

A Causerie Among Seniors

By Robert Stanley Weir, Formerly Recorder of Montreal

MR. W. H. Webbing, of the "Canadian Golfer" called the other day and we fell a-talking about the Senior Tournaments which of late years have become so interesting a feature of golf in the United States. I was able to tell him of one of the very first meetings of those seniors, when not more than thirty or forty met, the place being Wollaston, near Boston. To-day the participants run into 300 and 400 and the best part of a week is given up to the sport; but at Wollaston, that day, we numbered barely forty and one day's play was sufficient for what was laid out for us in the way of golf. In the way of comestibles there was, I remember, an excellent luncheon of beef and greens.

It runs clear in my memory too, that George Wright of Boston was the moving spirit of the occasion. We all split up into two teams for match play—no strenuous medal play at all; no mugs or prizes either; but shortly after my return to Montreal I received from George Wright, the handsomest souvenir in the shape of a golf bag which I treasure to this day. Invitations to participate in later meets reached me for several years until the present big Senior Tournament was organized upon the lines of other tournaments now, and invitations were no longer special. If you wanted to take part, you sent in your name and vouchers and fees.

Well, among the good friends I met at Wollaston and played with was Ralph Crandall of the Boston "Herald," an Englishman, born and bred, who had not long come to Boston. I am sorry to say he has since passed on still further—ad majores. A more delightful companion or more hospitable host than Ralph Crandall, I never expect to meet.

There was also Samuel Macdonald, formerly of Montreal, and one of the heroes of the lacrosse field when that game was in its prime and was wholly played by amateurs—excepting the Indians of Kanawaki and St. Regis, whose expenses and a little over were paid to make a Canadian holiday. W. L. Maltby, now of the Royal Montreal, was the redoubtable point of the team that for long were champions and Samuel Macdonald was by far the most dashing of the home players—those who attacked the opposing goals.

Webbing and I talked over these matters and he asked me to put them down in writing which I am doing as simply as possible.

"Do you think a Senior Golf Tournament 'would take' in Canada?" he asked.

"It certainly ought to," I replied in my elliptical way, "and yet when one reflects that the players of golf in Canada just now are practically all seniors, I don't know. The gallant juniors, still fighting or their fighting done, are all at the front and few of us feel keen for anything like a festive tournament. But, please God the war shall soon and suddenly end, let the Senior Tournament be made one of the ways of rejoicing and giving thanks."

Putnam came in while we were talking.

"Have you seen the pictures of the Senior Tournament in 'Golf Illustrated?'" asked Webbing.

"Yes," said Putnam, "and there is certainly a pathos about this sexagenarian enthusiasm—these attempts to renew youth."

"But why should not youth be renewed or old age deferred?" said I. "Past generations have simply lain down before the advancing years. These American seniors are fighting the superstition of old age. Others, again, are simply trying to remedy the errors of youth and early manhood, when there was too great a devotion to business and material things."

"When is a man a Senior?" asked Webling.

"When he ceases to be a boy," answered Putnam, rather neatly.

"But there must be a so-called age limit," said Webling. "In the United States they make it fifty-five."

"As we don't grow old quite so fast in Canada, perhaps the limit ought to be at least sixty here," I remarked.

"But we are fewer in number here."

We agreed that an age limit of fifty ought to secure a good attendance; that Toronto Ottawa or Montreal would rejoice to hold a Senior Tournament and that so far from waiting until the war was over, it might be made the occasion for helping the war. One of us remarked upon the delightful picture of two little tots with Red Cross decoration, which appeared in *Golf Illustrated*. "The very charming juveniles had succeeded in raising quite a tidy little sum for hospital uses."

"But I would stipulate, said Putnam, that the field photographer be excluded from any tournament of Canadian Seniors."

"Why," asked Webling and I together.

"Well," answered Putnam, "It gives me a little shock to see a judge of a high court and other dignitaries coatless and hatless swinging at a ball. I cannot say that I quite like to see President Wilson, for example, photographed in his shirt sleeves."

"Nonsense," said Webling, "we must allow for the progress of democracy. Why should men anyway be enslaved by the despotism of dress? Let us leave the tyranny of clothes to the German Kaiser who changes them twenty times a day."

"Coat on, or coat off, a man's a man for a' that," I said.

"No man should be ashamed to be seen playing in his shirt sleeves unless he plays badly," said Webling.

"Not even then," I suggested. "We are always doing our best. But perhaps in this less torrid region of the world, the coat and hat may be recommended. But after all, the play's the thing."

Well, without emulating the three tailors of Tooley Street, who were willing to settle the affairs of the nation, we three were of the opinion that a tournament of Canadian Seniors might very well take place, that, at least, there was no good reason against the project, and that after the war we might even organize a joint celebration of an international character with our allies and brother Seniors to the South. That would be well worth working for.

The Comrade-Nations' Star

For now the larger Christmas-
dawn is nearing,
And wise men see afar,
Above the low horizon-line ap-
pearing,
The comrade-nations' star.