to foozle effort after effort. In turn he has gone from one club to another, and each time with the same miserable result, and the net effect upon him at the conclusion of his round has been acute wonder why he has not done better. The root of the trouble was the over-supply of clubs.

BEGINNERS' MISTAKEN IMPRESSIONS

What is the correct number of clubs for the novice? I would answer, Seven. This number provides for most situations which are likely to arise in a round on an ordinary course, and at the same time gives the young golfer an opportunity of studying the different duties and capabilities of his implements. Such clubs as the spoon, the driving mashie, the mashie iron, may safely be left alone for a little time, and when confidence has asserted itself, the "in between" clubs, as one may term them, may be included in your bag.

MY OWN CLUB STOCK

I myself use four wooden clubs, a cleek, a driving iron, an iron, a mashie, a niblick, and a putter, but I would advise the beginner to confine himself to seven clubs, their classification being—driver, brassy, cleek, mashie, iron, niblick, and putter.
CHAPTER V

GOLF BALLS

The question of the golf ball has loomed large for a very considerable time previous to my writing this book. The feeling seemed in some quarters to be that the time had come when driving had reached such a stage that something had to be done in order to reduce the length of the drive of first-class men, and thereupon came a great campaign for what some were pleased to call the standard ball. The small and heavy ball had crept into popularity and with practically all the golfers in the United Kingdom and elsewhere using it the time seemed ripe to introduce legislation good, bad, or indifferent, in the matter of golf balls. Really the gist of the new idea was that driving must be reduced in length. It did not matter how far the first-class golfers might be penalized; the whole solution it was said lay in the introduction of the light and floating ball. No need for me now to recount the awful furore with which the proposition was received, and to an extent I can well understand it. Truly, as one very well-known amateur expressed himself on the situation, it would have been just as feasible to bring about legislation which would count two strokes to the man who holed a three-yard putt instead of one stroke as we have been accustomed to for so many years. The proposition could only have a more or less hostile reception, and I myself consider that the golf ball which some authorities would force on to the golfing community will have a short career.

Not only among professionals but among amateurs the small and heavy ball was favourite, and when the new ball was recently introduced to the public it did not have the commendation of more than five per cent of the golfers of this country. To be quite candid I cannot give the large and floating ball my support, and I am unable to see that either the beginner or long-handicap man can be helped one whit by the ball which was brought out in the year 1921 amidst much ceremony if not acclamation.

As a matter of fact had it been really desirable to keep driving within certain limits I think it would have been much better to have adopted another and much more simple course. With the ball which had been in general use I fail to understand how with the same materials in use as had been used for many years the driving of even our best men on the tee could have length-
we have known it for a long time is as near perfection as it is to be got, and the difference between one and another is infinitesimal if one takes the dozen best-known brands.

Now and then one hears academic discussions as to the dimple ball, the Bramble ball, and the mesh ball, but to be quite candid I fail to see that the average golfer need seriously trouble himself as to which ball he uses—if only he be left to use the small and heavy ball.

I quite agree that there have been great changes in the golf ball here and there in the past. I also agree that the introduction of the Haskell ball some twenty years ago practically revolutionized the golf ball market, but I do not think that anyone will gainsay the fact that the ball which we know to-day is a better ball for the beginner, the moderate-handicap man, the long-handicap man, and the plus man, than has ever been on the market, and moreover is a ball which is very unlikely to be improved upon if golf be played from now until the crack of doom.

Having said unhesitatingly that I have no affection for the large and floating ball, I may safely leave the subject of the golf ball. There are on the market varieties of the golf ball the names of which would occupy many pages in this book, and when all is said and done the problem as to which is the best ball for a given player to use reduced itself to a mere matter of opinion. Especially in the case of the beginner the topic of what ball he should use may safely be left out of any discussion. The golf ball as
CHAPTER VI

THE DRIVE THE IMPORTANT STROKE

Opinions differ as to which is the most important of golfing strokes, and despite the arguments which have taken place regarding this subject, I, as might be expected, will plump for driving. J. H. Taylor has made himself world famous by reason of his approach play, and it is not more than a few months ago that his opinion concerning the value of the pitch as opposed to the run-up formed the point of a terrific controversy. Yet again, Willie Park, formerly of Musselburgh, and now stationed in the United States, has placed putting first as the prime necessity for the man who would show golfing prowess.

I will analyse it this way. You cannot putt well unless you have approached well, and you cannot approach well if your drive has not been a good one.

If a man is going to cultivate a good swing, he must begin slowly. Imagine a man who has decided, or has had it decided for him, that as a runner he is a quarter-miler. Does his tutor allow him at first to go away at break-neck speed and then do the last hundred and fifty yards in a state of semi-blindness? Not at all! And the same thing applies to the man who, beginning with the rudiments of golf, sets out to get a correct swing. I have in mind one player who for six months from the time of his first taking up golf was not allowed to look at a golf ball. Day after day this pupil had to swing at an imaginary ball, while his tutor adjusted his fingers, moved first one foot and then the other a fraction of an inch, set one shoulder a quarter of an inch in advance of the other, and so on. I grant that this treatment is a trifle drastic, and not every man has the time, or the moral courage, to swing at a ball that is not there for three or four hours a day, seven days a week, for six months. Yet the man tells me that he is now plus four, so I suppose that there was method in what some people may uncharitably term madness.
CHAPTER VII

DRIVING PITFALLS

An uncomfortable feeling is sometimes experienced by the golfer regarding his driving. After a period of strict attention to his play on the tee, he finds that he can only attain a length of between one hundred and fifty and one hundred and eighty yards. His aspirations, of course, are much in excess of that distance, and a feeling of annoyance comes along with the almost inevitable result that for a time at least his driving powers go to the winds. That is the time when the "slowly back" idea is forgotten, and that precisely is the time when it should be most kept in mind. A disjointed and hasty swing back is simply a useless expenditure of energy, and, in strict fact, adds nothing in the way of merit to the down swing. Indeed, it would not be going too far to say that anything like a jerk in the back swing is going to have an effect on the drive which is derogatory and nothing else. It entails a strain on the lower part of the forearm which is not for the improvement of one's game, and, altogether, hurry or any semblance of hurry in the upward part of the swing is something which if once cultivated it is as well as early as possible to be rid of.

Opinions may differ as to the method, but it is beyond argument that on the down swing force and speed are essential, which fact is proved up to the hilt by a casual glance at the methods of such players as Abe Mitchell, James Batley, or myself.

It is here that I would call attention to the problem of timing, and probably that is one of the most important points in the art of long driving. The finest example of timing that I have seen exists in the wooden club play of J. H. Kirkwood, the Australian and New Zealand Open Champion, who visited Britain in 1921. This Antipodean expert uses clubs which contain an inordinate amount of the "whippy" element, and he is one of the few golfers I have seen who have adapted themselves to their clubs rather than procure clubs which suited their play. It may be that a fractional error in the case of Kirkwood would lead to trouble of the most dire order, but the fact remains that he contrives to avoid error with his wooden clubs, and very successfully. That is the result of good timing.

It really does not matter a great deal if one chooses to use the full swing which is characteristic of my own play, or whether one chooses to do
away with the follow through as in the style of Abe Mitchell—the thing is to get accurate hitting and hitting of useful length in a style which will suit the individual golfer. As I have already suggested, I lay no claim to being what is known as a stylist, and perhaps for that reason I am inclined to be a little sympathetic towards the peculiarities of human nature and the vagaries of the human frame.

Something like the idea to aim at in getting a lengthy drive is this: the club is controlled from the wrists, the part of the arm from the wrists to the elbows, from the joints just named, and the arms swing from the shoulders. The body must move as if dependent for its movements on the spine. At the same time these movements must be gone through without too much relationship between each, and the net effect must be that a concentration in their effects should accrue at the crucial moment. That moment is at the exact time when the club-head meets the ball. If anything goes wrong in the manoeuvre which I have endeavoured to describe, your timing is inaccurate and the pure result is what is known as pressing.

In his first few essays at length the player in executing his drive may be tempted to impart too much speed to the commencement of his downward swing, and that temptation in most cases arises from a sort of horror that time has been lost in the slow up-swing. If that error be fallen into that small fault will lead to a conglomeration of faults, and that mixture of faults will end in a drive which will not, to say the least, give the player cause for congratulation. It is not at the top of the swing that pace and force are required, but, as I have already said, at the point of the swing when the club-head strikes the ball. Anything in the nature of hurried force at the top of the swing is entirely out of place. Rather let the club begin the down swing with a nice easy movement, and then all the way in its passage to the ball let it increase in its velocity.

Should the elbows and wrists come into operation after the forearms have done their task the hands will get in front of the ball in a most undesirable way, and, in fact, will be in front of the ball before the club comes in contact with it.

Now we come to the question of body-work in the drive, and here I know that I am discoursing on a topic which will cause much comment; but, yet again as I have already said, I never was orthodox and I am afraid never will be. Those who have witnessed my play have doubtless noticed that in my up-swing my body has a tendency to sway from the target and then in turn it moves in the direction of the ball in the down swing. But, to be quite candid, I
would scarcely advise the inexperienced golfer to start emulating me in this respect as there are little points upon which he might go wrong. By far better let him wait until he has mastered the more academic items and then study the matter of sway.

Fairly free pivoting is essential in the first sway, and as the club advances and the forward movement of the body is evident, a slight turn on the ball of the left foot is advisable, the turn culminating in a sort of pointing of the left foot in the direction of the drive. By that means one will achieve a sort of rhythm and ease.

It has been suggested to me sometimes that my somewhat extraordinary build is everything in my driving, and though perhaps it may truthfully be said that my fairly bulky proportions do play a part in my driving, it would be a mistake to say that they entirely govern it. Though it is conceded by many that build does count in long driving, an argument I agree with to an extent, it must be kept in mind that there are players of comparatively small build who can get prodigious length from the tee, and here I have in mind the well-known Ben Sayers, senr., of North Berwick. This little man, who is merely a shade over five feet in height, uses clubs which do not compare too unfavourably with himself in the matter of length, and he achieves a length which is positively astounding to anyone watching him for the first time. Yet again he is unorthodox in his way much as I am in mine. His is a case where timing has been reduced to a fine art, and I suppose that just as it would be unsuitable for me to attempt to follow out the finer theories which have been advocated by our great professors for many years, so it would be correspondingly unsuitable for Sayers to endeavour to play golf on the more accepted lines. The point of this is that the average golfer who reads books on the Royal and Ancient Game scarcely ever hopes to be a Harry Vardon, and I have tried to write as far as possible with the average handicap and low-handicap man in mind.

Even among men of something like ordinary physique one finds little peculiarities in style too numerous and too varied to recount, and I have in mind at the moment the flourish in the swing of Arnaud Massy. One can perceive an element almost of the impetuous in George Duncan’s style, and despite all that has been written for years and years there is no gainsaying the fact that each and every golfer in the front rank, whether he be amateur or professional, has his own little way. Therefore, in explaining how I manage to get a fairly lengthy drive I do not insist that the student of the game shall follow me in every little detail. I ask him to employ common sense here and there according to his own build, his own weight, and other considerations.
CHAPTER IX

THE GRIP QUESTION

IT seems to me that now that I have dealt with the driver and the brassy the moment is opportune for the introduction of the question of the grip. In Britain, in America, in Australia, in India, and in South Africa the problem of the grip has excited controversy almost beyond measure, and when the most prominent American players, amateurs and professionals, arrived in England in the beginning of the golfing season of 1921, the query raised by more than five people out of ten was as to whether Mr. "Bobby" Jones kept his thumb down the shaft, as to whether Mr. ("Siege Gun") Jesse Guildford used the overlapping grip at all, etc.

At this time of day it is apparent that the majority of golfers are in favour of the overlapping grip, even though such experts as Mr. Harold H. Hilton and Mr. Sidney H. Fry recommend a separation of the hands on the grip of the shaft. Naturally when Mr. Hilton, the former Amateur and Open Champion, and

Mr. Fry, the one time runner-up in the Amateur Championship, have expressed sentiments which go against the use of the overlapping grip, less important people in golf may be pardoned if they oppose each other in their views on this question, but, as I say, it really would appear as if within the next few years practically every golfer of note will be using the overlapping grip. At the same time it must be kept in mind that even in the overlapping grip there are little points of difference among first-class golfers, and my own method is to point my right thumb directly down the shaft instead of slightly curling it round the leather grip. A good hold of the club by the fingers of the left hand is advisable with, of course, the left thumb uppermost. The right-hand fingers should encircle the shaft so that the little finger holds the left forefinger, the left thumb being completely covered by the ball of the right thumb. Some players prefer to have the right thumb round the shaft, but the essential point is to have the two hands working in concert as far as can be.

One point which to my mind is in favour of the pointing of the right thumb down the shaft is that should the player unconsciously allow the club to drift to an unhealthy extent across the right shoulder at the top of the swing, the placing of the right thumb as I advocate has a tendency towards preventing the evil becoming accentuated
in such a manner as to prove a deterrent factor. Of course it would be idle to aver that it is an utter impossibility for the club to wander in the way described whilst keeping the thumb down the shaft, but what I will say is this, That if you keep the thumb down the shaft you will very soon know if you are allowing the club to drop.

With the right thumb round the grip of the shaft it is always possible for the shaft to slip between the forefinger and the thumb, and once that contingency arises, well, there is no grip at all. If your grip is not correct your swing will be very short of perfection, and if your swing is imperfect, then your golfing effort will be nothing to be proud of.

I have known instances of players who have held the club in a finger grip at the commencement of the swing, but before the swing has gone very far the grip of the club has been in the palm, and one thing is certain, that if at the top of the swing the palms of the hands leave the shaft, the swing and the grip ought to be fairly good.

Never could I see the truth of the assertion made in days gone by with reference to a strong grip with the left hand and a loose grip with the right; if the intention is for both hands to work together, logically an equal grip should be taken in order to get this effect.

Those who have witnessed my play will doubtless have in mind the fact that I more or less hold my club on the putting green in a similar manner to that in which I hold my other clubs, but I will not be so egotistical as to lay it down that my way is the best way. Putting is a department of golf which stands out from other departments, and I am sure that so great is the diversity of opinion on all matters pertaining to putting that only a very small percentage of the readers of this book will follow me literally. Still, if on account of what I have written on the question of the grip—whether the reader agrees with me in every detail or only in one or two—the golfing student finds that his game has been improved, it will have been well worth my while going into explanation of the grip.
CHAPTER XI

CLUBS AND THEIR PECULIARITIES

I n dealing with the various clubs which go to make the complement of a well-stocked bag, let me remark at the outset that a well-stocked bag means adequacy; it does not mean immensity. The man who travels round the links with a score or so of clubs is not likely to improve his game so expeditiously or so thoroughly as the man who sets out to master the mysteries of, say, half a dozen. I am writing for the novice now. I do not propose to offer advice to those players who know what to do with every club, for they are well enough versed in the matter to do without such advice. The novice, however, is like the young scholar; his mind is pliable, and he is prepared to listen to the suggestions of experience.

There are two distinct and diametrically opposed methods of learning the use of clubs; the first is to take one club at a time and practise assiduously with it; the other is to play willy-nilly, and wait for the occasion to use any club
in the bag. The first is undoubtedly the wiser course. I am not at all sure that the reduction of a handicap is the desired end of every golfer, but even if it is, it should be a corollary instead of an aim; it should follow on natural improvement and be accepted as a reward therefor. How many times do we see golfers floundering about on the links with not the slightest sign that they will ever improve. They merely have a club and a ball—one might better describe them as a bat and a ball—and they are merely concerned with the task of "gaining on the hole." Their ball bounds over the ground like a spring rabbit; their club swings jauntily and unrhythmically in the air, but they are content because they are getting nearer the hole. That is not golf, that is merely outdoor and healthful exercise, and it is also a nuisance to other occupants of the links.

It is my object here to point out the special, the allotted tasks of the clubs, and in doing so, let me say that clubs are designed for the work required of them. One big mistake made by beginners is that of trying to assist the club too much. Give them a lofted club and they will try all they know to accentuate the loft by trying to slide under the ball. Let the club and the ingenuity of the club maker do the work. Time enough to learn about the vagaries of backspin, top-spin and other fancy strokes, when the straightforward game has improved. Golf is like billiards in this respect. The novice, in each game, tries to run before he has learned to walk. At golf, he tries fancy shots, at billiards he is imbued with the presumed necessity of getting "side." Hit straight, hit clean and strive for the poetry of motion with each and all of your clubs.

THE DRIVER

Let us take a metaphoric walk round the links with a man who seeks information in regard to the clubs which he has purchased and which he proudly displays in a brand new bag. The very newness of his equipment suggests the tyro, and it is the tyro that I want to suggest. Well, he takes his driver at the first tee and, of course, he starts with an exaggerated waggle, a most clumsy stance, heaving shoulders—and a surprising miss. That is where the tutor comes in to show him the error of his ways. The novice having amazed himself by missing the ball altogether is in better humour to listen to real advice. Well, we place our novice in what is more or less the right position. We give him a nice open stance, tell him how to hold the club and generally teach him orthodoxy tempered by his own natural comfort. It is no use telling a man to adopt a stance which is uncomfortable,
CLUBS AND THEIR PECULIARITIES

More than any other club it should "suit" its owner and nobody can tell the owner much about this. In every sport there is an affinity between man and his equipment. A cricketer will feel at home immediately he gets hold of a bat which suits him, the mere "feel" tells him everything. The lawn-tennis player knows in an instant when he has found the right racket, and similarly the golfer is told by "love at first sight" which is the club for him. He can consider the merits or otherwise of whippiness and "head load" when he is really a golfer.

The foregoing is not intended to be a technical commentary on the driver, but merely such assistance as I can offer towards that glorious feeling which is second to nothing at golf—the feeling which is exclusively the novice's, when he hears the crack of a well and truly driven ball.

THE BRASSY

Next among the orthodox clubs—and I am excluding qualified weapons such as spoons, baffies, etc.—is the brassy. The brassy is, in my opinion, the most difficult of all the clubs for the beginner. It has almost the length of shaft of the driver which it closely resembles except for its being shod with brass and that its face is deliberately lofted. The brassy is the
reward for a well-hit tee shot on a true course for it should be usable with a ball lying on the fairway. There are times when the ball irritatingly digs in and prevents the unfortunate golfer from using wood, but, as a general rule, the well driven ball at a two shot hole, permits the use of the brassy for the second shot. The brassy should be laid closely to the back of the ball in order that it may be ascertained whether the lie is suited to the club. If there is any doubt—if it seems that the brassy cannot get to the back of the ball, put it back in the bag and take an iron club. The remarks which I have made concerning the driver very largely apply to the brassy, although in modified form. The great endeavour with the brassy should be direction and not distance. Distance will come of its own accord, but the ball will only go where you hit it, subject to such matters as assistance or hinderance from windage. The man who can play a brassy well is at a big advantage among long-handicap players, wherefore it is sound advice to advocate concentration on brassy shots as part of the training.

THE CLEEK

The cleek is a club which has fallen into disrepute because of the many alternative clubs which have been created for the benefit of those players who just cannot play the cleek. This club will give you almost as much distance as the brassy if it is used properly, and it permits more accuracy in direction. It is a club which is intended for getting length and therefore comes in the classification of “full-swing clubs.” It may be used where the ball does not lie sufficiently high to permit of the brassy being taken, but the cleek should not be used—as it often is used—when there is a lot of growth to be cut through before the ball can be touched. There are not many courses in the vicinity of London which allow very many opportunities of the brassy being played, and it is therefore not surprising that we find the metropolitan golfer, as a rule, more adept with the cleek than are golfers who habitually play on courses which do not call for goloshes in the winter. The cleek should be taken right through the ball and the finish should be similar to those which obtain with wooden clubs. The cleek will never perform its allotted task when it is permitted to stab the ball and then dig into the ground.

IRONS

There are many irons with all sorts of lofts on their blades and they suit so many occasions that their employment must of necessity be inspired by local conditions. It is but natural
that the greater the loft of the blade the less is the potential driving power of the club, the loft being there to give height at the expense of distance. They are usually heavy enough however to carry the ball further than mashie distance. They form an endless variety of clubs with little that is consistent about them, either in regard to blade or shaft and they may be purchased with one eye on the "feel" and another on the course over which they will mainly be played.

THE MASHIE

The mashie is, to my mind, the master club of them all. It calls for super-accuracy, and is used over varying distances from a few yards to a hundred and twenty yards or so.

There is no prettier shot in golf than the hundred yards approach, in which the ball, describing a lofty parabola falls neatly on to the green, and, with a little run, stays within holing distance. It is a mashie shot. Efficiency with the mashie means much, for the well-played approach may save a shot or two at any hole. The average novice does not take sufficient care with his mashie. It is easy to hit the ball with this club, but it is not so easy to do the right thing with it. Anybody can address a ball with

CLUBS AND THEIR PECULIARITIES

a short-shafted club and get it away somewhere, but there is more real finesse and more ingenuity associated with the mashie than with any other club. He who is tolerably sure of getting his ball on to the green from any distance upwards of fifty yards is a man to fear in club competitions. He is a terror who can make amends for bad shots up to "mashie play."

THE NIBLICK

The niblick invariably means trouble, for it is used in connexion with recoveries very considerably. When you are bunkered and a sandy sea surrounds your ball—it is the niblick that is wanted. When your ball is nearly unplayable, it is the niblick which is called upon to extricate it. The niblick is also a useful club for pitching on to the green from short range, since it is possible to impart considerable "stop" with the deep-faced club. The niblick is a club which should not be wanted very often, but when it is, is wanted mighty badly. It becomes acquainted with most of the hazards on its owner's links, and it is sometimes used with more vigour than any of its bag mates. Poor long-suffering niblick!
THE PUTTER

The putter is the Machiavellian member of the club party. It is the simplest of them all, it is the most abused of them all, and it is the most irritating of them all. It is the stroke-waster-in-chief, and it defies all the attempts of its wielder to sink the ball at such times as one's putting is off. What more nerve-racking than to beat your opponent all the way to the green, to be stroke up within a yard and then to see a piffling little putt send the ball round the lip of the hole. There is no cure for bad putting other than that which lies in the hands of the man himself. It is of no use to tell anybody to take a different stance, to hold his club lower, to look at the hole when hitting the ball or to do one or other of the thousand things which long suffering stroke-wasters have suggested. Hit boldly and give the hole a chance—m'yes. But it is daring to hit boldly when the green is like a sheet of glass and the slightest blow sends the little white chief scuttling madly beyond. Master your putter or it will master you, but as to how you may do this—I wish I knew. Just get out on to the greens and practise; and let the inspiration come to you as and when it may.

There are many other clubs which I have not dealt with at all because they need not concern

the man who is starting out on his golfing career. He will find more than enough to get along with in the straightforward implements referred to above.

THE REPAIR OF CLUBS

Prevention is better than cure, and that applies in the matter of the players' clubs, as much as it does to anything else, and, in the first place, it is "up to" the amateur to see that his clubs are of the proper kind. I mean that there are a great many clubs bought in retail shops and warehouses, in various towns and cities, and I have known of a huge number of cases where the implement has practically had to be rebuilt by the club professional, sometimes by alteration of the face, and sometimes by other means. As a piece of advice, I would only suggest that the amateur, in buying his clubs, should at any rate have the advice of his club professional, and if he does that he may be enabled to avoid expending more money on his clubs so that they are worthy of an attempt to play golf with.

Another point which I would press home is that the player should, after he has been using his wooden clubs on wet courses, take them to his professional to have them re-filed, so that
they may get a proper grip on the ball. The player may then observe for himself how the professional files the club, as, in the event of the golfer slicing or pulling, a great deal can be done in the filing of the club to counteract the pull or the slice.

Should the golfer break his club, or even partially break the shaft at the socket, he should either have a new head fitted or a new shaft entirely, as it is quite possible that there will be a certain weakness in the neck of the club, which may very easily cause a twist at the moment of impact with the ball, this, in turn, being the cause of a great many faults,—causing the player to slice or pull in, to him, a most mysterious way.

I have already dealt with the importance of having a good grip fitted to your club, and I would emphasize here that it is utterly essential that the golfer get a firm and a good grip if he expects to play good shots.

In the event of the lead in the club-head becoming loose, see that the club is taken to the professional's shop to be re-filed at once, and I would also advise the player who wishes his club re-weighted, say by half an ounce, to have the lead inserted at the sole of the club, and slightly to the heel side of the centre. This, I maintain, gives a better balance than otherwise, while, to revert for a moment in club filing, the operation should result in the centre of the bulge being slightly to the toe side of the actual centre of the face.

Finally, I would advocate the periodical taking of the clubs to the professional for overhaul, so that he may varnish or polish the shafts, for many a time and oft have I seen good clubs go to wreck and ruin simply through sheer inattention.
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