

## HOSPITAL GOLF

BY THOMAS F. WALLACE.

IT HAS NOT been my lot to spend much of my time in Hospitals.

Belonging to the legal and not the medical profession, my practice is more concerned with financial than physical ills and my daily routine does not lead me to them, except when sickness or accident choose for their mark some relative or friend. While a kindly providence saved me from any recourse to them as a patient myself, until the early part of the Fall of 1916, when a hungry germ caused an infection which not only caused a high fever but also caused my face to luff to starboard furiously, and as a result, under orders from my family doctor, who doubtless knew that thus the comfort of my family, if not the safety of his patient would be greatly advanced, I journeyed to a hospital.

There I remained for ten days, and from its fourth floor window looked longingly out over a green park and the twin lakes set therein, towards my home on the further side. Longingly not because the Hospital was not pleasant, for it was, but because after the first three or four days my fever left me, and except for my swollen jowl now manned by a band of indolent strephacocii, who refused to succumb to anything but a watchful waiting policy, I felt but slight indisposition. Yet the need of constant attack upon this piratical crew by means of numerous and Sundry compresses, prevented my departure, or even my appearance outside the limits of my own room for a number of days.

Thrown upon my own resources and tiring of too continuous reading, I was reminded by my window view of the now impossible pleasures of Golf, and

how pleasant these tedious hours might be made if only it were possible.

Thus longing and looking half sleepily at the rug in my room, I evolved the game of "Hospital Golf," and every day got in from eighteen to thirty-six holes, thus reducing the monotony of my enforced confinement not a little.

The thought then occurred to me that my idea might help others in the same position, and accordingly herein are set down the simple requisites for the game, which each player can add to or change as his imagination or opportunity may suggest.

First comes the selection of the course. For this a large rug of oriental pattern is best, although if the design is not too conventional, a domestic pattern can be used. This should, preferably, not cover the entire floor, as a border of bare floor affords opportunity to penalise "wild shots" as "out of bounds."

The rug used by me was an Anatolian, with a nap or turf about one-sixteenth of an inch deep. It was better for "field shots" than putting, and had a background of dark red with a leaf and flower pattern of green and yellow, combined with small geometric circles and squares in white.

These latter constituted the holes, while a certain pattern of leaf was selected by me, after carefully going over the course, with "the professional" (nurse) as best situated for driving tees. The size of the rug was 13 by 17½ and the length of the course was sixty lead pencils lengths F. Venus American Pencil Company. (Faber or any other standardised pencil may be used). As to whether wooden or composition balls covered

with surgical gauze are best, I am in doubt. My first ball was a wooden one, discovered by happy chance beneath my nurse's cot.

But on the opening day of the course, a somewhat indiscreet boastfulness of mine, in regard to it, led to an investigation by her, which ended by her discovering in it a missing part of the tassel of her walking jacket and its consequent confiscation by her.

My resulting misery was so evident, that she then and there promised to construct a substitute for me, according to my directions.

The result was a ball which had more balance and weight. We made it by taking four small pearl buttons, which, held together by a piece of chewing gum, contributed by the elevator boy, formed the core. Round this we wrapped many strands of wrapping cord, and on top of this snapped all the rubber bands we could commandeer, and to make as smooth a surface as possible, we covered this with a mixture of mucilage and white shoe dressing, and when this had dried, put on the outer cover of surgical gauze. Its trade name is "Kultur," to indicate that no one need feel any fear of its being imposed upon them. I can testify that it lasted me through the entire season, and if anything, was at its best in the last game.

Now for the clubs, and this is one of the best features, inasmuch as the game is to be played only by the partially disabled. *There are none, ergo no caddy fees.* The ball being first placed on the tee is driven by a blow from the toe of the foot, protected by a leather, carpet or cloth covering, according to the style of your bedroom slippers. Strokes may be made with either the right or left foot, but the ball must be *struck* by the toe. It cannot be shoved, and the side of the

foot cannot be used. When you have placed the ball within the white circle or square selected as hole "one," you count your strokes and place it on the leaf or other pattern selected as the second tee, and so on, until you complete the "nine hole course." For the ordinary hospital room, a nine hole course is as large a one as can be laid out, but a course of eighteen holes might be laid out in a large de luxe private room.

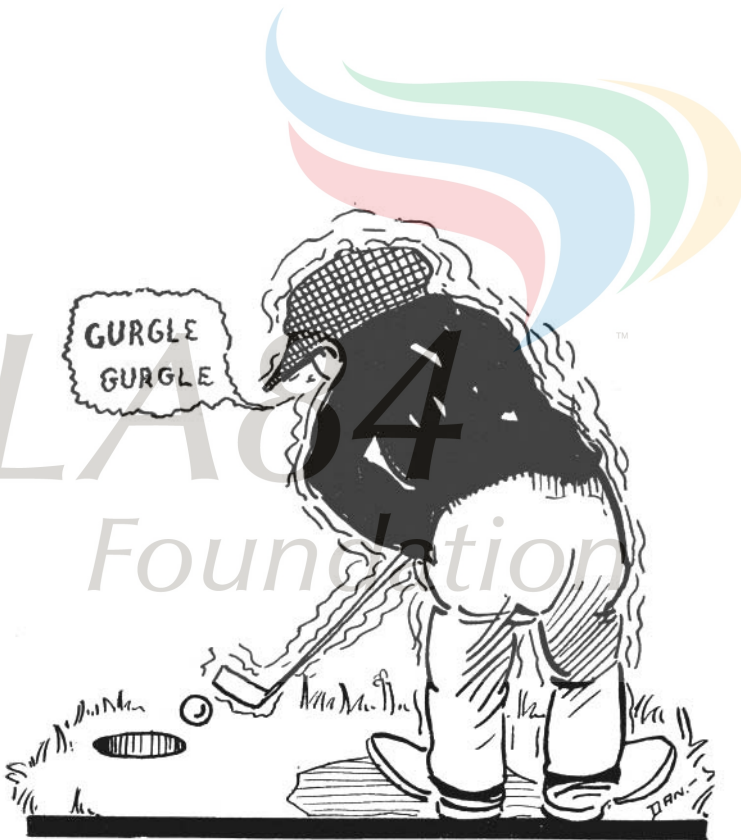
As to hazards I at first only had the natural ones afforded by the bed, a cot and a dresser, but later installed a bunker of a clothes brush on the fourth hole, and a water hazard in the shape of a small pan, loaned me by the nurse, guarding the eighth, which I found raised "par" from the course from thirty-two to thirty-three. A shot from the tee on one side of the bed, to the seventh hole, on the other side, had a mental hazard, for if you lifted your toe too high, as you struck the ball, or made a "sliced drive," the ball would remain underneath the bed, and could no longer be reached by your foot requiring you to drive over and count an extra stroke.

In addressing the ball, the foot used must be raised from the ground at commencement of the stroke, but the body may be steadied by support of any adjacent articles. My first score was forty-two for the nine holes. My last score was thirty-two without the artificial hazards and thirty-three with, and in the six days I played one hundred and eighty-nine holes.

Does it sound childish and crude for a man of over forty years of age to busy himself thus? I imagine it does, and yet it did more to while away the tedium of my convalescence than anything else. It disturbed no one. It required no outside companionship or aid—and it afforded a stimulus for a

certain amount of slight physical effort, which certainly did not unfavourably affect my return to my accustomed routine of work and pleasure, and with

the hope that it might do the same for others, in a similar predicament, I have ventured to tell the story of my discovery.



THE TREMULOUS PUTTER.