

SOME GOLF SENSE AND NONSENSE

BY LINCOLN C. CUMMINGS.

What is the use of taking golf "seriously," when, by taking it easily, one is sure to live merrier and perhaps longer?

A layman said he could not understand why a man should take the time and trouble to walk around eighteen holes, and hit the ball only "seventy-two strokes," when during the same period he could have had twice the fun by hitting it twice that number of times! He concluded that it must be wearisome for the average player to make over seventy or eighty strokes in one round (and right he is!) to a game, and that the best players, thus reserved their strength and skill "for another day."

So many unacquainted with golf seem to regard it only as a childish accomplishment and occupation, and wonder that anything "so simple," can interest a full-grown man!

The co-ordination of eye and muscle, the correct timing of wrists, the pivoting of the head, "the eye-on-ball," the "follow-through," the "right grip," not to mention the unrememberable unmentionable other things "absolutely necessary" to a perfect stroke constitute some of the "simple" essentials for a beginner!

In fact there are seventy-two, more or less, different perplexing arbitrary impossible things for the golfer to remember and put into action, at the *same instant*, or his golfing name is Dennis!

If it does not require intellect and concentration, then it needs a thousand horse-power dynamo of instantaneous self-acting thought to deliver the goods thus instanter.

In fact, the man who can remember and perform all these requirements correctly, requires an intellect or something unusual, which could grasp and recite verbatim, Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, unabashed and unhesitatingly and without any memorandums on his cuff!

Much has been said and written about the psychology of the game—of the "mind directing the action of the muscles," and that the stroke "must begin right and the head of the club come 'round, ahead of the hands."

I have found, in sheer desperation at failure to obtain good results in this conventional and generally accepted manner, that conversely, by "ordering the wrists" to begin wrong, and the head of the club to come 'round *behind the hands* (or dead wrong) that I can't accomplish even this (as ordered) with the result that I more often accomplish the impossible, or *right stroke*, in this confusing manner and get a respectable drive as the result!

I recommend all duffers to pay no heed to "intellect in golf," and all such intangible flattery and "advanced thought," and instead when they want to drive over a bunker, to *try to drive into it*, with might and main, and instead of listening to those "experts," evidently possessed of superior intellect, skill, genius or whatever it may be, to reserve their instructions and warnings, and *try to do it the wrong way*, and they will find the results pleasing—and *sometimes right*, and thus better the general duffer's beastly average!

It must be true that there are multi-

tudes who haven't any "mind" strong and effective enough to make the golf stick do what it is ordered to do, at the crucial moment, or else there are certain brands of golf sticks that will do the right thing, from intuition (and I have searched the country, far and wide, in vain, to find one).

My plan of restoring the duffers to their own and of thus reviving the courage and hopes of the multitudes, who are daily "getting worse" (!) does not cost a cent, but is freely given to the world in the sole interest of golfing-humanity!

Sometime in the future, when this great golf-panacea has spread through duffer-land and been put into "practice," I shall hope to benefit by the results, in finding the foursome ahead, keeping its place, and not holding me back and incidentally the whole field!

"Seriously" golf should be increasingly understood and played by the American business man as well as by the American who "hasn't any business," but is loafing perhaps around his city club and wasting energies, which need the conserving and up-building to be obtained on the golf links.

It is doubtless true that each golfer is so absorbed and mentally *stunned* often, in the search-light of his own incompetency, and in the development of his own persistence that golf is nothing, if it does not become "serious," and everything to a man if he happens to succeed in such an exact science as it is in fact!

For after all is said—golf is not a simple game, but a great accomplishment, an exact science, the expression and evidence of perfect co-ordination of eye and muscles in every successful instance, as well as the developer of mind, nerve and a better temperament.

In fact golf—taken seriously (yet merrily)—is the developer of our youth, the strengthener of middle-age—if not the panacea of old age—and perhaps nowhere on earth can such exhilaration be found as in a golf conquest—yes, even in a "friendly game" won or played on green pastures of hope (which here springs eternal) among companions, more enjoyable because of it on a field of honor, absorbing, time-consuming, and under the zenith of sunshine and pure air, in which patient toil has taught qualities of manhood, endurance and devotion.

If golf must be played "seriously" because otherwise it is only disappointing—let us remember that if there were no disappointments in golf, it would be the only thing in life which is free from them—and if it can't be mastered even seriously—then we can at least play it merrily (!) and thus imbibe some of the great and special benefits it freely offers mankind, from its great fund of health and pleasure.

Golf mistakes and failures are to be laughed at instead of sworn at! If one takes seriously every little mistake made (often before your friends) golfing life would indeed be miserable and a burden.

Laugh at our little (or big) mistakes and do not feel grieved and hurt if others laugh at them too, and us, as laughing will help us to remember to avoid them again, quite as well as giving way to serious regret and self-distrust! To grow morose and solemn at failure, is to commit a second fault.

By keeping cheerful and hopeful, under all circumstances and in every temptation, as well as avoiding taking the game too "seriously" will be bound to yield paying dividends.