

ON PUTTING

By HORACE G. HUTCHINSON

An English golfer who has been visiting the Garden City Club, in the States, lately, tells me that they have there a putting course laid out with holes of such minute size that the ball will only just go into them. This is not a new idea, but it is a good idea, and it is perhaps significant that this Garden City is the home club of that terribly good putter, Mr. Walter Travis. It is not a new idea, for I had painful experience of the effects of practising putting on a course of this kind as far back as 1885. This was in the big meeting which was the origin of all amateur championships (really an amateur championship in all but name and official recognition) held at Hoylake. In the semi-final round I just struggled home a hole up on Mr. John Ball and in the afternoon had to meet Mr. Macfie. Mr. Ball in the morning had knocked me empty of all kind of useful stuffing, but, quite apart from that, the way Mr. Macfie putted was a caution. After he had beaten me by 10 up and 8 to play, or whatever the exact figures were, he entertained me for the rest of the way by telling me how he did it, namely, by practising putting at tiny little holes, like egg-cups, in his garden. When he came to the comparatively big holes on the links they looked so receptive that it seemed impossible to keep his ball out of them.

That is what he told me, but I have an idea that the putter, like the poet, is born, not made; but still, both putter and poet may be the better for

a little education. Mr. Macfie and Mr. Travis (I suffered terribly, again, same twenty years later, from the putting of the latter, and it is singular that he, too, should be a small-hole putter) are good putters by nature, doubtless, but still they would not be



MR. HORACE G. HUTCHINSON
Captain of the Royal and Ancient Club at
St. Andrews

quite so good if they did not take some pains about their education. And it looks as if the education of both had been on the same lines—straight lines into very little holes. There appears to be a moral to the tale.