Mr. F. G. Tait, at Finish of Swing.
THE BOOK OF GOLF AND GOLFERS

BY

HORACE G. HUTCHINSON

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY

MISS AMY PASCOE

H. H. HILTON, J. H. TAYLOR, H. J. WHIGHAM

AND

MESSRS SUTTON & SONS

WITH 72 PORTRAITS

NEW IMPRESSION

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PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION

It may well be said that of the making of books about golf there is no end, that we have had enough of them—maybe too many—already. Partly that is true, and partly it is on account of its truth that the writer ventures to essay yet another book on the great and inexhaustible subject. It is not because it is inexhaustible that this book commends itself to the indulgence of the public, but partly because so much has been said about golf in so many books, so that it seemed time for some book to pick and steal from all these diverse sources and gather grain into one book; and partly, this book is inspired—let no one rashly cavil at the term, for there are founts of inspiration both celestial and the reverse—by a desire to set forth golf 'as she is played' under a new guise—not aiming at the purely didactic ends of elementary instruction which are the professed aims of several previously published volumes, but rather aiming to set before the world a gallery of golfing pictures, exhibiting eminent players engaged in those strokes which seem to be most characteristic and to have served them best in attaining that eminence. From a study of these pictures, and from the observations that the writer has permitted himself thereon, it is to be hoped that both instruction and amusement—
Sandford-and-Merton-like phrase!—may be reaped; for if we can find out exactly how it is that these eminent fellows arrived at their elevation, what in the world is to prevent our joining them there?

A goodly portion of the book is thus occupied. For the rest we are indebted for most valuable assistance, first, in courtesy, to Miss Pascoe; and in this regard let a word be said to those golfers of the Tory school who object ‘on principle’ to ‘women on the links.' Their objection, according to their lights, is a perfectly sound one. It is their lights that lead them astray. These lights seem to show them woman on the links as a talkative, irresponsible person, without real knowledge of the game or real interest in it, treating the solemn matter as if it were a mere affair of a game of croquet at a garden party. This may have been the light in which women on the links really appeared in the generation of the Tory golfer; but that generation is passing away, and being succeeded by another in which woman yields nothing in golfing interest and knowledge to the most crusted golfer of the other sex. Her enthusiasm even passes his; she is as keen and alert in regard to every point of the game as any male golfer ever can be, and in point of execution she is often quite the equal of some of those who would have her removed from the green. As for talking or moving ‘on the stroke,’ such an enormity is quite unthinkable for her. In fine, she is capable of being as good a golfer, in the most complete sense of the phrase, as any man.

Appearing, therefore, in this new light she has no need to ask for sufferance, she has only to claim her right to play on the links with the best. If she be not as long a driver as some men we know, she is at least as long as many of those
that are described as 'good partners in a foursome,' and she is herself often as 'good a partner in a foursome' as any of her critics. With this justification, therefore—it would be incorrect and impertinent to speak of it as an apology—the chapter on ladies at golf may safely stand on its own merits. It is only to open the Tory eye to the dawn of the new light that the justification is necessary—certainly not that the golfing ladies' cause, through any weakness of its own, requires it.

The merits and qualifications of the writers who have aided in this work are too well known to need more than the barest mention. Miss Pascoe is a late winner of the ladies' championship. Mr. Hilton has twice won the open championship, which only one other amateur has ever won. Taylor has also twice won this great distinction, twice in succession; and in the third successive year was only beaten by Harry Vardon after a tie. Mr. Whigham is ex-amateur champion of the United States, though by birth and golfing education a true Scot, and if the opinions of those who have proved their worth in golf so fully as these have proved it are not worth hearing, for whose opinion shall we wait?

It may be said that there is too much of England and too little of Scotland in this book of Scotland's national game—that it is mainly English, whereas it should be mainly Scotch—only one Scotsman, indeed, bearing a hand in it, and his handiwork dealing with American, rather than British, golf. But this is surely rather narrow criticism. We of England are very ready to subscribe ourselves British rather than English, embracing Scotland with a good heart—we are all grateful to Scotland for giving us her game; we have no national jealousy in the matter. Why should
she? Has she? We believe not. It is not Scotsmen, but only those who take on themselves, with little right, to speak for Scotsmen that would claim it for her.

An apology we do owe to America for the comparatively brief notice of her golf—a notice that we cannot admit to be inadequate in kind, but only in degree inadequate—altogether too meagre, and in point of length quite unworthy of its subject. Unfortunately our own selfish British point of view has engrossed us so as to leave only too few pages for the golf in the States, to which we should have wished to devote many more. An apology is all that we can offer. It is our loss, rather than America's, that we have not space to repair the deficiency.

Messrs. Sutton & Sons, the celebrated seedsmen of Reading, have been kind enough to write a chapter on the proper treatment and laying out of greens on different soils, with the different grass seeds appropriate to each, and possibly J. H. Taylor's chapter on practical club-making will turn the thoughts of many to the advantage and interest of making their own clubs.

H. G. H.

March 1899.
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attempt strokes which, although I knew them to be possible
some years back, I never then attempted, as the general
standard of play did not call for such risks to be taken;
unconsciously this latent talent is unearthed by that spirit of
 emulation which is caused by increased competition. That
the standard of play has improved during the past five years I
feel certain, and I am equally positive that the standard was
higher then than it was ten years previously, as my memory
serves me that far. Unfortunately, I cannot hark back to the
days of Allan Robertson, nor even to the days of Young Tom,
but if the standard was as high as it is at the present moment
the records of the past certainly do not show it.

A FEW THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING

After giving a club a fair trial, and finding that it does not
suit you, keep it not; it will only cause trouble and vexation
of spirit. Happier is the golfer who has four clubs that suit
him, than he who has forty which do not.

Always practise with the club which supplies the weakest
part of your game; the natural inclination is to sally forth
and knock the ball about with the club which gives you most
satisfaction. Familiarity breeds contempt, and it is not
improbable that you may become too familiar with that club;
and there is no greater enemy to combat in the game than
broken confidence. Try to strengthen the weak part of your
game, the strong part will look after itself if not abused.

Try to get the grips on the handles of your clubs some-
what of a similar thickness—that is, as far as the balance of
the different clubs will allow. Habit is a great factor in golf,
and sensitive hands are apt to resent a sudden change in
grips.

Habitual golfers should never neglect their hands—a stitch
in time is worth nine, and a cracked hand is difficult to heal.
After a hard day’s play, sore hands can readily be relieved by
a free application of vaseline, glycerine, or any similar sub-
stance. Skin does not crack when soft and pliable, it only cracks when hard and dry; and this fact very few golfers appear to realise, their main object being to harden their hands—a fatal mistake.

Don't oil the shafts of your clubs immediately after they have received a severe soaking. Oil will keep moisture out, but it will also keep moisture in; and, being kept in, it is apt to rot the shafts.

When playing a foursome, do not remind your partner about his bad strokes until the game is over. You may rest assured that he did not foозle the ball on purpose; and even a gentle reminder is only apt to increase his anxiety, and you never know when you may be guilty of a similar error. An anxious player never makes a good foursome partner; he only irritates both himself and his partner, and irritation is fatal to successful combination.

A change in putters is often beneficial. Good putting is mainly the result of confidence, and broken confidence is often more disastrous than no confidence at all. Do not necessarily desert your favourite putter altogether, but carry a spare putter if the size of your bag will allow it; and if your trusty friend deserts you, have resort to the alien and stranger. The immediate result may not be beneficial, but it may have the result of restoring your confidence when you take the old weapon in hand again.

When playing a match, do not watch your opponent too closely. Play your own game and let him play his. His good strokes are apt to have a demoralising effect on your own play, and his bad strokes are conducive to a feeling of over-confidence or carelessness, both of which are fatal.
sufficient emphasis. Careless practice is worse than none, and it is impossible to be keen and careful when both muscle and eye are wearied. More than this, it may be said that carefulness without keenness is a human impossibility. The carefulness to which you force yourself is not true spontaneous carefulness; it is only a keen zest in your work that can make you truly and usefully careful. And this keen zest you cannot feel when your muscles are weary of their work and do not execute it gladly.

Therefore, so soon as you feel your practice work wearisome, drop it. Try a few approach shots, as a change, for practice in this can never come amiss; then take your weaver's beam again—the driver, brassy, or whatever it may be.

Again, in practice with these longer clubs, always aim at a mark. The driving into empty space may help you to a correct and free swing, but it will encourage you in an objectless way of driving, with too little regard of the ultimate fate of the ball. In the match this will not do, and there is no reason that the freedom of the swing should be lost because you have a care for the direction also. Take a bush, a tuft of grass, the brow of a hill—anything you please—on the line, and try to drive to, or over, that. Otherwise, if you content yourself with driving, merely driving, without thought of the direction, you may find yourself, when you come to important business in the match, hitting your ball well and freely may be, but constantly either to right or left of the proper line—a revelation which is very apt to be disconcerting, and so to undo the good benefit that should be your possession by virtue of your practice shots.

In your preliminary canter—the practice strokes previous to the commencement of a match—on a windy day, you will do well to test your driving both down the wind and against. You will be required to face both alternatives in course of the round, and it is as well to make sure that in both cases you are master of the circumstances before becoming involved in
them with great issues depending. A false step or two is very likely to occur while you are getting into your stride, and it is far better to execute these preliminary faux pas in practice than when the actual match is in full progress.

When you are at practice is the time to think of your form, of the how your shots are to be played, of the correct attitude, and of the correct swing. When you come to the stern business of the match, you ought not to have to bother yourself about these little details—about the petty means—you ought to have an open mind to concentrate on the great ends—namely, the ball and the hole. If you are then thinking too much about the grip, the stance, and the rest of the fifty-two elements that are commonly said to go to making up the perfect golfing swing, you are very apt to lose sight of the ball, to lose sense of the right timing of the stroke, and to miss the great and never to be recovered psychological moment at which you can strike the ball with confidence of success. This matter of 'timing' the stroke is one that is not sufficiently considered by the golfing instructors. They teach the correct way of making the club describe the correct circle or ellipse, but they generally do not dwell quite enough on the necessity of making the moment that club and ball meet the culminating point of the whole business—the point at which the greatest effort is to be exerted by the striker, the point at which the club-head is to travel with the greatest speed. Cricketers understand the timing theory, and appreciate it, better than golfers. They know that no hit ill-timed can drive the ball well, no matter what muscular effort is expended, and that a well-timed stroke of half the force will drive the ball more satisfactorily than an ill-timed one delivered with twice the energy. No doubt the necessity of accurate timing is brought more forcibly home to the cricketer by the fact that he has to deal with a moving ball, but it is scarcely less important for the golfer if he is to drive the ball perfectly. After a certain point, strength becomes a factor in the length of drive, but it is only after the point has been
passed at which practice has taught the hitting of the ball in the right way and with the right sense of time.

Instructors have every reason for not dwelling too much on this essential point—the correct timing of the blow—for it is an indefinable sense that is required, and a sense that no instruction can impart, to bring it home to a learner's mind. This much, at least, it is both safe and useful to say, by way of instruction anent it, that the common error is to put in the force too soon. The club-head cannot keep up its fastest pace all through the swing. There is one certain fastest point, and this fastest point should be at its moment of meeting the ball. The common error is to hurry that point, to be in such a hurry to get the club-head going at speed that it loses some of that speed before the ball is reached. For that reason the learner's attention—and every one should be a learner in the practice hours—should be greatly turned to what happens after the ball is hit. The effort should be to reach that one point of greatest speed of travel not an inch before, but rather two inches after, the ball is struck. The natural tendency is to reach it too quickly, and the reasonable remedy therefore is to aim to reach it a trifle late. And therefore, too, it is high praise of a golfer's swing to say of it that 'there is a deal of it after the ball is struck.' The tendency is to pull up too soon—at the instant of striking the ball—not to let the swing, and indeed to make the swing, finish itself out well. Does the reader know those pummelling machines which register the force of a fist blow? If he has any experience of them he will quickly remember that the blow that sends the needle on the dial flying round to mark a great force of percussion is not the blow delivered, howsoever violently, on the near side of the pummelling cushion, but the blow that goes right through into its depth, as though it would come out on the further side. This is the sort of blow that the golf ball wants, as if you wished to hit, not the side nearer to you, but the side further away, a tremendous stroke. It is an invaluable illustration to bear in
mind—invaluable not merely for this purpose of good timing and of sending the force of the blow well through, but also valuable as an index to the direction of the blow, and of the club-head at the moment of delivering it, which should be in the plane of the ball’s intended flight. In some of the illustrations of the famous players—whose portraits, while executing their characteristic strokes, are included in the later pages of this book—may be seen many examples which will be pointed out with due emphasis of this ‘deal of the swing after the stroke’ which should be the ideal of the golfer’s practice.

The sense of time, and putting in the force at the right moment, is valuable not in the driving strokes alone, but also in the shorter shots up to the hole. The manner in which the stroke is timed, so as to let the club-head come with greater or less speed on the ball, makes all the difference imaginable in the length that the ball will travel; and often a spectator, with but slight knowledge of the game, will exclaim in surprise at the distance that the ball flies off a clean-struck well-timed half iron stroke, while one who had given the matter a thought would see at once that the secret of its flight lay not in any remarkable muscular force applied in some abnormal manner, but simply in the fact that the utmost force that the gentle stroke contained was concentrated into the exact moment at which the club-head met the ball. The practice of the proficient differs of course from the practice of the tiro. The former is rather striving to keep what he has got, and to improve it, if at all, by insensible degrees; the latter is learning a new lesson. I believe no better advice can be given to both tiro and proficient alike than that which Willie Fernie is emphatic on—to practise the swing in front of a mirror. We then see ourselves as others see us and detect many unsuspected weaknesses.

For the actual tiro a most useful maxim has been invented by Philpot, the clubmaker and professional adviser to the Princes’ Club at Mitcham. He instructs his pupils
to ‘strike from a point.’ Of course we all know that the stroke is to be a swing rather than a hit, and so on, so that perhaps the very word ‘strike’ is a little out of place; but the great thing in these golfing instructions is not so much to be logical, or etymological, or exact, as to convey to the learner’s mind an idea of what he should try to do; and language for conveying a new idea to a man’s mind is very difficult to find. Philpot, in his maxim, seems to have expressed the notion intelligibly—the notion that there should be a point of division between the up swing and the down, a definite point from which the down stroke should begin. Without this notion the up swing is apt to be vague, aimless, without limit. It is a useful maxim for the tiro to bear in mind that he should ‘strike from a point.’

It is not a bad thing to practise yourself especially in those circumstances that are most distracting to you, so that familiarity shall divest them of their effect. If you are one of those who are especially put off the stroke by any one standing ‘behind the eye,’ as the saying is, it is no bad plan to practise with a caddie perpetually in that position, so that you may be accustomed to it. The old mariners found that the compass misguided them when there was ironstone in the country near; the modern mariner puts two great balls of iron, one each side of the compass, so that the iron afar off has comparatively no effect. This is the function of the caddie perpetually ‘behind your eye.’

There are one or two points in which the caddie himself may well be given a little practice. It is to be presumed that the need of instructing himself in the elementary grammar of silence and immobility on the stroke will be obvious enough, though it may be a grammar hard for him to learn. At Westward Ho! there was at one time in vogue a system of qualifying examination for enlistment into the high roll of caddie. The boys had to answer a series of questions that rather suggested the Shorter Catechism. ‘What should the ball be teed with?’ was one of these.
The most apparent answer would be 'With sand;' but as this is not always so, seeing that some play off artificial tees, an answer of more universal applicability seemed to be required, and the stereotyped answer was 'With care.'

Certainly this is always praiseworthy; but there is a special point about the teeing of the ball to which the caddie's attention ought to be directed, and yet which is seldom inculcated. We must all have suffered much from caddies whose practice it is to make a little heap of sand, and then do one of two things—either perch the ball so insecurely upon it that, time after time, it rolls off, or else, going to the other extreme, ram it down on the sand-heap in such manner that the ball is partially bunkered. Now, if any one will take the trouble to make the experiment, he will find that it is very difficult to take the ball and place it securely and yet delicately, as it should be placed, on the tee, unless some portion of the hand be laid on the firm basis of the ground during the operation. The lower part of the hand—that is to say, the knuckle of the little finger—should be rested on the ground, and with this steady basis to work on the ball can be perched up with the nicest adjustment. It seems a little matter to make so much bother about, but the perpetual rolling of the ball off the tee, or its alternative interment in the sand-mound, is so very annoying, and the remedy so very simple, that it is perhaps worth this brief remark.

In practice, and in unimportant matches, the methods should be adopted that you will use in great contests. Any variation of method is apt to put you off. Thus, if it be your opinion that you can gain a better notion of the line of your putts by studying the ground from hole to ball, as well as from ball to hole (and so great an authority as Willie Park says that the apparently correct line, as judged from the former point of view, is always the truly correct one), then accustom yourself to this double study in your practice matches. Do not practise, in short, in any slipshod manner,
or else you will find yourself a little put about when you have, of necessity, to alter this manner in the matches that you are keen to win.

Professionals, as a rule, gain a long advantage over amateurs from their greater faculty of laying their long putts near the hole, and this, I am convinced, is acquired by their more constant practice. The inference is that time spent in practice in this particular stroke cannot be wasted. This final point has been noticed before, but its importance makes it a good one to end up with, and it will bear the repetition. Knowing that Fernie had made a special study of the golfing swing, and had actually lectured on it, with good results, in different parts of England and Scotland, I asked him to jot down for me a few notes on the subject, and in response he has kindly written as follows:

'Any one looking at my photo will see top and finish of swing. You will observe that at the top of the swing the toe of the club points straight to the ground. The club points the same way at the finish of the swing. When this happens the club travels in its proper circle; otherwise the stroke will be pulled or sliced.

'I would strongly recommend any one wanting to learn the swing to practise in front of a mirror with a walking-stick or a toy club till he attains the true position. Of course the action of the feet must be attended to. Some players are inclined to turn more than they ought to on the left toe. If they would turn more on the right toe, after the stroke, it would steady the body a great deal better.'

No doubt more useful advice than that of practising before a mirror can scarcely be given and can scarcely be repeated too often. Without that precaution it is possible to continue indefinitely long in faulty ways, without a chance of perceiving the real cause of the error, but only lamenting its disastrous results.
CHAPTER V
A PORTRAIT GALLERY

MR. E. BLACKWELL

Let us set the ball rolling—that is to say, let us open this gallery of portraits of eminent players engaged in the strokes that have had greatest effect in raising them to that eminence—with Mr. Edward Blackwell, both because he has an alphabetical claim to the position, and also because the general opinion credits him with being the longest driver in the world. I will take the liberty of quoting what Mr. Everard has to say of him in the Badminton book on golf, p. 415, 5th ed. 'He first came into notice in 1884, when a match was played at St. Andrews between him and Jack Simpson, the then champion, who at that time was at the very prime of his powers.' (Now, alas! he has been cut off by an untimely death.) 'In the end the amateur's tremendous driving proved too much for the professional, who was defeated by one hole in the thirty-six. So far as is known, Mr. Blackwell is the only player who has fairly driven the long hole in two each way; he was out practising, drove past the hole going out, turned back, and drove past it again; the average of each shot being about 260 yards. He returned to this country for a short time in 1892, was elected a member of the Royal and Ancient, played for his first medal, and won it, in 82, establishing a record. Details are:

Out: $645555534=42$ = 82
Home: $444455564=40$
away a long low ball that runs far after the pitch—a style of ball, it may be said, that is especially useful on the long flats of Hoylake—and with his length he combines more than the average of straightness.

Altogether, therefore, it is just a little difficult to find out why Mr. Dick has not done more than he has done in big competitions. He is capable of much. But the initial success always seems to require a little luck to assist in its achievement; after the initial success the confidence thereby won quickly leads to further success, and perhaps this little luck, the initial success, has still to come to Mr. Dick. But he has plenty of time before him and plenty of golfing ability.

Mr. John Ball

The name of Mr. John Ball ought to be an inspiring one to write about. Just at the moment of writing it appears that he is not, for the time being, on his best game, but he has no need to do more than he has done to fill perhaps the biggest place in the golfing eye—even Mr. Hilton, twice open champion, not excepted. Mr. Ball has been amateur champion four times, and no other man has been amateur champion more than twice. He has also won the open championship, and though he has won it once only, while Mr. Hilton has won it twice, he was the first of the amateurs to win it; the first to break the spell of professional invincibility; the first to raise amateur golf to higher pretensions.

For a great many years of his golfing career Mr. John Ball was a disappointment—both to his friends and to himself. He played extraordinarily well at Hoylake, went round in wonderful scores, beat any one that dared to play him; but when he went away from this, his native heath, he always failed to do himself anything like justice; so that after a while it began to be said of him that he could not
Mr. John Ball, at Top of Swing.
Mr. John Ball, at End of Swing.
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The principal constituents of plant-food required by grasses, and of which most soils are liable to run short, are nitrogen, phosphoric acid, potash, and lime. Clay soils, however, usually hold sufficient potash, and of course chalk soils will not require lime. Strong nitrogenous manures, such as nitrate of soda, must be applied with discrimination. Grasses respond very quickly to them, and grow so rapidly that the turf becomes hollow. Guano is one of the best forms in which to apply nitrogen. Phosphoric acid may be supplied in dissolved bones, superphosphate, or basic slag (Thomas’s phosphate powder), all of which also provide lime; and muriate of potash and kainit are the usual forms in which potash is used. Although phosphatic and potassic manures are a great help in the production of a close turf, clovers take undue advantage of them, and judgment must be exercised in their application. If too large a proportion of these fertilisers is used, clovers will soon become predominant and grasses will be crowded out. A safe plan is to rely on a good compound manure such as Sutton’s A 1 Lawn Manure, which contains all the essentials in suitable proportions. Farm-yard manure is slower in its action, but it supplies all that is required. The chief objection to its use is that it necessitates the laying up of the greens, and on links where these are not duplicated artificials are found more convenient. However, if it can be applied, it is important that it should be in a well-rotted and finely divided state, and spread very evenly over the surface during the autumn or winter if possible. With the help of rains such manure will disappear in a surprisingly short time, and very little litter will remain to be brushed off when the green is again brought into play.

For the above observations, which can scarcely fail to be of the greatest value to all interested in the laying out and up-keep of greens, I am indebted to the kindness and the science of Messrs. Sutton & Sons, the famous seedsmen of
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