

Silloth, and Haskins of Hoylake, which produced some surprisingly good play, and both these players were capable of something in the eighties on a long and trying course. I notice by the way in my last copy of GOLF ILLUSTRATED that America has produced a one-armed phenomenon in Louis Martucci who had an 82 at the Siwanoy Country Club in a match against Tom Kerrigan. There is an opportunity for some sportsman of Essex County to back him against Yves in a one-armed international.

The Moray Golf Club in Scotland has taken determined action as regards one of its prominent members. At a special meeting convened a few days ago it was resolved by seventy-three votes to twenty-four to remove the name of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, M. P., from the roll of members. This was on account of certain utterances of Mr. MacDonald's about the war which have been, to put it mildly, quoted in the German papers with much greater enthusiasm than they have evoked in this country. Mr. MacDonald is a very well-known man, one of the leaders of the Labor party, who went, I believe, regularly to Moray on his holidays, so that the step was a strong one to take, but I fancy it has been very generally approved by members of other golf clubs.

One well-known golfer has been killed in action during the last month in the Honorable Brian Butler, a brother of Lord Lanesborough, who was a lieutenant in the King's Royal Rifle Corps, more generally known by his old and illustrious number as "the 60th." Mr. Butler who was forty years old was a spasmodically brilliant rather than a

reliable golfer who won one capital and surprising victory in the Sussex Championship a few years back. His opponent in the final was Mr. R. H. de Montmorency, who is one of our best dozen amateurs, and I do not imagine that anyone thought that Mr. Butler had a ghost of a chance against him in a thirty-six hole match. Win he did, however. The only real history I ever heard of the match came from the lips of Mr. Butler himself and probably he was unduly modest. By his own account he jumped bunkers, laid full shots dead, holed long putts and played a generally heart-breaking game from his adversary's point of view. How much of this was true I do not know; most likely he had the run of the luck, but nothing could alter the fact that it was a most gallant victory.

Just as I was on the point of posting this letter, I read in a *Daily Mail* the following account of some very wonderful golf by an one-legged player. It should be said that Chislehurst is a short course, but even so the feat seems quite miraculous.

Ernest Jones, the Chislehurst golf professional, whose right leg was shattered by a shell a few months ago and afterwards amputated, has resumed playing and teaching at Chislehurst. He has not yet been fitted with an artificial leg, but on Saturday, in his third round since being discharged from hospital, he accomplished the fine score of 70.

The one-legged golfer walked with the aid of two crutches, but discarded them for the purpose of playing his shots and balanced himself on his left leg. So thoroughly has he mastered the art of maintaining his balance during a full swing of the club that his driving was almost as long as ever. Before the war Jones established a record of 61 for the course.

Word has just come from Bernard Darcin that he is under orders to proceed overseas. During his absence in France Mr. A. C. M. Croome has kindly consented to contribute "Our Foreign Letter."

AN IMPROMPTU SYMPOSIUM

(Reporting Some Club Chatter About Golf Theories)

By ROBERT STANLEY WEIR

BIG Shaw came into the club-house one late September afternoon, after finishing his round with Smithers, and sank himself heavily into the most convenient and comfortable upholstery he could find. Smithers sought the davenport and was soon recumbent. He and Shaw had just done thirty-six holes and four extras. The strokes, if the truth be told, were not far short of at least two centuries.

"Well, I'll be jiggered!" said big Shaw.

"It isn't the jigger alone" said Smithers. "Your jiggered and mashed and brassied as well."

"True it is," said big Shaw. "Jiggers, mashies and brassies are alike to me."

"What's the matter?" queried Brown who was happy with a cigar between his lips, and something else at his elbow.

"Shaw's disgusted with his game" said Smithers. "Can't get more than 150 yards off the tee to save himself. Digs into the turf with his irons. Flubs his mashies. Skies every brassy-shot. The only thing he can do is putt. Putt he simply must to have any kind of a look in."

"And there is young Jimmy Jones, my caddy," said Big Shaw, "not fourteen yet, who sends them away as clean

as a whistle. I ask him how he does it. He simply grins and says he doesn't know. I take lessons from Albert: who alters my stance, corrects my swing, shifts my grip; in short, makes me as uncomfortable as possible and expects me to hit a ball. I go out by myself and hit them after a fashion; but—no results—slicing, pulling and general feebleness. Some secret there is about the game of golf and I'd give five hundred dollars to know it."

"Have you read what Johnny Dunn says about it in his A-B-C of Golf?" asked Brown.

"Yes, I've just read Dunn's book. And he says the secret of golf is 'balance.' Get properly balanced, he says, and everything will be all right. 'By the process of elimination I arrive at just one thing that is common to all good golfing styles, and that is body balance.' Well, I balance myself all right, but what has that to do with hitting the ball right?"

"Perhaps your clubs don't suit!" said Smithers. "knowing well that Big Shaw has more drivers, putters, mashies and irons than half a dozen lockers could comfortably hold."

What Shaw said to this need not be related. He takes no pride in his collection—reminders of misplaced enthusiasm.

"Have you read what that chap Vaile says about it?"

I see he has written another book called *The New Golf*," said Brown. "I have not," said Shaw. "What does he say?"

"I've read it," said Smithers, "and there's nothing very new in that 'new golf' of his. He starts you with the putter; says that hitting with the left and changing weight to the right leg is all nonsense. Quotes Braid and Vardon when it suits him; and, when it doesn't, says they didn't write their books anyway; some fellow by the name of Henry Leach wrote them."

Harry Birks, Donald Hogg, Sam Baylis, Robinson the club scratch man and others now dropped in and Birks, who had overheard Smithers, said:

"Some driver that chap Vaile must be. Says he once drove a ball across a river and two hundred yards up a hill on the other side. What do you think of that, Hogg, eh?"

"I think," said Hogg, who is a lawyer, "that no book, particularly a book on golf should be allowed to be printed without being censored by the U. S. G. A.; and that there ought to be an affidavit printed in the front to certify that all the allegations of the book are true."

"Well, perhaps Vaile did drive a ball across a river and two hundred yards up a hill on the other side. (This from Brown) In which case he is the man for you, Shaw. Better try out his theories; smack them with the right hand; bear well on the roots of all your left toes; and hold tight at the top of the swing. What do you think, Hogg?"

"That may be *new* golf; although he has dished up the same thing in two or three books already; but it is certainly not *true* golf."

"Why don't you study Vardon?" said Birks. "He gives it all to you in seven rules. Don't sway, don't lift up your head, don't imagine there is any snap of the wrists, and the rest of it."

"But Braid says there is a snap of the wrists," broke in Sam Baylis. Something like a corkscrew twist. First, great tension at the top, and then hard at the ball. Have you tried the corkscrew twist, Shaw?"

"Yes, I've tried it," said Shaw, "and topped or sliced them every time. Tried Vardon's tips too; with his notion about shoving out the hips as you come down. Nothing doing."

"The trouble with you, Shaw," said Hogg, "is your flat swing. Better change it to an upright, like mine and Vardon's."

"You and Vardon?" said Brown. "You remind me of the chap who writes about 'Newton and I.'"

"Don't you do it," said Birks, "nobody plays better golf than flat swingers like Taylor in Britain and McDermott in America. An upright swing is no better than a flat one unless, perhaps, for irons."

"It seems to me that the only man who has properly sized up the game is Haultrain who wrote a book on *The Mystery of Golf*. The inside of the book is all about psychology and moral philosophy and wouldn't make a golfer in a hundred years; but to say on the cover, as he does, that the game's a mystery is to hit the nail on the head. Golf is a mystery."

"Perhaps your grip is wrong," said Hogg. "Change it."

"What shall I change it for?" queried Shaw. "A fist grip" like Travis? Forefingers and thumb tight like Vardon? Or little fingers tight like Travers? I have tried them all and none of 'em suit me. No, I tell you there's some blamed

secret about the game that some fellows have and don't know; while others know it and won't tell—that's what the matter. I have tried slow back, keep your eye on the ball, keep your head still, follow through, don't sway, and can't get round under 95 to save my life. They've got to get some new maxim before I can play golf."

"Look here, Shaw" said Birks. "Why don't you ask Robinson there, who is rated 3 in the U. S. G. A. There is nobody to equal the intelligent amateur. He'll give you the secret of golf in half a dozen words."

Robinson had sat silent, listening to the chatter while enjoying tea and toast with Brown. He was known to have his own ideas about the game, but could very seldom be induced to expound them.

"Come on, old man," said Smithers. "Reveal the secret of the prison-house. We're all attention."

"Well," said Robinson, pushing away the tea-things and preparing to light up, "I should like to say that the maxims of golf, slow back and the rest are, in my opinion, signs of golfing grace rather than causes of it. It is a waste of time to worry over them."

"The great secret of the same is to hit the ball where the ball is. Do you know where the ball is when it is being hit right? It is in the middle of a spread of about three or four feet. The trouble with most golfers is that they think of a spread of about thirty-five feet. They waste their strength and mis-time the stroke." Big Shaw and the others were listening intensely.

"Another secret of golf, although it is really the same thing as the one I've just told you about, is to hit the ball with slightly twisting forearms, the right passing over the left at the impact. Turning, mind you, not bending. This gives you a ball with the greatest possible distance and you graduate it to lesser spaces by shortening the swing. If you want slow, dead balls, don't let the club-head turn leftwards; keep its face up."

"What about balance?" queried Birks.

"By all means keep your balance," said Robinson, "but don't worry about it. What you want to do is to hit the ball with a concentrated stroke. Swinging back is merely getting under way. Swing the club back and *sling* it down."

"What do you think about Duncan's tip—or is it Max Behr's—about the left shoulder initiating the swing?" asked Smithers.

"Excellent; and gives one a much better notion of what to do than the old one of trying to pivot on the hips."

"What is the real soul of golf, anyway, Robinson?" asked Brown.

"It is underspin," was the reply. "And there are two strokes: Pitch and Pitch and Run. In the first you send the hands and wrists forward without turning them; in the second you turn them. Pitch is underspin; run is top-spin or rolling. Any other kind of top-spin is fooling. In putting, of course, you roll the ball."

"What about slicing and pulling?" asked Baylis.

"Ah, that would need a lecture by itself. You can't tell all about golf in ten minutes."

"Do you think you could drive a ball across a river and two hundred yards up a hill on the other side?" asked Smithers.

"For a carry of that size I prefer the assistance of my friend Curtiss and a bi-plane. I agree with Hogg that some books should not be allowed without affidavits."