

By OUR BRITISH CORRESPONDENT.

ONDON, September 10, 1911.

One of the leading events of the autumn season in this part of the golfing world, in fact, quite the leading open event for amateurs, is the Irish open amateur championship which rarely fails to attract a very good entry the majority of the players being of a class good enough to enter for the British championship, most of them as a matter of fact doing so. In quality, therefore, it is not so very far behind the premier event, and it takes place at a time of the year when a golfing holiday is more convenient to most people than it is in May when the chief championship is held, while the Irish see to it that the event is made most enjoyable to all concerned and that there is nothing wanting in the matter of hospitality.

This year's championship has just been concluded, and, if the entry showed a very slight falling off both in quantity and quality, I think that this is very easily to be accounted for by the exceedingly trying weather conditions through which we have passed this summer, which have thrown most golfers off their game and made them more or less indifferent to it. Day after day for weeks the thermometer has been hovering between eighty and ninety degrees Fahrenheit in the shade, and occasionally it has climbed up above the

latter figure, one day reaching ninety-seven. We in this country are not used to this sort of thing, and, though golfers can stand nearly anything, they have been unable to stand this, especially as all the courses everywhere have been burnt to dust, and it has been impossible to play the shots as they ought to be played. Hitherto it has been the British custom to look with some disfavor upon the American system of playing golf without jackets, but less will be said about it in the future than there has been in the past for the good reason that on some of our most burning days a large proportion of the British golfers have thrown stupid convention to the winds (this is not exactly the way to put it after all, because unfortunately there were generally no winds) and have played the game in their shirt sleeves, and assuredly more would have done so but for the fear that, being unaccustomed to playing in this way, their game would suffer.

However, when one talks about British weather the expression is not generally meant to cover the meteorological conditions in Ireland, which are commonly quite different from those which we enjoy or deplore in England, Scotland and Wales. Chiefly on account of the more humid conditions prevailing, the courses are generally greener and nicer to play upon



Mr. Percy Bishop,
a British golfer, who has just done a round in 63.

in Ireland in the late summer time than they are anywhere else; and with the fine links that it possesses the country ought to be much more popular with golfers as a holiday ground than it really is. On the occasion of the championship just concluded at Portmarnock, the course of one of the two premier Dublin clubs and a very fine course, too, the weather, though burning hot all over England, was to a large extent wet and unpleasant; but for all that there was some wonderful golf played by some of the competitors, and the result of the championship was of a most interesting kind. Future events cast their

shadows before them, for, as the usual preliminary to the championship tournament, there was a stroke competition which was won by the Irish player, Mr. Lionel Munn, with a magnificent score of 74, beating record of the course. Thereafter in the championship Mr. Munn carried all before him, and sailed through to the finish an easy victor. In the final he had to play the Hon. Michael Scott, one of this year's visitors from Australia, who set up a very strong opposition to him in the first half of the first round, doing some marvelous putting and reaching the turn in 34 strokes. Mr. Munn, however, held very closely to him, and at this stage was only one down, whilst at the end of the round, which was completed by both players in 78 strokes, he was one up. In the afternoon he went clean away from his opponent, was six up at the turn and won the match and the championship by seven and six.

By doing so he won the championship for the third successive year—a most remarkable achievement when the extent and nature of the entries are taken into consideration, and one which stamps Mr. Munn, who is only 24 years of age, as being without any doubt one of the finest golfers of the time and a long way ahead of any other Irish player. No other golfer in recent times has won an open event of first-class importance three times in succession. Round about ten years back Mr. Hilton won this same championship three times running, and some twenty years ago Mr. John Ball won the St. George's Vase, a leading amateur stroke competition, four times in succession. The British amateur championship has never been won three times one after the other by the same player and in all probability

never will be, and it is ages since the open championship was held in three successive years by the same party. So Mr. Munn has earned a great distinction for himself. He does these things when in Ireland, but he has yet to win an event of importance in England or Scotland and has not so far reached the final or semi-final stages of the amateur championship; but his time will probably come. He is a tall player, rather slenderly but still strongly built, with a very good style and one peculiarity in that just before driving from the tee he invariably soles his wooden club in front of the ball after the manner adopted by many people when putting. He used to be an exceedingly tedious putter, and it was quite painful to watch him getting ready to make his stroke on the putting greens, so desperately anxious was he to leave as little as possible to chance. He has, however, now to a considerable extent got rid of this habit, and is not appreciably more tedious in his methods than many other leading players.

An event has lately taken place on the continent which has attracted more than usual attention for certain good reasons, one of the least of which is that it is the first golfing event that has ever taken place in Germany that has attracted any general attention at all. They have become very keen on golf at Baden-Baden, one of the foremost of the German spas, and have made up their minds that it will pay them very well to attract British and American players there, and are going to do all that is in their power to accomplish that end. They have a fine club house and have lately spent a great deal of money in enlarging their course and making it quite good. Having done this, they decided on having a professional tournament of

the first class and securing the attendance of the very best men. What more natural than that they should wish to call this tournament the championship of Germany? They duly announced it as such, and then there was trouble, for the club belonged to the German Golfing Union, which wanted the championship of the country to be played on some other course, being apparently much jealous of the great enterprise of the people of Baden-Baden. Therefore they forbade the latter to style their tournament in the manner proposed, and after some demur the name of the competition was changed to the "open championship of Baden-Baden," which was really just as good. The prize money amounted to \$1,250, the first prize being \$500. Some of our leading professionals, specially invited, went over for the event, which was decided by four rounds of stroke play, and in the end it was Harry Vardon who won with a remarkable total score of 279, no fewer than nine strokes less than that of his nearest rival, Alex Herd. Edward Ray took 297 and Tom Ball 300, and as these men are players of the very first rank, the high quality of Vardon's exhibition can be judged, apart from the lowness of his score which seems to be about the smallest ever made in a four rounds stroke competition on a full-sized course. His four rounds were 69, 67, 71 and 72. On the same occasion the amateur championship of Baden-Baden was played for, and it was won by an American player in Mr. Alexander H. Revell, of Chicago.

All this was very fine and successful, but it only stirred the good people of Baden-Baden to further efforts of a more magnificent character, and they have just come out with a manifesto of their intentions in the matter

of a similar competition for next year which is in many respects a most remarkable document. They have determined that on this next occasion, when the event will be called the open championship of Germany, they will increase the value of the prize money to \$2,500, the first prize being \$650 and the second \$400, with the usual gold and silver medals. Amateurs are especially invited, and if one of them wins a prize he is to receive its value in plate. There will be an entrance fee of five dollars, but this will be returned to all entrants who duly make an appearance at Baden-Baden and start in the competition, of the date of which, it is said, due notice will be given by advertisement in the leading golf papers of the world.

Then follows in the official announcement a very interesting item, thus: "All contestants are provided by the town of Baden-Baden with their hotel accommodation and meals free of cost. The competitors this year loudly praised the treatment they had received, agreeing that never had they been so well received and treated, and that they would so express themselves to all their friends, and that they would return with them next year." It is perfectly clear from all this that the people of Baden-Baden have unlimited faith in the capacity of golf and golfers to do good to their township, and are determined to get the players there at any cost. There is no stipulation made as to the quality of the game played by any intending entrant, so those who like to read the announcement in this way may conclude that all a man has to do to get a fine week's holiday at Baden-Baden at the expense of the municipality is to enter for this golf championship and attend the meeting. Those who do not know their Europe very well

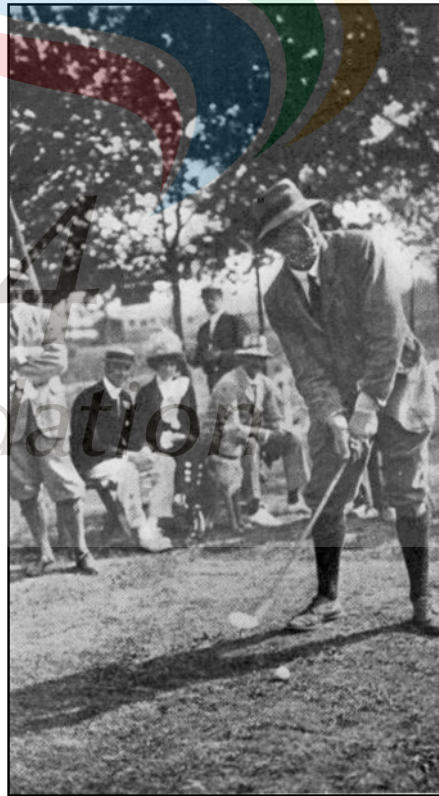
may be informed that Baden-Baden is one of the German spas where visitors take the waters to cure them of all kinds of big and little ills that trouble their flesh, and plenty of interesting amusements and recreations are provided for them to fill up their time with. Lest these remarks should not convey a full impression of the attractions and quality of the place, let it be added that Baden-Baden is something of a fashionable society resort, and is not by any means a common or a cheap place. At the end of all this I might add that the secretary of the Baden-Baden Golf Club is Mr. C. M. Groetz. I am told that they are expecting a very fair American entry as hundreds of the citizens of the United States find their way to this German spa in the course of the season.

It will interest a certain special few of your readers to know that already great preparations are being made at Westward Ho! in Devonshire in view of the amateur championship that is to take place there for the first time next May. This course of the Royal North Devon Club, one of the oldest in England and most surrounded by traditions, comes into the list of championship courses now by virtue of the system adopted a year or two back when it was determined that the already established five championship courses, St. Andrews, Muirfield, Prestwick, Sandwich and Hoylake should keep their places as before, but that every sixth year a new course should be tried, a fresh selection being made every time. Westward Ho! was selected last year for first trial in this way, and now its turn comes. It will be a most interesting part of England for golfing wanderers, either British or foreign to visit, and the course is undoubtedly a very fine one,

though a liberal discount should be taken off the eulogies that the people who are attached to it in one way and another pour forth. The dining and dressing rooms are being enlarged, and every effort is being made to bring the accommodation up to "championship standard," while at the same time some important alterations are being made on the course.

It may be considered to be a doubtful point whether the club controlling a course selected for a championship is quite within its rights in making extensive alterations to its course giving up old holes and making new ones, without consulting the championship authorities on the point and gaining their approval, for it is easily to be seen that when this is done the course on which the event is ultimately decided may not be at all the same course as that which was selected for it, and, whatever the views of the committee of the club, it may be much inferior as a test for the would-be champions. However, this is regularly done in this country, and nobody seems to mind, so it must not be taken that the Westward Ho! people are doing anything that they should not do. As a matter of fact very great alterations are continually being made on all our championship courses except St. Andrews and Prestwick. They were done at Muirfield before the last amateur championship was played there; they have been done at Hoylake in recent times—though they do not tinker about with Hoylake so much as they do with some others—everybody knows what great alterations were made at Sandwich for the amateur championship that was played there this year, and they are being done on a large scale at Deal, which is an open championship course. As to what they are doing in this way at

Westward Ho! it may be said that the old third hole, which was a short one and a rather poor thing, has been given up and a new hole among the sand hills after the old fifth takes its place. This new hole, I am given to understand—I have not yet seen it—makes a very fine short hole. The distance from tee to pin is about 150 yards, and the green is up on a hill near the old sixth tee. It is surrounded by bunkers, and there is broken ground and big sandpits to punish short or topped shots. It is played from a tee at the back and to the right of the old fifth green. I should ad-



The first and only picture published in this country showing Harry Vardon making a tee-shot in the golf championship at Baden Baden. In the foreground (left to right) are Clarence Jones, New York; Preston Gibson, playwright, of Washington and New York; Miss Dorothy Taylor, New York, and Oscar Herron, President of the Baden Baden Golf Club.

wise any American golfer who intends visiting this championship next year to do something as soon as possible in the way of securing accommodation, for it is none too plentiful in this locality, the best accommodation that is.

There has been the usual crop of curious happenings in the golf world during the summer season, the end of which we are now nearing. Some most enormous drives have been made on the hard and burnt turf, and the other day it was announced that Captain Stokoe, playing on the Crowborough course, which is up on the hills some thirty or forty miles out of London, reached the eighteenth green from the tee, though the distance is 350 yards, the ground is uphill and the green is guarded by a sand bunker and by a mound nearly five feet high. By the way, I hear now that a leading firm are just about to bring out a new ball, which one or two leading professionals who have tried it in private, declare to have carrying and running capacity far exceeding any other! It is the old tale, and goodness knows when we shall get to the end of it.

But in the way of the remarkable performances of the season there has hardly been anything more wonderful than a score of 63 done by Mr. Percy Bishop on the Wildernesse course, which is that of a small and rather exclusive club a little way out of London. Although not a long one, the course is of very fair length, getting on for six thousand yards. Mr. Bishop, who is a frequent entrant for the amateur championship and generally gets through two or three rounds in it, is the foremost player attached to it, but this score of his was a long way better than anything he had previously accomplished on it. He was out in 29, and home in 34, and he got a one at the third hole and a two at the eleventh—very useful items in the compilation of a record score. I mention this wonderful round very particularly, as a report has come across the Atlantic that an American player has done a round of 63 or 64 somewhere out in the West and is claiming the world's record—for whatever that may be worth—in consequence.

