

THE GOLFING CRANK

Whilst playing with James Braid at Bath last Thursday my thoughts more than once turned to the scene which was on the same day being enacted at Sunningdale, where the "Gold Vase" tournament drew such a fine field of amateur players, and, I am told, attracted about two thousand spectators. The large majority of the latter not unnaturally concentrated their attention upon the game played by that famous pair, H. H. Hilton, the British Amateur Champion, and Francis Ouimet, the American Open Champion. Now it would profoundly interest me to interrogate the whole of those spectators. What I should like to ask them separately is: "What did you gain in actual golfing knowledge by watching Mr. Hilton and Mr. Ouimet?"

My observation has convinced me that of every thousand golfing spectators not more than one really sees what the player is doing with his hands and feet. The other nine hundred and ninety-nine simply gaze at the driven ball soaring through the air, and exclaim: "Golly, what a fine shot!" without having the remotest idea how that shot was accomplished. Probably the one who does scrutinise the actions of the player—his swing, grip, stance, and footwork—knows too much about the game to play it really well, but he is invariably a most interesting party to converse with about golf, although his fellow members dub him a "crank." He is what I call one of the brainy men of the game who play "thinking golf," but seldom play well, as they are generally badly balanced.