

THE HUMOR OF THE GAME

By A. W. TILLINGHAST

With drawings by A. B. Frost. Courtesy of Harper & Bros.

THERE is a club, not many miles from here, which employs a Scotch professional, one of the canny old-timers. One of the most enthusiastic players is a minister of the gospel, a fine, broad-minded man. He has been playing only a short time but he has diligently followed the pro's instructions, and one day, recently, after a particularly satisfactory round, he hastened to the shop. His face glowed with happiness and he was eager to report his progress.

"I've had a great day, Scotty!" he exclaimed enthusiastically. "I hit well with my driver, I hit well with my brasseey. My iron and my mashie worked beautifully; my putts were good, *and I didn't swear!*

"Aweel, Doctor," consoled Scotty, "that'll come tae ye in guid time."

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But all professionals are not Scotch. There is one located with one of the Metropolitan clubs, who is a Cockney. One afternoon he was working diligently in the instruction of a slightly inebriated novice, who was experiencing great difficulty in striking the ball at all.

"Keep your hye on the ball, Sir! Keep your hye on the ball!" the patient coach constantly reminded.

Again and again, the futile efforts to connect were followed by the droning advice, "Keep your hye on the ball, Sir!"

Finally in desperation the thoroughly exasperated

GOLF ILLUSTRATED



pupil deliberately removed his right eye;—*it was a glass eye*, and stooping, he placed the artificial optic on the top of the ball. Then straightening up he shook his fist at it and wrathfully shouted,—”There, damn you! *Now take a good look at it!*”

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With the after-dinner cigars the conversation turned to a discussion of golf courses. One of the men at the table fell to bragging considerably about his own course, which, by the way, is notoriously bad, and one of the party frankly expressed the opinion that it was so.

“What are you talking about?” exclaimed the first. Then he added pointedly, “Why *you* couldn’t play around our course in better figures than 90!”

“Very likely,” was the quiet reply, “for I wouldn’t go there unless I was *paralyzed*.”

OUR SAMUEL PEPYS AT VAN CORTLANDT

With acknowledgments to S. P. & F. P. A.

October 21.—By subway to Two-hundred-forty-second Street with my good wife, my aunt Martha and my six children and nurse Rebecca making in all our party ten souls for the playing of the game of golf upon the links . . . we did find some 3,000 persons resting at the tee or place of beginning when we did arrive, and we did lay our ten bags of clubs in order at the end of a long line, and so waited three hours in the hot sunshine for our turn to come.

Verily it did amuse me not a little to stand waiting for our turn at the tee to see those many persons from the Ghetto and East Side who were beginners at the game. Some missed the ball, some struck it sidewise, some shot their balls off into the neighboring forest and so lost them. These persons returned to the teeing ground and did begin all over again to our great annoyance who were waiting to play. . . . The loving pairs that did play caused us to laugh greatly by their behavior for they entered upon the game not so much for sport as to be bussing and kissing together at the edge of the woods. . . . Three ruffians or gunmen from the street called “Avenoo-a” came noisily on the tee long after we had come and with threatenings and loud outcries pushed two old men from the teeing ground and proceeded to play out of turn. Albert the officer in charge did protest mightily and called loudly to a constable who seeing the fracas walked quickly away. . . . These same miscreants struck their balls with such force and precision

that a little child, at a distance, playing with a croquet mallet instead of a golf club, with her mother, was struck down and killed, at all events such was the report, and those waiting to play instead of sorrowing set up three cheers, to my good wife’s amaze. But I soon learned that the playing of women and children on these public links was to so-called experts at the game, a nuisance and as one vouchsafed to me in my private ear “made them crazy.” He did further inform me to my great horror that in the past year 1,287 women of uncertain age, children in swaddling bands, old maids out for the purpose of waylaying a husband, pert school teachers, and unruly small boys, had been secretly murdered by angry but expert golfers at the most distant holes. At this my wife and children did set up a most dismal wail and refused to play, so that it fell to the pretty maid Rebecca and to me only of our party to step up in our turn upon the tee, after sending my family to the city. . . . Thus after some four hours waiting, I began to play, and though we started at early morn already the sun was drawing to its last quarter on the sky.

Twice did I essay to strike my ball, and twice did I miss amid the laughter of those waiting to play. Meanwhile my maid Rebecca did hit much to the right or as they term it did slice across a roadway and into a piece of woodland, where after a lengthy drive I did follow her to help find her ball...

here I may draw a veil on what did transpire fearing the just wrath of my wife should she read these lines . . . suffice it to say, that while in Rebecca, I found a loving soul, it took some time to find the ball . . . which had devilishly hidden itself beneath a bush. . . .

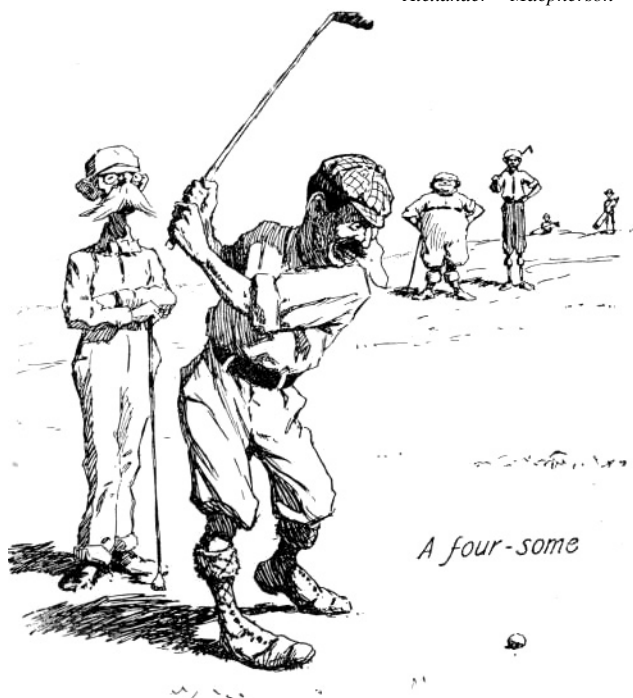
Thence arriving at the second teeing ground we found already some forty souls standing and waiting there to proceed on their course, and, no constable being present, some four free fights for precedence were then taking place. The three gunmen had already knocked down a rightful player and entered upon the tee, amid the loud hissing and remonstrance of many school marns there present. But it was of no avail. Rebecca becoming alarmed besought me that we should seek the quieter wood paths and pick flowers instead of attempting so hazardous a game. To this I yielded consent not without reluctance for I am an expert at the golf, playing eighteen holes frequently in less than 125 strokes . . . and being much admired by my wife and children when I do hit a long shot.

. . . Arriving at home quite late after candle light, my wife did angrily box our maid Rebecca’s pretty ears, and declared that she should not be permitted to play the game of



golf again. . . . Rebecca in tears. . . . To the club,
 where I did drink freely of high balls . . . home to bed in
 the small hours and to an angry wife. . . I will no more
 of Van Cortlandt Park.

Alexander Macpherson



The two men walked to the eighteenth teeing ground. One of them walked to the sand box and then turned to his companion. "Tom, we've been friends now for a great many years, haven't we?"

"We surely have, Bill," replied the other warmly.

"And, Tom, if I should ask a favor of you, a very great favor, you would grant it if you could, wouldn't you?"

"Why, certainly, Bill. What's up, old man? Nothing serious I hope!" He came over and placed his arm around his friend's shoulder. "Tell me what it is, and you can depend on me to the finish."

"Well, Tom, we have played seventeen holes of golf this afternoon and for seventeen holes you have discussed *your* game. Would you mind very much, if on the last, one hole we talked about *mine*?"

* * *

One of the most amusing situations imaginable resulted from the misunderstood directions of a caddie. His employer started his round over an entirely strange course. He was a terrific slicer, and to keep on the course at all, it was necessary for him to face many degrees to the left of the true line.

"What is my line, lad?" he asked.

"Bear on yon steeple, sir," the boy answered.

But there were two steeples in the distance, one far to the right of the other which was on the line. Seeing but one (and the wrong one), the player took his stance. Thinking that his man was standing for a pull the boy held his tongue, but was startled by the weirdest slice he had ever seen. The ball came to rest far in the rough, almost at right angles to the line to the hole and from which point it required a number of strokes to regain the fairway, not far from the

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original starting place. It would have been suicide to have laughed at the unfortunate at the time, although the occurrence has given him much amusement since.

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In China all the golf courses are in graveyards with tombstones for bunkers.

At Hot Springs, Va., the tombstone golfers on Thanksgiving day had great fun writing epitaphs wherever the last stroke took their balls. The tournament was arranged by Mr. and Mrs. William C. Denney and was won by Dr. Robert A. Black of New York and Mrs. J. W. Cassidy of Chicago, who started scratch, with an allowance of fifty-eight strokes for twelve holes. They completed the course once and got on the second green the second time around when they "died." Nearly as much time was consumed in writing the epitaphs as in playing, and many golfers were entirely unable to break into rhyme. The prizes were awarded to-night to Mr. and Mrs. William J. McIntosh of New York, who are here with Albert H. Harrison, Vice-president of the New York Central lines.

Mr. McIntosh wrote over his little grave:
Not a drum was heard nor a funeral note,
When over the bunkers we hustled.
Not a slice was sliced nor a pull was pulled,
As over the course we jostled.
And when died he did and pulled down
the lid,

Not a tear was shed for our poor ball dead,
Nay, 'twas cause for a *Great Thanksgiving!*

While his wife composed the following:
Good sport, forbear from blaming him who
lieth here.

He did his best. It's his mistress's fault
This rubber child is in his vault.

Honorable mention in the contest in
versification was given Dr. Black, winner
of the cup. He wrote:

Here doth my little ball lie at rest,
That woods was his undoing,
Perhaps in some more kindly world
He'll go again golf wooing.

G. K. Morrow, who "died" half way around, attached a card saying his golf parentage was unknown. Some of the other players were C. S. Neave and Miss Beatrice Pratt, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Rosengarten, Mr. and Mrs. Walter N. Stillman, Mrs. G. K. Morrow, William T. Brinker, E. D. Bancroft, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Forsch, Mr. and Mrs. Denney, and Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Browning.

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"I have nothing but praise for their raising money for the poor Belgians at our golf club."

"So I noticed when the hat went round."

* * *

At Pinehurst, when one of the little colored caddies was caught stamping a "lost" ball into the sand:

"You deserve a good lickin', Sammy!"

"What t'ell do ah care? Lickin's is soon ovah, an' killin's yo dasent!"

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Washington, November 24.—President Wilson to-day illustrated to callers his state of mind on the question of attending executive sessions of the Senate by telling the following story:

"A certain man was playing golf, and after a few holes he turned to his caddy and said: 'Caddy, have you ever seen any one play worse golf?'"

"The caddy was silent.

"'I say did you ever see any one play worse golf?' repeated the man, evidently thinking the caddy had not heard.

"'I heard you the first time,' said the caddy, 'I was just thinking.'"

* * *

To cuss or not to cuss, that is the question. The cartoonists delight in picturing the golfer as one filled with strange oaths and imprecations. Some of them are. Two of the most artistic "cussers" that ever missed a shot were paired together in the medal round of a tournament, not long ago.

The chairman of the Green Committee went to each privately and told him that the other was a minister of the gospel and begged that he bridle his tongue. "All right," replied each, "I'll be careful."

The round was a series of mishaps for them both, but with heroic restraint neither forgot that he was a perfect gentleman, nor his respect for the cloth. As a result the entire route was covered in silence. Words were not safe.

When at last the awful grind was done, one walked off the home green in advance, and, meeting the chairman, he let off his throttled steam in language which had been denied him for over two hours. A few moments later the two reverend mutes were making their way, arm in arm to the nineteenth hole, but the chairman of a certain Green Committee signed the check. Serious business, but golf furnishes a laugh now and then.

* * *

City Golfer (*who affects to be witty, to Caddie*).—I say, boy, what is the best *breakfast* on which to win a match? Don't you think a *red herring* across the enemy's path might be effectual, eh?

Caddie.—Weel, sir, d'ye ken, I'm no' sayin' but it wad; but I'm thinkin' ye wad jist be as likely to win by a *fluke*.

* * *

Mr. A. C. M. Croome tells a bright story of the critical acumen of the caddie. He had just finished a rather unfortunate morning on the Westward Ho! links, when he happened to overhear another boy ask his caddie the question: "Who was you a-playing against?" "So-and-so," replied the caddie. "Oh," said the other, "I suppose you beat 'ee?" "No," replied the caddie, "us didn't; 'ee beat we; us putted like a blooming monkey."

* * *

"A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
Of him that hears it; never in the tongue
Of him that makes it." *Love's Labor's Lost*.