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PUTTER PERKINS



NOTHING BETTER TO DO THAN TO PLAY ALL DAY

PUTTER PERKINS

BY
KENNETH BROWN

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
E. W. KEMBLE



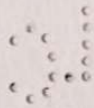
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TO L. B. R. BRIGGS

DEAR MR. BRIGGS,

Not very long after I left college I wrote a little book, and dedicated it to you. It was called "Contrariwise," and sparkled with the promise of youth, and contained that gem of mine, which you cannot have forgotten, "The Compressed Vacuum Pill."

Some day I may yet find a publisher who has courage to print it; but publishers are timid men, and all this time you have never known that I had written a book which I had dedicated to you.

"Putter Perkins," a staid and scientific chronicle, has found more favor with the publishing men, and so I am dedicating it to you now in place of the little volume which still lies darkly sparkling in the bottom of my trunk — like a diamond undiscovered in the depths of a diamond mine.

KENNETH BROWN

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PUTTER PERKINS



CHAPTER I

THREE INJUDICIOUS BETS

I

THIS is a tale of prehistoric times, when all the world lived in a state of amicable bluff, when countries built navies and trained armies, and nobody — at least nobody out at the Medchester Country Club — believed there ever would be a war again; and so we were much more interested in such matters as a golf match between Sharples, the sharp, and Bixby, the nervous, who could play rings around Sharples except when the latter managed to irritate him to the verge of frenzy. However, that story has been told elsewhere.

This one concerns Peregrine Perkins — him we called “Perry Perk” before he be-

came famous as "Putter" Perkins. He was an ardent week-end golfer, and used to say that golf was all that saved him from being a crank. Everybody else said he *was* a crank, but then there's no telling how much worse he might have been without golf.

The bees in his bonnet were three, like the Napoleonic bees. They were wireless torpedoes (he was inventing one), the invasion of the United States by a foreign foe, and Claire Terhune. The last was pretty serious, at least to a lot of the fellows at the club. The first two we considered harmless as collecting epitaphs off old tombstones. Torpedoes were things one read about in the newspapers as being tried out at Sandy Hook or somewhere, while, as for a possible invasion of America, we would to a man have sprung to arms with Bryan's million men.

But with Claire Terhune there was no springing to arms — not for Perry Perk. She was the club champion, and had been



HE INVENTED NEW STANCES, NEW GRIPS

runner-up in the national championship, while he was the club dub, and the handicap limit had been especially raised so that he could have a look-in, when we had a little something up on the game. A cat may look at a king, but it would be preposterous for a twenty-four handicap man to cast aspiring glances at a lady champion.

Whenever the two met on the links, Claire gave Perry a bright smile, but he could not even enjoy this ray of sunshine because of the torturing doubt whether she was smiling at him, or at his golf. He rarely saw her elsewhere because he was a hard-working boy, and when not relaxing at golf he was always busy with his inventing.

By rights, too, Perry Perk ought to have been a good golfer. He was a loose-limbed, well-built chap with plenty of strength and dash. The trouble was that he could not keep from inventing even while playing: he invented new stances, and grips, and ways

of drawing back the club-head; new things to remember in the up-swing, and new things to do in the down. And, since his was a fertile mind, a Saturday rarely passed without his inventing some new fault to correct an old one.

McDivot, our pro, took him in hand once, and after an hour gave him up, with perspiration streaming from every pore and his tongue cleaving to the roof of his mouth — McDivot's mouth, you understand. Perry was fresh as a daisy. He had argued every point with pertinacity and acumen. He had not taken a single swing as the pro wanted him to, but had illustrated his own methods with great freedom.

“It would tak' a professorr of logic to teach yon chap gowf,” McDivot gloomily observed, after he had managed to uncleave his tongue from the roof of his mouth, in a way commonly practiced in those ancient times.

II

IT seems a far cry from golf to wireless torpedoes; but in Perry Perk's mind they resided cheek by jowl. While the juxtaposition did his golf no good, it had no disastrous effect on his torpedo, which was rapidly reaching perfection.

We are a big country, he would argue, with a tremendous coast-line, divided half east, half west, and the taxpayers would never stand for the expense of keeping a navy on each coast sufficiently strong to protect it against the designs of predatory nations, who might combine against us. But here was where *he* came in.

"Wait just a few days longer till I've fully perfected my wireless torpedo, and I'll put a fringe of scorpions around God's Country that will give a bad shock to any nation that tries to handle us without gloves."

Occasionally Perry would talk in this strain at the clubhouse. Usually he talked golf, for he tried to put his torpedo out of his mind over Sunday. Moreover, he found little sympathetic attention for his theory of predatory nations annexing us. Those were the good old days when we had the future course of everything except the stock market pretty well doped out. The fellows would remark that Perry's invasion might be some time coming, while the winning of their match at a ball a hole was a matter of present importance.

III

ONE Saturday night Perkins was sitting gloomily in the clubroom between a group of cross-country riders and a crowd of golfing enthusiasts. The horsemen were vehemently debating the question whether the breed of thoroughbreds would deteriorate, now that, for all practical purposes, except

racing, the horse's place had been taken by machinery. The golfers had got on to the subject of Breitmann, the German professor, who had worked out a system of playing the game to music, and who went into tournaments with a fiddler and a trombone player at his back. Some ridiculed the whole story and believed it a hoax, like the Kupernick affair; while others considered the idea quite feasible, in view of the great part which rhythm and timing played in a stroke.

Perhaps it was the cross-currents of conversation that got on Perry's nerves. Perhaps it was because he had received a statement from his bankers that morning, informing him that he had only a few thousand dollars left in the world. Or he may have been depressed by the consciousness that he had made his worst round of the year to-day, and had lost ten balls to Sharples.

Perry was one of the few men in the club to whom the loss of a dozen balls was a con-

sideration, and the men at Medchester by tacit consent kept the stakes low when playing with him. Sharples alone would boost the betting, and, since he was even cleverer at making a match than at playing it, he usually won. During to-day's game he had begun to talk about a mythical combination of nations against the United States and the imperative need of some adequate defense, and the unsuspecting Perkins had fallen into the trap. His wits flew back to his invention, and he played his shots as he would brush away obtrusive flies.

Sharples's ruse was the more effective since Perry's torpedo was now an accomplishment: the last technical difficulty had been surmounted: it was perfect. A few days before, he had written to the Secretary of the Navy inviting him to come to Medchester with his experts and see it working.

At the tenth green the two men came within hailing distance of Claire Terhune on

the sixteenth tee, and for the moment even torpedoes were driven from Perry's mind. Claire was tall, with a figure just made for golf, or riding, or tennis, or dancing, or almost anything. She wore each of her smooth braids of brown hair in a sort of shield on either side of her head, after a fashion that was noticeable and becoming. Her features had a symmetry which really did not prove her more worthy than other maidens, though men thought so; while, as for her mouth, its shape made it far more precious than if pearls and rubies had dropped from her lips, like the lady in the fairy story. And her eyes of lustrous brown — a perfect match to her hair — had the power of piercing through the toughest hide to melt the heart beneath. There is more that might be said about Claire were this story primarily about her and not about Perry Perk, three injudicious bets he made, and all that resulted therefrom.

IV

"WELL, how's the match?" Claire called cheerfully, as her caddie knelt rapt at her feet to tee up her ball.

Perry had n't the faintest idea how he stood, but Sharples chuckled as he answered:

"Ten up, and eight to play."

"And who's ahead?" Claire asked innocently — an innocence a little overdone.

Perry sank into mortification. There could now be no doubt what caused her to smile habitually at him when she met him on the links.

"I am," Sharples replied gleefully. "Shall we make it double or quits on the bye, Perkins?"

"Thanks, no!" Perry replied, a flush of anger rising to his cheeks. He was no fool, though he might be a crank, and he discerned too late the reason for the turn his antagonist's conversation had taken during the

match. "I've had enough golf for the day." And, handing his putter to his caddie, he stalked back to the clubhouse.

"Ought n't to have waked him up so soon," Sharples admonished himself. "If I'd talked a little more Peril-to-the-United-States, he'd have bet me anything I liked on the bye."

v

THIS evening, between the horsemen and the golfers, Perry sat morosely brooding. Presently he caught his own name and looked around to find Sharples giving a humorous and highly colored account of their match of the afternoon, and bragging of the number of balls his conversation on foreign-nations-attacking-America had been worth to him. Now Peregrine Perkins was a pleasant-tempered young man, and it was usually safe to crack any joke at his expense; but to-night he was sore at the whole world and sorest of all at Sharples. Sharples had cer-

tain qualities which made men hate to be beaten by him more than by any other man in the club.

Perry scowled. Then his eyes suddenly narrowed, and a look of intense concentration came into his face. "Yes," he muttered, "it could be done." It was as if he had forgotten the grinning *raconteur*; but that he had not was proved by his next words.

"Damn it all, Sharples," he burst forth, "just because a big oaf like you has nothing better to do than to play all day, you think you're mighty smart because you can do it well. If I really cared to devote my scientific mind to making a little ball go from the tee to the hole, I could beat you so badly you'd never want to play anything again except tiddle-de-winks."

"Hear! hear!" cried little Jimmie Daniels.

"Talk's mighty cheap," Sharples sneered. "I'll bet you —"

VI

JUST then one of the club stewards brought Perry a long white envelope without a stamp and with the notice printed in the upper right-hand corner that there was \$300 fine for using it for other than official business.

Without a word of apology to those present, Perry tore open the envelope, with fingers he could not keep from trembling. Here was the letter that would enable him to realize his life's ambition. It was from the Navy Department, quite short, and informed him in politely supercilious language that the Government had fully provided for the protection of the American coast-line, and regretted to be unable to utilize Mr. Perkins's wireless torpedo.

Perry had known vaguely that there might be practical difficulties to surmount in getting his torpedo adopted by the Govern-

ment. He had never imagined that it might not be considered even worth investigating. And he could not afford to bide his time; for he was nearly at the end of his resources. He had placed such hopes on his torpedo that the rapid melting away of his fortune had seemed of no importance, so long as his torpedo was perfected before the end of his money was reached. Now his impending bankruptcy stared him in the face as an awful calamity, both for himself and for the American Nation he was trying to serve.

VII

INTO his numbing disappointment the insistent, jeering voice of Sharples gradually wormed its way. The latter was still harping on his petty theme of odds and strokes and handicap, while Perry had been concerned with matters of vast importance — the future safety of his country, the preservation of the American ideal, of civilization

itself, perhaps — not to mention the subject of his own poverty.

Roused at last, a cold, calculating glare came into the inventor's eyes.

“All right, Sharples,” he said, turning on his tormentor, “I guess I do play a pretty rotten game of golf, but what will you bet me that I can't beat you a month from to-day, by applying science to this little game of yours?”

“Apply all the science you want,” Sharples replied airily, “and I'll bet you — well — a tenner on it.”

He ended on a note of caution. Being a four-handicap man he would have to give Perry three fourths the difference between four and twenty-four. With fifteen strokes, the latter stood a fair chance of winning, provided he played golf and not world politics.

“That's under handicap, of course?” Perry observed.

"You did n't imagine I thought you would play me even, did you?" Sharples laughed unpleasantly.

"H'm! Just make a note of it. Now, what odds will you give that you can beat me with only eight strokes handicap?"

Sharples brightened visibly. He liked this sort of a bet.

"I'll give you a hundred to twenty."

"Make it a thousand to two hundred, and you're on," Perry said coolly.

Sharples stared at him, and Kerstaw, M.F.H. of the Medchester Hunt, who had been drawn from the horse group to the golfing group by something electrical in the air, grabbed Perkins's arm.

"Perky, old man, how many cocktails have you had to-night? You don't want to make any such fool bet as that."

But Sharples, fearing lest the opportunity might slip from him, cried, "Done!"

Rather roughly Perry shook off Kerstaw's

friendly hand, and continued, with no sign that he lived anywhere near the cocktail belt of Medchester:

“And now what are the odds that, with the help of my science, I can’t beat you without any handicap at all?”

This was too much. In spite of the rebuff Kerstaw had just received, little Jimmy Daniels could not sit quietly by and see an innocent robbed in this way.

“Perry Perk, you’ve got torpedoes in your north pole! Don’t listen to him, Sharples. Now, if you want a sporting proposition, I’ll — ”

“What are the odds that I don’t beat you even?” Perry repeated imperturbably.

“Oh! most anything you like,” Sharples replied, trying to conceal his eagerness.

“Say ten to one.”

“Five thousand to five hundred?”

“Sure thing!”

“All right. It’s a go. And now I’ll say good-night to you all.”

Perry rose and stalked from the room and the clubhouse.

VIII

SOME years before, Peregrine Perkins had inherited a modest fortune from his father. From then on he had thrown himself and his money into his invention unreservedly, and the torpedo had absorbed his money with speed. (To those who do not know, it may be said that a wireless torpedo is more expensive in its tastes than a gentleman-farm.) Perry's little house stood on a retired lane, beside a big pond. There he lived and worked, a capable old negro mammy looking after his wants. It was fortunate that Aunt Cassie appreciated to the full the importance of her duties; for, when Perry became immersed in his inventing, it required more than the clock to make him remember to eat or to sleep.

Aunt Cassie would bring his food into his

workshop on a tray, take up a big wooden mallet and pound. On one occasion, when he had been particularly oblivious to the claims of the flesh, Aunt Cassie lost all patience and pounded the model of his invention. This made such an impression on Perry, and on the model, that the first stroke of the mallet commanded his instant attention ever after.

His little house was lighted with electricity. Aunt Cassie insisted on having a central switch in the kitchen. At the time she deemed proper for Marse Perry to go to bed, she turned the switch. There were no lamps or candles, so that, after the switch was turned, it was impossible for him to continue his work.

The pond in front of his house had been a favorite swimming resort for the boys of Medchester, but, after Perry's invention proceeded to a certain stage, it gradually lost its popularity. One never could tell when a torpedo would rise noiselessly from

the bottom of the pond. It had a pointed end, and when it caught one suddenly in the small of the back, one forgot for the moment that it was n't loaded. In its early stages Perry did not have it under proper control, and it was liable to rampage around pretty much as it pleased; and it seemed to have a natural propensity for nosing swimmers in soft and ticklish spots. Gradually the pond came to have a bad name. Few people ever trod its shores except stray tramps, and, after the torpedo slid its nose out of the water and took a good look at them, they usually went away, too.

IX

ON this night, upon leaving the clubhouse, Perry strode along and savagely addressed the mild atmosphere of Medchester.

“Oh, you blind and self-satisfied America, more interested in your sports than in your national existence! Because a lenient fate



NOSING SWIMMERS IN SOFT AND TICKLISH SPOTS

has given you freedom from outside interference for a hundred years, you think you are as safe from the world's enmity as when men sailed in wooden ships and trusted to the capricious winds to blow them to their journey's ends. And I who *could* render you immune from foreign invasion — me you flout and despise because my handicap is twenty-four at a foolish game in which any silly ass may excel. And a crassly ignorant, demagogic Government writes me sarcastic letters that they have not time to investigate my 'certainly novel' scheme for safeguarding our coasts. If I were a golf champion, they would not dismiss me thus. The papers would give me scareheads: 'Perkins, Golf Champion, Invents Wireless Torpedo. Experts at Washington Much Interested,' and then a column of misinformation by some chap who could n't tell a wireless torpedo from a seedless raisin."

Perry tramped to his home, made his way

to his room in the dark, and paced up and down, barking his shins against each piece of furniture in turn. He had stayed late at the club, and Aunt Cassie had retired and cut off the light.

“But since my country cares for nothing except futile things, I’ll turn my talents into a channel it appreciates,” he ended in a fierce outburst, and went to bed.

CHAPTER II

THE MATCH

I

ONE month later, when his match with Sharples came off, Peregrine Perkins was quite his old cheerful self. In the interim he had worked harder than ever in his workshop. He had practiced little golf, and that little in the early morning by himself.

Bixby offered to coach him a bit.

"I certainly appreciate your kindness," Perry replied, "but I've an idea I can work out my game best by myself. I don't play in orthodox form, you know."

"I know," Bixby solemnly assented. "You don't."

II

A GOOD-NATURED, chaffing, pitying crowd gathered at the first tee to see the con-

testants drive off. There were petticoats among the knickers, and Perry gave a slight gasp as he noticed one he had hoped and feared might be absent.

It was a warm day, and Sharples, in a tennis suit, collar open, and sleeves rolled up, took his place on the tee, cool and supremely confident. As low handicap man he had the honor and drove a good ball straight down the course.

Perry wore not only a coat, but a waistcoat as well, fastened with odd, shiny metal buttons, and the pockets of his coat bulged and sagged.

“Carrying along plenty of golf balls? That’s right,” Sharples observed condescendingly. “I suppose you will take the zigzag route as usual, and it’s easy to lose balls in the rough just now.”

Perry did not reply. Carefully teeing up his ball, he faced around to the left, at an angle of forty-five degrees, to allow for his

customary slice. He drew back his club, brought it down with a vicious swipe and as the ball flew from the tee, his right hand loosened its hold of the driver and was clapped to the pit of his stomach, as if he were in pain — as any golfer might be at such a slice. Yet, had all eyes not been focused upon the curving ball, they might have noticed that this was no chance attitude of Perry's, and that each of his four fingers rested upon a different one of the shiny metal buttons of his waistcoat.

As for his ball it looked at first as if it would certainly be lost in the rough to the left; then it swooped around and made straight for the long grass bordering the fairway on the right. Just before reaching it, it stopped. It did not slow down gradually and trickle to rest as most golf balls do, but stopped as if it had come against some invisible obstacle.

“By Jove! that 's the only ball I ever saw

that might have been lost in the rough on both sides of the course at once," Bixby cried admiringly.

Perry usually drove between one hundred and forty and one hundred and fifty yards, with luck. To-day in spite of its devious course, his ball rested nearer to the hole than Sharples's excellent drive. The gallery could hardly believe it. All of them knew the deleterious effect of a slice on distance, and all trooped along with the players to make sure their eyes had not deceived them. Anyway, they might as well see out the first hole before beginning their own games. Few of them proposed to grace the foregone conclusion of Sharples's victory with their presence.

"You're becoming a mighty swiper, Perk," shouted Kerstaw, slapping him on the back. "Keep it up and you'll get Sharples's nerve." This was more a hope than a belief; besides, what Kerstaw did n't know about golf was

as extensive as what he did know about hunting.

The first hole was three hundred and ninety-seven yards long, a fairly hard five, since it ran up a steep little valley with the green a good many feet higher than the tee.

Sharples's drive lay just opposite the two-hundred-yard mark; and Perry's ball was a good forty yards farther, within a foot of the rough.

Sharples took his brassie for the one hundred and ninety-seven yards of uphill before him, but he pressed a bit, sclaffed his shot, and half-topped his ball. It rose quickly, then ducked and ran along the ground like a scared rabbit, eventually stopping fifty yards short of the green.

"Lucky for you the ground was hard or you would n't have got halfway there," growled Jimmy Daniels, who begrudged Sharples any luck.

Perry studied his ball and the undulations of the ground before him carefully.

"My putter would be safest," he murmured.

"Oh, take your brassie," Claire Terhune breathed imploringly.

"Did n't you know I had no right to accept advice from any one except my caddie?" Perry asked in mild reproof.

The gallery was stunned. To think of a dub venturing to quote rules to a champ.

The caddie drew the brassie from the bag. Perry shook his head. "Putter!" he said firmly. "My goose-necked putter."

"Goose-necked idiot!" muttered Bixby in disgust, while the other spectators chuckled. But, when they realized that he actually proposed to use it, they shared Bixby's disgust. Only golfing etiquette prevented their walking away even while he was playing his ridiculous shot.

Undisturbed by the disapproval of the

gallery, Perry drew back his putter, made a quick jerky shot toward the far distant green, and then stood as before, holding his putter in his left hand and pressing his right to his stomach.

The ball leaped away from his club in a short flight and began to roll toward the hole. The ground must be hard indeed today, for it seemed as if the little white sphere would never stop. It hopped along, swerving from side to side according to the undulations of the ground, but in general keeping straight for the green. Up the incline it sped, seeming not to slacken its pace at all, and disappeared over the brow of the hill on the very green itself.

III

THE gallery stood dumbfounded. Each man gazed at his neighbor to discover whether he were dreaming or not.

“Oh, goody!” cried a feminine voice,

moved even out of golf language by the shot.

“Well!” burst from little Jimmy Daniels, “it did n’t have any wings, but such legs on a ball I never saw in all my life.”

Perry gave a pleased smile. “On in two,” he remarked.

Terhune rushed up and grabbed his arm. Bill prided himself on his length. So long as his ball flew far, he did n’t much care in what direction it went, but even he was rarely green high on this first hole.

“Perry Perk, how did you do it?” he implored.

“Brains,” Perry replied easily. “I told you that, if I cared to devote my scientific mind to golf, I could make you all look like thirty cents. I have n’t quite mastered my driver yet, but my putter seems to work all right.”

“Putter!” Bixby groaned; “why, you did n’t even hit the ball hard.”

“Not very,” Perry agreed. He held up



LITTLE JIMMY DANIELS

his wrists and gazed at them thoughtfully. They were strong, supple wrists. "It's a matter of — of follow through, you know. Only there is this difference between us: you put the follow through into your arms, while I put it into the ball."

He looked so owlishly wise as he spoke that the crowd was dazed. What he said would have been hooted at as arrant nonsense if he had n't just made the shot he had. So interested were all in Perry's shooting that they forgot Sharples altogether and were making for the green, until he acridly asked them kindly to wait until he had played his third.

A fine running-up shot with his iron laid his ball six feet from the pin, and he holed out for a half with Perry, who took two puts.

IV

THE second hole was a peculiar one, complained of by many, and yet the pride of the

greens committee. It was one hundred and ninety yards long with no difficulty except a wide sand bunker just short of the green, its farther side composed of a bank of railroad ties sloping up at an angle of forty-five degrees from the sand to the green.

The long swipers of the club had frequently wished to have this changed. They could not resist the temptation to try to carry the green, and almost invariably they would either come to rest in the soft and yielding white sand, which had cost the club a pretty penny to import from the seaside, or else their ball would strike against the railroad ties, leap high in air, and fall back into the bunker they had almost escaped.

But to all remonstrances the greens committee turned a deaf ear. An obstacle that every one could see, they contended, rightly, was perfectly legitimate. If the long swipers could n't make the green, let them take an iron and play short. ५

Sharples followed this excellent advice. With a midiron he laid his ball twenty yards short of the sand, a chip-shot from the pin.

Perry took his driver. Unless he perpetrated another miracle shot, there was little danger of his reaching the bunker on his drive. He studied the hole with minutest care; altered his stance three times, and his grip twice. Unfortunately he also glanced once at Claire Terhune, and he overreached a fatal fraction of an inch, caught the ball under the heel of his club, and it darted nearly at right angles into the rough. As it disappeared, he made a frantic clutch at his waistcoat, as if seized with sudden agony.

“Too late!” he muttered.

All trooped over to hunt for the ball, which was quickly found. It did not lie badly, although surrounded by thinnish tall grass.

“Mebby you can get it out in one,” his

caddie remarked hopefully, and handed him his niblick.

Perry waved him away. He studied his lie and the line to the green as carefully as if he hoped to hole his next.

"It might be done," he said under his breath. "Boy, give me my putter."

"Putter, sir?" The caddie's jaw dropped. "You mean your niblick."

"Putter," Perry repeated, and fished it out of his bag himself.

"Well, this is the limit!" Bill Terhune remarked to the world in general.

The gallery largely lost its sympathy for Perry. Such a fool deserved to have his money taken away from him.

Entirely undisturbed, Perry drew back his club and made the same kind of a painstaking push-shot he had made with his putter on the first hole.

The ball did n't rise an inch — nobody expected it to. Instead it plunged into the

grass like an ambitious spaniel retrieving a duck. It whirred through the long grass and actually came out on the fairway, still rolling.

“Well out!” cried the gallery, forgetting its disgust of a moment before. And well out it certainly was. The grass seemed not to have slowed it up in the least. On and on it rolled. It came up to Sharples’s ball, and then amid a groan of disappointment from the onlookers, kept on into the bunker.

v

BUT what was this? While all still gazed mournfully after the vanished ball, it reappeared, running swiftly up the railroad ties, and came to rest on the very green itself.

Sharples gasped, and even Bixby shook his head reprovably.

“That’s too much, Perry Perk,” he admonished. “Was it a *putter* you perpetrated that with?”

“Yes,” Perry replied, gazing down at it in modest pride; “I did it with my little putter.”

No wonder that after this Sharples missed his chip-shot, and topped it straight into the sand. It was enough to get on any man's nerves.

The next hole was a difficult one of three hundred and ninety-one yards. One's drive had the whole field to rest in — slice or pull; but the second shot was between a narrow lane of trees. Perry led off with his usual rainbow slice, of fair length. Sharples, driving desperately, sent a long straight ball a full two hundred and fifty yards away. He smiled grimly: here he would square the match and then walk away from his opponent.

For his second shot Perry first took from his bag his putter, and, in spite of his recent exhibition of its powers, every one felt relieved when he handed it back to his

caddie and said, "No, give me my brassie." With this he faced around to the forbidding line of tall trees to the left, to allow for his slice.

"He's cutting it a *leetle* too fine," Bixby remarked in an undertone to Kerstaw, and so it proved.

The ball started off at a good pace, but before the slice had time to take effect it disappeared into the tree-tops.

In the still air they could hear the ball hurtling through the leaves and striking the branches.

"Gone to earth!" groaned Jimmy Daniels. "Here ends Perky's career. It was too good to last . . . *Hold on!* LOOK! YONDER SHE GOES!"

Sure enough the ball had come curving out of the trees, its slice still in fine working order and its distance not at all impaired by its devious course.

"I swear, that is too much!" Sharples

expostulated angrily, and for the first time the crowd at Medchester did feel some sympathy for him.

“Sorry, Sharples,” Perry soothed mendaciously. “I was just thinking about my torpedo, and I may unconsciously have put on a little extra steam.”

Sharples glared and the gallery grinned, the allusion not lost on either. Instead of winning the hole, as he had confidently expected to, he lost it and stood two down.

VI

THE spectators had forgotten all about their intention of turning back. Such a match had never been seen before. It proceeded with varying fortunes; for, to do the black-browed Sharples justice, he was a hard man to beat: sure two-put man on the green, and never conceding his opponent anything. Perry's play was erratic, as it had always been, but interspersed with so many prepos-

terous shots that it would have taken the heart out of any man.

“Have you noticed one thing,” Claire whispered to Jimmy Daniels, “he’s hole high on his second every time, and yet he has n’t overrun the green once.”

Others had observed the same thing. While he had little control over the direction of his ball, his distance was invariably perfect. Whenever he was in a tight place, no matter how far distant from the hole, he turned to his putter, for with it he did seem to have an idea of direction. It was Jimmy Daniels christened him “Putter” Perkins when, being dormie on the eighteenth tee, he actually took his putter for the drive on a five-hundred-and-thirty-seven-yard hole, and brought off such a screamer that Sharples, after fozzling his own drive and second, picked up his ball and gave up the match.

Claire Terhune was the first to congratulate him on his victory.

"Oh! I'm *so* glad you won," she cried. "We were so afraid you might only win the ten-dollar bet, and lose the others. It was perfectly splendid. You must devote more time to golf, now that you have shown what you can do."

"I'm thinking of going in for it pretty extensively, this summer," Perry replied modestly.

"It *is* nicer than old torpedoes, don't you think?" she asked, making a little face at the latter.

"It seems to be more appreciated," he admitted ruefully.

"Torpedoes may be useful and all that, but they are n't golf, are they?" Then, fearing lest she had hurt his feelings, Claire went on quickly: "Not that they are n't really very nice. I always thought if I could have a tame one to carry me on its back when I was bathing, like a dolphin, it would be the *grandest* thing."



PICKED UP HIS BALL AND GAVE UP THE MATCH

“Would you like one? I’ll make you one,” Perry said eagerly.

“Oh, that would be *wonderful!* But where could I keep it? There’s only room for two cars in our garage. Anyway, we’re going to the mountains this summer — and I’d rather have you go in and win the club championship. I believe you can.”

It thrilled him to have her care about his winning.

“I’ll do it!” he declared. “I’m going to get out of golf all there is in it, this summer.”

VII

WHEN he was walking back to his little house beside the pond, he took a golf ball out of his pocket and regarded it thoughtfully.

“I wish it did n’t have to be round,” he murmured. “I can manage the distance, but the direction bothers me. Now, if they

would let me use a cigar-shaped ball — There's nothing in the rules against it — No, they'd be sure to *make* a rule. I'll have to do the best I can with this."

He put it back into his pocket, and proceeded to the boat-house, where his torpedo lay lolling half out of the water like some amphibious monster.

"I'll have to desert you for a while, old chap," he said sadly to the huge sinister thing. "It's golf for me until I can make a name for both of us."

CHAPTER III

PERRY PERK MAKES GOLF PAY

I

PEREGRINE PERKINS saw his name in the headlines of a newspaper for the first time two weeks later when he won the Medchester club championship against Bixby. The reporter sent out to cover the assignment was an ex-prize-fight-reporter, and the idea came to him to treat the event without mitts. Perry's style of play encouraged picturesque language, and he turned out a column of skyrockety journalese that tickled the fancy of the city editor.

"Make those Medchester swells sit up," he chuckled, as he topped off the report with a scarehead.

Perry Perk read the paper with a grin of satisfaction. "Getting there already," he

muttered. "I'll give 'em more to talk about before I'm through."

He was as good as his word. If his golf was a nine days' wonder at Medchester, it burst upon the larger golfing world like a comet. He went from one tournament to another and won every one of them — won them wearing his old baggy coat, wearing his waistcoat with its shiny metal buttons, no matter how hot the weather was. And always did his right hand forsake the shaft of his club and fly to his waistcoat, "like he was trying to play the flute on his tummy, in imitation of Breitmann, the musical German golfer," as one irreverent sporting reporter wrote of him.

In the discussion which raged fiercely about him and his play, his clothes occupied a prominent place. The English press, which first scoffed at this new golfing genius, ended by pointing jubilantly to him as proof positive that England was right in

the perennial question of shirt-sleeves *versus* coat.

“This new American phenomenon,” they declared, “could never have attained his preëminence in the States had he not adopted the English custom of playing in his coat.”

II

ON that bitter night when he had received the Government's curt epistle and had made his wagers with Sharples, Perry had promised himself to levy tribute on his countrymen, to enable him to carry on his work for their safety, since they themselves were so wrapped up in sport and money-making that they could not see any need for national defense. And levy tribute he did. Wherever he went, he was willing to back himself against the leading players for considerable sums of money, and his style of play continually tempted wealthy amateurs

to bet that they could beat him. The nest-egg he had won from Sharples grew week by week.

As his fame waxed, he discovered that there were other, unexpected sources of income opening up to him. He had bought his now renowned golf suit ready-made from a large shop in town. The head of this clothing establishment, himself a golfer, and a keen business man, wrote to Perkins offering him a thousand dollars down and a royalty of a dollar on every suit if he would permit the firm to name the suit after him "The Putter Perkins Golf Suit," and to advertise it as that in which he was winning his sensational series of tournaments.

Perry accepted the offer without shame.

Next the Sporting Trust made him an even better offer for the right to make a set of clubs to be called "The Putter Perkins Clubs." Among these was a driver guaranteed to give the identical slice with which his



THE RIGHT HAND ON THE STOMACH

ball left the tee, whenever he used his driver. It may be mentioned in passing that these clubs attained great popularity — especially the driver, which, owing to the curious perversity of golf, was found to cure even the most inveterate of slicers, and to send a perfectly straight ball.

Several of the popular magazines wrote to Perry to ask his terms for articles on golf, and his brazen demand for a thousand dollars apiece was acceded to without a murmur.

A regular school of golfers — though from these he derived no direct pecuniary benefit — arose in imitation of him. They not only copied his clothes and his stance, but his odd movement at the end of every shot. The right hand on the stomach, they said, insured a perfect balance. They were as good as any other school of freak golfers: their scores were not appreciably worse than before, while their conversational range was considerably widened.

As for "Putter" Perkins himself, he continued on his triumphal career, and rounded out a phenomenally successful season by winning the Amateur Championship with ease.

III

HIS name had now become a household word from New York to San Francisco. Still he was troubled with doubts. "Have I done enough?" he asked himself, as the winter closed in and the public forgot golf for six-day bicycle races and the opera. "Have I attained a sufficient height, or must I conquer yet other worlds before my ideas will have the weight I wish them to have with my countrymen?"

To this problem he gave his most earnest attention. He tabulated the relative amount of space devoted by six representative newspapers to him, to the remarks of major team baseball magnates, and to the utterances of the Secretary of State. He plotted these

statistics on a chart, and from it decided that, to attain to the position of importance and authority he coveted, he must, like a prima donna, become an international celebrity before he would be appreciated at home. This meant that he must conquer the little cynical, scoffing island across the ocean, which, in golf at least, had managed to retain its preëminence almost unimpaired up to that time.

The wisdom of Perry's decision was proved by the instant response in the newspapers to his announcement that he was going over to take part in the British championships. His partial winter eclipse came to an end, and he again began to read columns of speculation and forecast about himself. If there is one thing which arouses popular interest in the United States, it is an athletic contest with England.

Perry sailed on the same steamer with Roosevelt on his last round-the-world trip,

and as our former President listened to the cheers from the dock — cheers for “Putter” Perkins, not for him — he realized at last the mistake he had made in sticking to big-game shooting and tennis, when he might have become a golfer.

IV

THE British people welcomed Perry with wide-open arms — at least as wide as Nature permits an Englishman’s arms to open to a stranger — and in pretended perturbation exclaimed,

“I say, I expect we shan’t be able to hold you at all, you know!”

And a great and sudden gloom fell upon the country when their words of modest self-depreciation turned out to be true, and after a number of close matches Perry won the Amateur Championship.

“Won it with his putter, as that beggar Travis did, by Jove! But fahncy his taking

his putter from the tee!" And they derived a certain amount of satisfaction from the knowledge that their cracks — whatever might be the outcome of their matches — never drove off with a goose-necked putter, as Perry sometimes was constrained to do when very hard-pressed.

Yet in spite of his success a depression settled upon Perry Perk which he could not shake off. At Medchester, unknown and working away all day upon his torpedo, and worshiping Claire Terhune from afar, he had been as cheerful a soul as you would care to know. Now, with the golfers of two nations at his feet, and the name of "Putter" Perkins grown so great that no newspaper ever thought of putting "Mr." before it, with prizes dropping into his lap in shoals, and his bank account waxing day by day, a deep melancholy came upon him.

The English press noted his "dour concentration," as they called it, and com-

mented on it variously. Some tried to lash the English to a realization of the national disgrace of permitting Americans to win even this last stronghold of sport. "Englishmen must not take their games so lightly. Never could Great Britain," they cried, "hope to regain her premier position until she regarded sport seriously, as the Americans did. Their players must be under strict training, as the Americans were. Sport must be reduced to a business, as it was in America."

Another section of the press, with aristocratic, public-school leanings, congratulated themselves that they had not yet sunk to the level of Americans in making of sport a business. English gentlemen, they thanked their stars, did not devote their whole existence to winning, as the Americans did. From a purely golfing point of view, it might be satisfactory to produce such a phenomenon as this "Putter" Perkins, who had no

other thought in life than golf; but for their part they were thankful that the fine old breed of English gentlemen still regarded golf as secondary to their afternoon tea, and did not make the winning of games the sole reason of existence, as the Americans did.

V

IMMERSED in his own gloomy thoughts, the time passed slowly for Perry between the Amateur and the Open Championship. Great Britain had not given up hope of retaining this, the highest goal to which a golfer can aspire. Against the American the United Kingdom marshaled her best: Vardon, the Great; Braid, the long-armed smiter; Taylor, the short and chunky wizard of the mashie; Ray, the imperturbable; Duncan, of the lightning swing. She even called upon the Entente, and Massie, with two lesser Frenchmen, stood shoulder to

shoulder with the great English and Scotch, all mustered to crush the Yankee upstart.

Yet — not to keep the reader on tenter-hooks — Peregrine Perkins won again. It was a neck-and-neck finish. He won by one stroke, Braid, Vardon, and Taylor tied for second; and, again one stroke behind them, Massie, Ray, and Duncan. They had to bring in the constabulary to manage the crowds which were attracted to Hoylake, and the contest was only decided on the last green.

“Now,” muttered Perry to himself, as he straightened up after his final putt, “that ought to make them sit up.”

“Them” referred to certain persons in authority in his own land who had refused to pay any attention to his wireless torpedo.

CHAPTER IV

PERRY PERK MEETS BREITMANN

I

PERRY was about to return to America when a small but distinguished deputation of golfers called upon him in his hotel to make a peculiar request of him.

John Ball, Hilton, and Hutchinson sent up their cards, and when Perry appeared the eldest as spokesman for the three burst forth impetuously:

“For God’s sake, Perkins, before you go back to the States, run over to Germany and take a fall out of that musical champion of theirs. He’s been bragging that he could beat the best of us, if we did n’t rule his musicians off our links, until we’re sick of it.”

“As a matter of fact, he’s done it,” Hilton broke in. “We get so put off by his

confounded tunes that we invariably crack. I slipped over there myself —” He shook his head gloomily.

“You can do the trick,” Ball urged eagerly. “I don’t believe that music or anything else would put you off *your* game,” which, if one studied it out, was a left-handed sort of compliment, though Ball meant well when he said it.

“No, I don’t believe music would put me off,” Perry replied, musing.

There was no reason why he should hurry back to America. It was the dead season in Washington. The President was spending the hot weather in the mountains of Vermont and the legislators were scattered to the four winds. Nothing could be done about his torpedo till fall. He might as well go over to Germany and enhance his reputation by another international victory.

“I believe I’ll go,” he announced.

II

AS soon as news of his intention got into the papers — and “Putter” Perkins could hardly take a step now without the fact being cabled to America — it roused an interest hardly less than his coming to England had done. Breitmann, the musical German, loomed mythically menacing in the imagination of the Anglo-Saxon world. Unde- feated in his own country, and barred from competition in other countries by the St. Andrews rule against music on the links, Anglo-Saxondom could not believe him to be invincible, even with the aid of his musicians. Now the matter was to be put to the test in open competition.

The English were as excited about it as America. The vanquisher of their best amateurs and professionals must not be beaten by a German.

It must be remembered that all this hap-

pened in bygone days when Germany was a military nation. It is difficult to conceive that the peaceable country which to-day is so industriously engaged in depreciating the mark, should once have felt a keen interest in military affairs, that it should, indeed, have been regarded by its neighbors as a menace to the peace of Europe. Well, times have changed, but the older of my readers can distinctly remember the former state of affairs.

With this undercurrent of hostility and suspicion, now so happily absent, it is no wonder that even in athletic contests there should have been a rivalry the keenness of which revealed the underlying temper of the people toward each other.

If England and America were excited over the coming contest, Germany welcomed it with a delirious burst of national enthusiasm. Breitmann was the son of a trombone player in the Wiesbadener Kur Orchester, who after twenty-seven years of faithful service

was enabled to retire, rich, from the invention of a patent trombone attachment for player pianos.

With wealth, Ambition raised her head. The Breitmanns were all for taking up the pursuits of the idle rich. The father embarked on an automobile. The mother folded her busy hands and grew fatter in placid contentment. The daughters took lessons in playing "diabolo." And "das Schport" called the son. He, who with many family privations had been raised to be a professor, took up golf.

III

FOR six months he practiced it with all the ups and downs that golfers know. Then he came to a momentous conclusion. Stupid *Engländer* might give years of concentration and practice to acquire efficiency in the game. He would evolve perfection out of his inner consciousness.

Retiring to his library, with pencil and diagram he worked out a perfect method. The essence and gist of golf was the swing. Were that perfect, perfect shots would result. The reason men did not achieve this perfection was because, in their anxiety, they lost the perfect rhythm. And the remedy, Breitmann found, was to play golf to music, as one danced. Golf was an art. Artistically played, all its troubles would be overcome.

The selection of the proper tunes and tempo for the different shots occupied him over a year, even with the valuable assistance of Professor Dämmergötterung, of the Berlin Conservatory. In their painstaking German way they trained a couple of musicians, a violinist and a trombone player, until these were able to render exactly the music required. The rest was easy. Taking his stance, Breitmann had only to size up distance, wind, and slope of ground, and then ask for the proper tune

whether for wood, cleik, iron, or mashie — full, half, quarter, or chip. For putting he had been unable to find a suitable tune.

And, preposterous as the whole thing appeared, he had made good at it. It was after a number of noted English players had slipped over to Germany to take a fall out of him, and had been beaten with consummate ease, that the St. Andrews Rules Committee had a hasty meeting and forbade music on the links.

IV

BUT now Germany felt that her triumph was at hand. England had been pursuing sport for centuries. Germany had just taken it up. Yet already, by wedding Euterpe to Hercules, she had produced a golfer whom only the unfair St. Andrews rule prevented England from having to acknowledge as her superior on her own soil. Now if the holder of both the British amateur and open cham-

pionships were vanquished by Breitmann, under the enlightened German rules, would that not be proof conclusive of Teutonic superiority?

Baden-Baden used to be a pleasant place to spend that most precious or most valueless of possessions, Time. It was so situated, climatically, that it was rarely empty, and in the spring and fall was very full. It was fuller than usual when Perry Perkins arrived to try conclusions with Breitmann.

As he looked out of the window, on the morning after his arrival, he was charmed with the place, and had little anticipation of the trying scenes it had in store for him.

Although advertised as the Championship of the World, the tournament was only open to Perkins and Breitmann. The Deutscher Golfersbund reasoned logically that, since Perkins was the best in England or America, and Breitmann the best in Germany, it would be a waste of time to

admit any other contestants. It was an unusual way to look at the matter, but the Golfersbund was composed of New Thinkers, not of mossbacks.

Perry slipped down to Oos, seven minutes away by train, where the golf course is, to have a look around. The links seemed to be deserted, the golfers of Baden-Baden not being of the early-bird variety. Wandering about the clubhouse, Perry went into the dressing-room and came upon an elderly gentleman, stocky and square, of swarthy coloring, with neat little mustaches cocked up at the ends. He was sitting on a stool, before a washbowl, with a towel tucked under his chin, scrubbing a bowlful of golf balls with a nailbrush.

V

“CAN you tell me whether Mr. Cecil Blandford, the honorary secretary of the club, will be here this morning?” Perry asked.

“I believe he will,” the stranger replied, with a slight foreign accent, but in precise English. “But are you not Mr. Pootaire Perkins, whose face we have so often seen in the golfing papers this year?”

“Yes. I have come over to see if I can hold my own with your musical champion.”

“Not *my* champion, I assure you. May I introduce myself, since I have not a fame like yours which needs no introduction? I am the Chevalier Défense d’Afficher, an earnest though humble follower of the game of which you are master.”

The chevalier rose from his seat and wiped his hands, and the two shook hands.

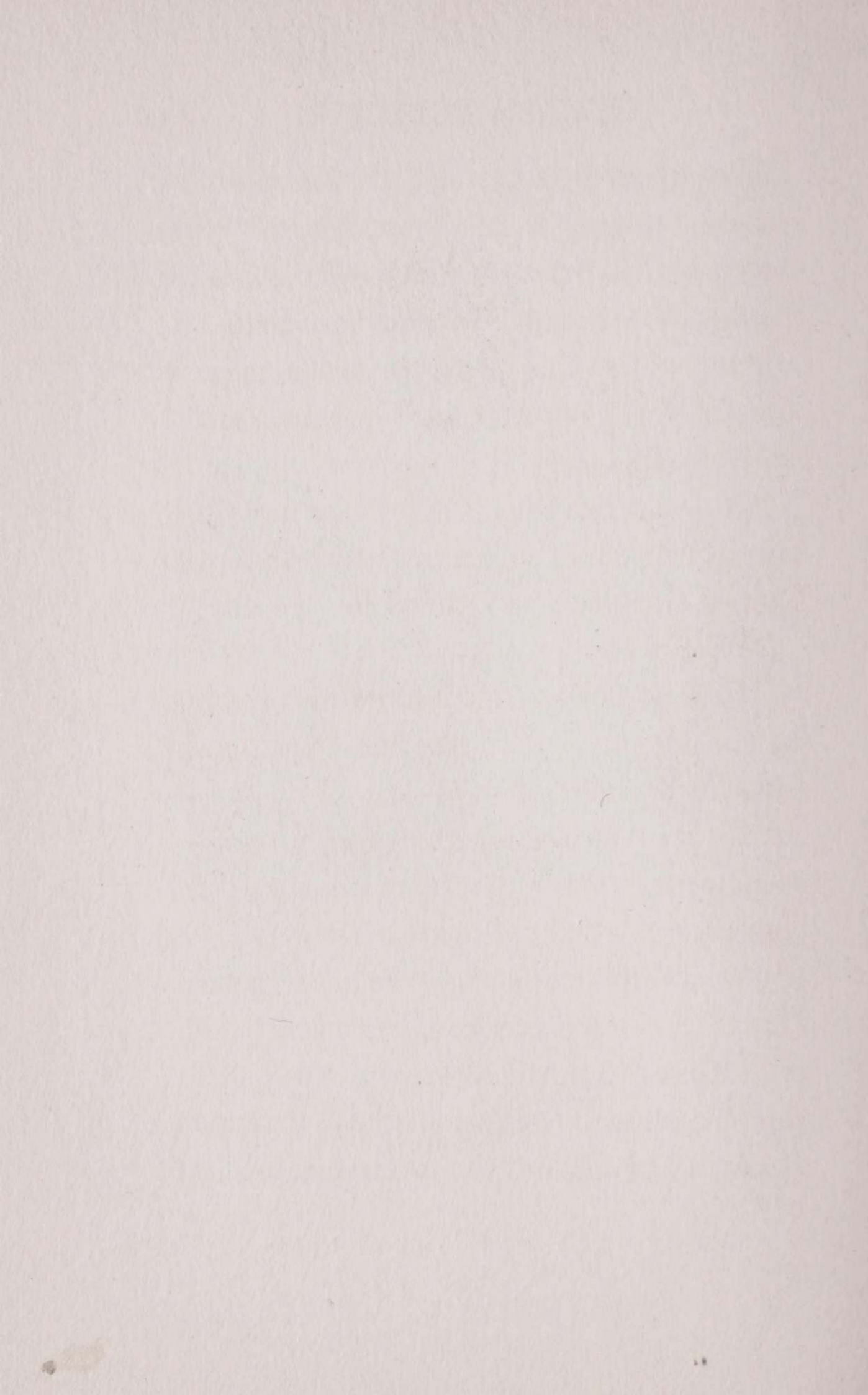
“You were asking for Mr. Cecil Blandford,” the chevalier continued. “Do you know him?”

“No, I have never met him.”

“You will find him a very charming gentleman — and a superb golfer. Ah! there he is coming now.”



“ I AM THE CHEVALIER DÉFENSE D’AFFICHER ”



The talented secretary of the club instantly recognized Perry and warmly welcomed him to the Baden-Baden links. After the first words of greeting, Perry asked:

“Aside from this matter of music, is there any difference between the German and the St. Andrews rules?”

“No, they have n’t had time for more yet, but the whole matter has been turned over to Doktor Adolph Schwärmerei for revision.”

“Who is he?”

“He’s the celebrated author of a treatise on the Games of the Ancient Egyptians,” Blandford replied grimly.

“He will be one of the most interested spectators at your match to-morrow,” the chevalier put in with twinkling eyes. “It will be the first game of golf he has ever seen. But the Germans feel confident that he will produce a set of rules of far greater philosophic reasonableness than those that have grown up haphazard in Great Britain.”

“By the time they bring in beer and pretzels, it will become quite a *gemüthlicher* affair,” Blandford added gloomily. Himself an aristocrat of the game, he viewed with distrust any reform tending to make it easier for the masses, whose handicap would always remain between eighteen and thirty.

“Give me a line on Breitmann,” Perry said.

“If you defeat him, you will not be at all popular here,” the chevalier volunteered. “He has become rather an idol, and I hear that Emperor William is so nervous about it that he is either going to take up golf himself, or forbid the officers of his army playing it at all.”

“But about Breitmann’s game?”

“Oh, his game’s all right,” Blandford exclaimed. “No one bothers about that. What we all worry over is the bally trombone player and fiddler at his heels. Did you ever play on the course at Trinkomalee?”

“No. Where is Trinkomalee?”

“It’s in Ceylon, and when you take off your golf shoes there, you hang ’em up on pegs, toes up, so that scorpions and centipedes shan’t nest in them. I was a bit run-down when I was there, and, whenever I was addressing the ball, I used to fancy I felt a centipede in the toe of my boot.”

“Must have helped your game,” Perry laughed.

“Well, a trombone player is n’t a centipede, but he seems to have somewhat the same effect.”

VI

IN spite of Blandford’s warning, Perry went into his match with entire confidence. Neither the immense crowd of patriotic Germans who had come to cheer on their champion, nor the playful gambols overhead of the huge Zeppelin, “Sachsen,” made him in the least nervous. As for the fiddler and

the trombone player, he believed that the strains of their music would be soothing.

The contest was at match play over thirty-six holes, and the gallery gallantly proposed to tramp the whole way.

“It vill at least gif’ us a fine appeteet,” hopefully explained one of the spectators who enjoyed the pleasures of the stomach, though he knew little about golf.

Breitmann won the toss, and took his place on the tee amid the cheers of the on-lookers, his two musicians breaking into slow, even music. He waggled three times in perfect accord with the music, then drew back his club-head in a beautiful, rhythmic full swing, without a suspicion of haste, or pressing, or nervousness.

His ball sailed straight down the course, and landed a little to the left of the place where the old green used to be, before Blandford metamorphosed this first hole into a dog’s-leg.

Unfeignedly the American admired Breitmann's style.

"If I could play like that, I should n't care whether I won or not," he exclaimed.

"And now — you vill vin?" Breitmann inquired, with an edge of sarcasm.

"Oh, I've *got* to win," Perry replied cheerfully. "I need it in my business."

He stepped on the tee, placed his ball on a pinch of sand, and without preliminary motion struck at it. He topped it — no uncommon occurrence — but stood smiling, in his usual attitude, with the fingers of his right hand pressed against the buttons of his waistcoat, watching the ball as it scurried along the ground. He watched it confidently, as he had done many a time before, when from a seeming fizzle his shot had turned into a triumphant success.

Hullo! Instead of leaping lightly over the water hazard and continuing on its way, as he expected it to, it plumped into it and sank.

"That's funny," he muttered. "I wonder what's wrong."

Giving his driver to his caddie, he plunged both hands into his coat pockets as if rummaging for another ball.

"Putter" Perkins, the unbeaten, and till now unbeatable, took seven strokes for the first hole, an easy four.

He took nine for the second, another four hole.

On the third his ball headed straight for the upstanding bunker, and burrowed into it like a mole, so that he had to pick up.

In fact every stroke was that of the Perry Perk of twenty-four handicap, who used to play around Medchester with half his mind on the wireless torpedo he was inventing. There was dismay among the Anglo-Saxon spectators; jubilation and joy among the Germans. They would show the world! Here was a man who had beaten everything in America and England — and their cham-

pion was making him look like thirty pfennigs.

The anxiety on Perry's face deepened from minute to minute, and frantically he clutched at his waistcoat after every shot. Blandford, who had not seen this characteristic gesture before, thought he was in pain.

"Can I send to the club for a wee drappie, old man?" he asked solicitously.

Perry shook his head. "I believe it's the accursed music," he muttered. "It interferes with the vibra —"

At the end of four holes he was four down.

That Breitmann played golf with his head he had already proved by the invention of his musical system. His employment of gray matter did not end here, and to his knowledge that his music put his adversaries off their game, quite as much as it helped him, may without libel be ascribed the fact that he kept one or other of his retainers playing continually.

VII

ON the fifth hole Perry made the curious discovery that, although his shots went all wrong while the trombone was sounding, the strains of the violin had no adverse effect on them.

The trombone player was a big lusty man, whose ample chest denoted immense lung capacity.

"Looks as if he could last all day," Perry thought, sizing him up. Yet even a phenomenal trombonist must take his instrument from his lips now and then, and these were the occasions Perry seized for making his shots. But this necessitated an exhibition of waggling such as man had never seen before; and he had to make it all appear natural, lest his sharp-witted adversary notice that this wealth of waggling coincided with the booming of the trombone, and that only when the violin took up the strains did he give

his quick, jerky stroke and drive off his ball.

"It iss not golf you blay so much as vaggel-ball," Breitmann observed sweetly to him.

"Seems as if I could n't stop waggling while that delicious music of yours keeps on," Perry replied with equal sweetness. He hoped that the German's patience would become exhausted and that he would order his musicians to be silent; but Breitmann only smiled amiably and replied:

"Your poet say, 'Music haf charms to sooth the saffage breast.' Berhaps you haf a saffage breast — yes? I fear some beebles mitout a saffage breast haf find it not so bleasant."

While the principals in this odd match might display infinite patience, the gallery found it hard to be equally philosophic.

"*Donnerwetter, aber* dass iss a game to go to shleep by," cried a florid young man in uniform, an *Oberleutnant*, who had stood

first on one foot and then on the other while Perry waggled, until both feet were equally worn out. "I haf not time in one life to learn such a game."

Many of the spectators, indeed, had drifted back to the clubhouse and were ordering cooling drinks, or giving orders for luncheon. Yet the increasing closeness of the match was holding many; for Perry, after his discovery on the fifth hole, not only managed to hold his own, but won back three of the holes he had lost.

The morning round lasted four hours and a half, although the course is short. As they were finishing the eighteenth hole, Breitmann uttered a jubilant cry, and Perry, glancing quickly at him, felt his heart sink; for in the triumphant look on the German's face he guessed that his adversary had made the same discovery about the power of the trombone that he had made himself at the fifth hole.

VIII

LUNCHEON was a soberly anxious meal for both contestants. The American was wondering whether he should be able in the afternoon to elude the vigilance of the trombone player enough to bring off his shots. The German had his own cause for worry; for at the end of the morning round his two musicians had begged for a word in private. They wore long faces and a truculent manner.

“*Donnerwetter*, Herr Breitmann,” burst forth the trombonist, making himself the spokesman, “ve gannot geep on blaying for efer, like a hant-orkan. Ve gan blay a whole efening’s goncert — yes — *mit pausen*; but not all der dime, like dis morning. *Herr Je!* you must tink I haf a lungs of brass, as vell as a brass instrument. Und my frent here, his arms is of an achiness dey drop off like autumn leafs. You should haf *tree*

trombone artists, und *tree* fiddle-men for such blayment."

"Ach! dat iss true!" Breitmann agreed. "Such a length of wagginess as dat tall *Amerikaner* haf, wass nefer seen pefore. But to-day iss too late to gif training to udder musicians. I tell you! To-day I pay you both *tree* times as much *gelt* — und to-day you play *like tree men a piece* — hey?"

With only the proper amount of grumbling the musicians agreed to this, yet Breitmann was not sure they would be able to do it. The son of a trombone player himself, he knew what a strain such an attempt was. If only their match could be shortened in some way. He racked his brains over this, and, before play started, innocently proposed to the American that, in view of the fact that it was already half-past three, they should mutually agree to limit themselves to three waggles before any one shot.

"Certainly," Perry agreed, "provided you

will also agree that your trom— that is to say, that your musicians will stop playing while I am making my shots. They can play as much as you like while you are making yours.”

“I am sorry,” replied Breitmann, “that I gannot agree mit. It iss *notwendig* that I haf the music all the dime to breserve such a broper harmony in me.”

“Then I cannot agree to waggle only three times,” Perry said. “As I told you, your music sort of hypnotizes me so that I feel as if I could go on waggling for ever.”

“*Ach so!*” Breitmann retorted in a steely tone. “Vell, ve vill see if der Herr Referee vill bermit such onlimited vaggling.”

But the referee when appealed to said he could find nothing in the rules which limited the number of waggles allowed a player. He in turn appealed to Professor Schwärmerei, the great authority on the games of the Ancient Egyptians.

“*Nein*, der iss not vun such rule,” the professor admitted. “*Aber* anodder dime ve vill make vun such. It iss *unverschämmt* so much to vaggel. Not efen de ancient Egyptians, who had so many more centuries of dime pefore dem, vould haf vaggled in such an extremely lengthy manner.”

IX

PLAY began, and Perry learned at once that the trombone was consecrated to him, while Breitmann made his shots as well as he could to the music of the violin alone.

Luckily for the American the trombone is not an instrument that a man can play continuously, minute after minute, without taking breath. It became a regular game of hide-and-seek between them. If Perry managed to make his stroke when the musician was temporarily out of breath, it came off with all its old efficacy. If, on the other hand, the trombonist let out a blare of sound at the

instant that Perry struck the ball, the latter would do almost anything of which a golf ball is capable in the way of contrariness.

Perry blessed his short and jerky swing, hardly more than a good-sized waggle itself, which enabled him to get off many a shot before the musician could guess his intention. A duel it was, a duel to the death. Perry aged under the strain of the contest; while, as for the trombonist, it seemed as if he might be carried off by an apoplectic stroke at any instant.

Breitmann, also, with only the thin strains of the fiddle to play by, lost the wonderful steadiness that had characterized him in the morning.

Holes were won, and holes were lost. Neither was able to draw away from the other.

At the thirteenth Perry was one up.

The fourteenth they halved.

The fifteenth Breitmann won. The match was all square, with the long sixteenth before

them. This hole ran beside the railroad track, from the extreme end of the links nearly back to the clubhouse. A hundred and forty yards from the tee an upstanding bunker needed a good carry for safety.

X

“*Ach, du lieber Himmel*, how dry I am!” moaned the poor trombonist, as he plodded from the fifteenth green to the sixteenth tee. “My throat haf crack, my lungs are like a fedder-bed, mit my tongue noddings but a piece of leather. If I had but one drink — one *schoppen* of beer, I tink I could blay yet a liddle more.”

“*Beer!*”

The word shot like the crack of a whip from the lips of Breitmann. He seized the clubs from his caddie.

“*Bursch*, you run like vun greased lightning-bug ofer de railroad tracks to a *gasthaus*, und here bring de biggest *schoppen* of

beer on earth. *Schnell! Ach!* why did I not methink of this sooner before?"

The rôles of the two contestants had now become reversed. As ardently as Breitmann had wished to hurry matters, so eagerly did he now wish for delay. While the boy dashed away on his errand of mercy, Breitmann stooped to arrange the lacings of his shoe. Deliberately he untied it, and then tied it up again. He walked on a few yards, and stopped to untie, and tie up, the lacings of the other shoe.

The gallery looked on sympathetically — at least all the Teutonic part.

"Shall we not play the rest of the match to-day?" Perry asked mildly.

"*Aber* his feet — haf you not observ' — they do him *weh!*" indignantly exclaimed Professor Schwärmerei. "You do not hurry your vaggie — ve vill not hurry his feet."

After his shoes had been untied and tied up again in the most thorough possible man-

ner, Breitmann proceeded slowly toward the sixteenth tee. His eyes roved over the railroad tracks in the direction his caddie had taken. Had the boy failed to find a saloon? In Germany — never! Had he perhaps fallen and broken a leg — or spilled the beer? Had a too zealous police official arrested him for crossing the tracks, *polizeilich verboten*?

Still no boy in sight.

“My ball!” cried Breitmann. “I gannot find him. Where is he?”

“I’ll lend you a ball,” Blandford offered.

“No! no! I must haf my own ball.” With every appearance of desperate eagerness he sought through his pockets. “He is lost!” he cried tragically. “I must vait till de boy he come. Berhaps he has him.”

Perry pulled out his watch. “If it’s a case of lost ball, you have five minutes to find it in. If you don’t find it, you lose the hole.”

For four minutes and fifty seconds Breit-

mann hunted for his ball. Then he discovered it in his hip pocket, where, singularly enough, it had not occurred to him to look before.

Still no boy!

Slowly, slowly Breitmann teed up his ball; re-teed it in another spot; teed it up again in a third. He took a piece of bee's-wax from his pocket and rubbed the handle of his club. He breathed upon his hands.

Ah! *saved!* There was the boy — yet afar off — but safely speeding along with two huge steins of foaming beer in his hands.

A dozen waggles and the boy would be with them before Perkins could possibly tee up his ball and drive off.

XI

THE scene on that sixteenth tee will remain indelibly impressed on Perry Perk's mind: the large anxious crowd, gazing hopefully toward the running caddie with his two full

steins; overhead a magnificent heron sailing along as majestically as an aeroplane; and the stout trombonist, exhausted but game, tooting away at his instrument for dear life.

It was a pretty piece of timing. Breitmann did not drive off his ball until the boy was within thirty yards of the tee. By the time Perry had teed up his ball and taken his stance, the boy was there, the boy with his precious burden of beer, which was to moisten the parched throat of the faithful trombonist, give new life to his leathery tongue, revivify his feather-bed lungs.

Breitmann had worked out his musical system of playing golf in a marvelous way, had worked it out laboriously and thoughtfully, with diagrams and rules and principles. In the matter of beer he had acted hastily, intuitively, on the spur of the moment — and his was not the nature to work by this method. Given a week, and an encyclopædia, and grave consultation with all the

authorities, and he might have arrived at a wise and proper solution. As it was he erred.

Perry Perk, waggling despairingly on the tee, was surprised by a sudden sharp clang of brass, followed by a deep, humid silence. He was so startled that he could not refrain from glancing around.

There lay the trombone on the ground, while he who had produced its brazen music stood with his head buried in an immense stein, whence issued happy gulps and gurgles.

He had heard the Call of the Beer!

For an instant only did this idyllic scene last. Then Breitmann flew at his recreant trombonist, and, cursing in fluent, guttural German, command him instantly to return to his playing.

But the trombonist, planted on powerful legs, minded the words and tuggings of Breitmann not so much as he would the buzzing of a fly in mucilage.

Perry laughed softly. There was no need to hurry. When that stein pointed to the zenith, and not before, would that sturdy German descend to earth and to trombone playing. At present he was in heaven.

“Seems to have a genuine thirst, does n’t he?” Blandford observed, as he watched Breitmann’s frantic efforts to separate the trombonist from his stein.

“Yes, I guess part of what I took for lung capacity was beer capacity.”

During that blessed interval of peace Perry made his shot, made it quite leisurely, with his putter, his face breaking into such a grin as it had not worn for many a day.

Up, up, up into the air sailed his ball — a hundred yards it looked; and they said afterwards that there must have been a veritable hurricane blowing in this upper air. They said the ground was very hard; they said that the ball must have struck a stone or something on landing. There even arose



AT PRESENT HE WAS IN HEAVEN

a legend, some weeks later, that a track-walker on the railroad had seen a hare spring out of a bunch of shrubbery, pick up the ball in its mouth and carry it a hundred yards toward the green before discovering it to be inedible.

A great "*Ah!*" broke from the gallery. "I belief he haf proceed to the green itself!" shrilly cried Professor Schwärmerei, moved beyond his patriotism by his admiration. "*Ach!* he iss der world's champion surely."

XII

MADDENED beyond restraint by this result of his musician's dereliction, Breitmann caught up the trombone from the ground and began to belabor the big man with all his strength: on the head, on the back, and on that part reserved for punishment in small boys.

The trombone suffered more than the trombonist. The latter only gave a great

sigh of happiness as he drained the last drop in the stein, and muttered dreamily, "*Aber dass war gut bier!*" Yet, as he trudged down the field beside his colleague, a dull flame of resentment began to smolder inside that soggy brain. As he pondered over the blow he had received, and thought of his bruised body and outraged feelings, gradually he forgot his patriotism — forgot how greatly the pride of Germany depended on him.

Breitmann's wrath had cooled a little, and he wondered if he had gone too far. Apprehensively he glanced back to see if his musicians were following him. Yes, the violinist was trudging sturdily along, and just behind him lumbered the big figure of the trombonist, his stein in one hand, his battered trombone in the other. Breitmann could not read the thoughts inside that ponderous head; he only saw him meekly following, and his brow cleared.

"He will be *gut* now. It iss not yet too

late," he muttered. "He needed disciplinings. I haf been too kind mit dem *kerls*."

"Come, now, blay me my musics!" he commanded sharply when they reached his ball. Yet he made only a half-hearted attempt to halve this sixteenth hole. His brassie shot lacked steadiness. Either his nerves had become a trifle unstrung by his chastisement of the trombonist — executed without rhythm — or the musicians themselves, excited by the beer, may have fallen away from the perfect regularity they had attained by months of training. At any rate, Breitmann pulled his second far enough over to give himself an impossible lie, and picked up his ball.

Perry Perk was one up with two to go. He had the honor. The trombonist, quite recalled to his duty, blew upon his instrument so diligently that Perry could not find the smallest pause in which to drive off unhindered.

He made the attempt at length, and shot a miserable fozzled ball.

Breitmann won the hole.

XIII

THE match was thus all square on the seventeenth, or rather the thirty-fifth hole, and the power of beer still flared brightly in the trombonist's chest.

Supremely confident now, the German champion stood upon the final tee. Fiddler and trombonist were playing again in perfect rhythm. Breitmann swung back his club, and —

An awful screech came from the trombone, and the ball went away in a slice that left it nearly as far from the green as when it had started.

“Jesus-maria-und-ein-teilchen-von-joseph!” yelled Breitmann. *“Vat iss den loss mit you?”*

The trombone player carefully turned his instrument upside down and examined it.

“It iss a dent you haf make in mein trombone — mit mein head,” he announced blandly.

Breitmann stared at him suspiciously. Was this rebellion, or was it merely the truth?

“Vell, don’t haf anodder dent to-day,” he said menacingly.

Perry managed to get off a fair drive during an instant when the trombonist stopped to take breath; and then the whole gallery trooped over to see Breitmann make his second shot.

His lie was good, and his usual brassie would put the ball on the green. But just as the German champion was making his swing, again an awful yowl came from the trombone, and the insulted ball dived into a thick patch of reeds.

There was no mistaking the evil intent of the trombonist now, and Breitmann sprang at him and shot out his foot in a mighty

kick. This time, however, no beer distracted the attention of the trombonist. With a quick waddle he evaded the kick, which, spending its force on the unresisting air, caused Breitmann swiftly to sit down.

The trombonist strode up to the sitting champion and snapped his fingers under his nose.

"I blay you no more," he announced. "I am an artist, not a golfer-making machine — und you haf too many habits of kicking."

"Und I — I haf not shpoken pefore," put in the violinist; "but I am in my feelings mit my brudder-in-music. I make one sympathetic shtrike mit him. Der next kickings might come by *mir*. I go also."

And the two marched away to the gay little air of "*Ei, du lieber Augustin*" — played, not with the regularity which for months past they had been practicing, but mockingly, temperamentally.

And Breitmann lost the match.

CHAPTER V

CHOICE OF WEAPONS

I

IT was next day and Peregrine Perkins was peacefully sitting on a bench beside the purling waters of the tiny river Oos. The jubilation attendant on his victory had lasted well into the night before, and this morning he was well content to be by himself, bathed in the warm sunshine and in agreeable meditation. And his thoughts were less on golf than on wireless torpedoes and a girl he had left behind him in Medchester. He was also ruminating on the remarkable events that had occurred since the day, a year ago, when he, the club dub, had wagered all that remained of his patrimony that he could defeat Sharples, a four-handicap man, by applying science to the game.

Now he was ready to go back to America;

for now he felt that he had earned the fame which would force the American Government to pay attention to his torpedo, designed for the defense of his country's shores. When he had been unknown, the Navy Department had scorned even to investigate his invention, the invention on which he had spent ten years of his life and all his money. But now that the name of "Putter" Perkins had become a household word, he could desert golf and return to his beloved torpedo; and when that should carry his name higher than ever golf could —

From torpedoes his thoughts glided to Claire Terhune, and there they might have remained for an indefinite length of time had no outside interruption occurred. But, while he had been thinking his pleasant thoughts, his eyes had been staring absently at a big German officer, with a neck like an elephant's leg, and mustaches curled and stiff as a bull's horns.

This officer had been one of those who had most bitterly resented Perry's prolonged waggling in his match with Breitmann, and his resentment still burned fiercely within him. As Perry's eyes, without his realizing it, rested on the big man, the latter glared back ferociously. Of this Perry was entirely oblivious, and the officer became redder and redder in the face. Finally he sprang to his feet and strode over to the American.

"*Sie haben mich fixiert!*" he announced.

Perry looked up in surprise. "*Wass ist dass?*" he asked.

"*Sie haben mich fixiert,*" the officer repeated truculently; then, noting by the American's puzzled face that he did not grasp his meaning, he translated into sputtering English: "You haf make a stare upon me."

The officer's manner annoyed Perry.

"My good man," he replied patronizingly, "I did n't even know you were on earth.

I was thinking of something far pleasanter than you."

"Aha! It iss more offense you say," cried the German. "Your cart!"

"My cart? What do you think I am — a toy-shop?"

The officer, in deadly wrath, fumbled in his pocket until he found his card-case. He produced a card and formally presented it to Perry, fiercely demanding again:

"Your cart!"

"Oh, very well," Perry drawled, "if you must have it." And he presented his own card in elaborate imitation of the officer's manner.

The German took it and stalked off.

"I suppose he'll have me fined for gazing at his mustache on the public highway," the American murmured, and thought little more about the matter until late in the afternoon when another officer, a dapper little chap, called on him at his hotel, and with

punctilious ceremony requested him to appoint some gentleman with whom he could confer.

“Confer?” the American repeated. “What about?”

“A duel,” the dapper little officer replied.

“A duel?” Perry gasped. “With whom? And why?”

“Mit the Herr Oberleutnant Kaffee-klatsch. Dis *morgen* you haf fixier a stare upon him. He send you a challenge. I bear it.” The little officer thrust out his chest and stood if possible straighter than before.

Perry was flabbergasted. To be challenged to a duel by a stray person upon whom his eyes had happened to rest in a public place struck him as so utterly ridiculous as to be beyond discussion. At this instant the Chevalier Défense d’Afficher happened to enter the lobby. Quite a friendship had sprung up in the last three days between the old diplomat and Perry. The

chevalier had been one of the most interested followers of the great match, and declared that Perry's style made him hope even for his own game. To him the American now turned.

II

"I SAY, chevalier, help me out with this, will you? This officer has come to invite me to fight a duel with a chap who imagines I 'fixiered' him in the Lichtenthaler Allee this morning. What am I to do about it?"

The little officer saluted. "If this Herr will act as your segond, ve gan arranche eferything. I vill await him in the café."

He stalked away, his head stretched upward to the extremist limit of his five feet four.

Perry looked after him. "Well, what do you think of that? A little runt like him coming here and insisting that I fight a duel. I feel more like spanking him."

“Just what happened this morning?”

Perry told him. The chevalier threw back his head and laughed.

“It may be mighty funny for you,” Perry said, nettled, “but I can tell you it’s most inconvenient. My boat sails on Saturday, and there are a lot of reasons why I want to get home as soon as I can. If I lose this boat I may n’t get another chance to sail for a month. They’re all filled to the brim. It was only by luck I got this berth on the Lusitania, anyway. Somebody gave it up or I could n’t have got it.”

“Supposing I go out and confer with the little officer, and see if he won’t take a reasonable view of this affair,” the chevalier suggested, rising.

He found the little second sitting bolt upright in his chair. He looked taller than he did on foot. It was his legs that were chiefly lacking in length.

“Herr Leutnant,” the chevalier said, re-

turning his ceremonious salutation, "this seems to be entirely a mistake. I assure you that Mr. Perkins intended no discourtesy to your principal. When his eyes rested upon him this morning with a certain intentness of gaze, his mind was occupied with thoughts quite apart from him."

"Berhaps mit some new ways of wag-gling," suggested the little second sarcastically.

"It is quite possible," the chevalier returned serenely. "But it is manifest he could not have intended 'fixiering' Herr Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch if his thoughts were engaged on waggling. I may mention in addition that he is very desirous of sailing to America next Saturday. He begged me to say that it would be most inconvenient for him to stop over and fight a duel."

The little officer nodded. "I *versteh*. He does not desire to fight. My brincipal gif me instrugtions in such a case, if Herr Berkins

vill send a"— he consulted a slip of paper —
“a abject apologizing, he need not fight.”

“I fear me that this solution of the difficulty would not appeal to my principal. You must remember that the Anglo-Saxons do not regard dueling in the same light we Continentals do. Indeed, I remember to have heard one English gentleman describe our code as ‘all tommyrot.’”

“It may be tommyrot — I haf not acquaint myself mit the meaning of the vord — *aber* a American man gannot go around tommyrotting Sherman officers mitout consequences. He must fight or send an apologizing.”

“I will confer with my principal and learn if he desires to apologize,” the chevalier said grimly.

III

THE chevalier looked grave as he rejoined Perry.

“He is inexorable, that small man. He declares that you must fight Herr Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch, or send him an abject apology.”

“Abject nothing!” Perry replied, beginning to feel vexed. “I told him I did n’t even know he was there. What more does the poor fool want?”

“I understand that he desires the blood of your heart.”

Perry gave an exasperated laugh. “What an inconsiderate person! Why, I have n’t *time* to be killed. Did you explain to him that my boat sails on Saturday, and that all the others are booked up a month ahead?”

“Every reason I gave why you did not wish to fight only seemed to make him more eager for the duel. You would not care to send even a moderate apology, would you?”

“Apology be damned! I’ll slap the *Oberleutnant’s* fat face first — and then he *will* have something to challenge about.”

“That might be a pleasant diversion, but it would not assist you in sailing on the Lusitania. May I inquire if you are an adept with either pistol or sword?”

“Never bothered with either of them. By Jove, if the beggar insists on this silly duel, I’m going to choose torpedoes. I’ve got a torpedo at home that can lick creation. That’s the idea!” Perry cried, warming to the subject. “Put us in boats a hundred yards apart, each with a torpedo in leash — give the word — and we sick ’em at each other. That would be *some* duel.”

The chevalier twisted the top of his mustache.

“It has an enticing air, certainly. I am afraid that — ”

Suddenly the Frenchman sprang to his feet. “Will you place yourself unreservedly in my hands?” he demanded.

“Why, y-e-s.”

“It is good. I have an idea. Leave it all

to me." And he walked rapidly away toward the café, his swarthy face in a broad grin. As he neared the little officer, however, his smile left him. He became solemn.

"Herr Leutnant," he said, after punctiliously bowing again, "I find that my principal is not versed in the use of either pistols or swords. It would not be fair for him to have to fight under such a great disadvantage."

The little German shrugged his shoulders. "That is not an affair of us. He has had years enough to learn. Or he may send a groveling apologizing to Herr Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch."

"The latter he declines to do. And, since the choice of weapons lies with him, he chooses either torpedoes at one hundred meters, or golf balls at fifteen."

For once the little lieutenant forgot his dignity, and sat with his mouth wide open.



GOLF BALLS HE DOES NOT KNOW ALSO

“But — but — Herr Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch does not understand how to shoot torpedoes,” he stammered.

The chevalier shrugged his shoulders. “That is not an affair of us. He has had years enough to learn. If he is not acquainted with torpedo-fighting, he should be very careful how he challenges an American to a duel. I understand Herr Perkins is such a skillful torpedo-fighter that he can lick creation.”

“‘Lick creation’ — *wass ist dass? Aber, Herr Je*, it iss of a ridiculousness to fight a duel mit torpedoes.”

“Or golf balls,” the chevalier interjected. “He is willing for you to choose which you wish.”

The small lieutenant mopped his brow which had broken into profuse perspiration.

“Golf-balls he does not know also,” he said weakly. His manner had changed considerably in the last few minutes. His back

had lost its rigidity and he coughed in a deprecating way.

“Berhaps ve gan arranche,” he suggested. “You assure me Herr Berkins haf not intentionally intend to ‘fixier’ Herr —”

The chevalier waved away the words.

“No!” he answered gloomily. “Between ourselves, Herr Leutnant, I believe he *did* intentionally intend to do it. He meant to ‘fixier’ him through and through.” He lowered his voice confidentially. “To admit to you the truth, he is a born ‘fixierer,’ that American. Of course, if Herr Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch is sincerely sorry for having obstructed Mr. Perkins’s view this morning, I may be able to persuade my principal to accept a groveling apologizing from your principal.”

“Nefer!” cried the little lieutenant, springing to his feet. “Ve vill fight — mit golf balls. Ve Shermans are most brafe. I myself blay the tennis-spiel, *und* ve haf no

fear of any other little game-ball. To-morrow *morgen, früh*, early, ve vill fight."

IV

ON the night before the duel the nightingales sang the whole night through. Perry slept fitfully. Every time he awoke he heard them and wondered how near the morning was, and whether the hotel clerk would remember to wake him up in time. At last he lost himself in sound and dreamless slumber until there came a thundering at his door. The clerk was faithful to his trust, and on reaching the lobby Perry found the Chevalier Défense d'Afficher already awaiting him.

With the bag of clubs they went forth into the lovely dewy morning and walked beside the little river burbling over its foot-high-and-every-fifty-yards-little-dams (the German influence is plainly visible in this sentence) which distinguish this river from other little rivers; and past the frequent

little bridges trailing their decorations of vines down into the water, like fine ladies careless of their finery. The tall trees towered above them, and the green grass-blades sparkled with their morning diamonds.

On past the tennis club they walked, where the tall umpires' seats kept watch over the gleaming white lines. It was too early for the perambulator-pushing nurserymaid. Only the milkman with his dog-pulled cart was astir. He and the duelists had the early morning to themselves.

Perry and the chevalier arrived first at the secluded spot appointed. The American pulled out his watch.

"I've just one hour and thirteen minutes to duel before the train leaves. I hope they won't be late."

They were late. Till a very early hour they had sat up before frequently replenished *schoppen* of beer, toasting themselves, Germany, and the Kaiser; drinking confu-

sion to "Putter" Perkins, the Monroe Doctrine, and America. As a consequence there had been difficulty in arousing them at all this morning, and they did not look as if they had heard any nightingales.

All his original haughtiness of manner had returned to the little second. Formally and distantly he saluted the chevalier.

"Ve haf brought a surgeon mit uns," he said. "I do not know if it iss gustomary in golf duels. I haf ask a frent. He declare a caddyboy iss more right. I do not know vat iss a 'caddyboy.' Berhaps it iss something like a 'tommyrot.' May I make inquiries? In a duel mit little game-balls, how many dimes do dey shtrike the ball at each other? Till one is vorn out mit exhaustion — yes?"

"Not at all," the chevalier replied. "They keep on until one or the other is *hors de combat*."

The little man shrugged his shoulders

disdainfully. "It iss vell ve haf begun early."

V

IT was arranged that the duelists should drive at each other alternately. The surgeon prepared the lots, and the seconds drew them. The long straw fell to the German, and the bag of golf clubs was offered him for selection. To his trained military eye the niblick appealed as the most powerful weapon.

They took their places on the smooth turf exactly fifteen meters apart. Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch's ball was put in place.

He drew back the niblick for a mighty swipe, and with a beginner's luck caught the ball perfectly and lofted it high over the American's head.

"Ah, what a strength!" the surgeon murmured admiringly. "Less high and the duel would haf been finished already."

Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch waved his hand.

“Next dime I vill bedder know,” he muttered.

It was Perry Perk's turn. He was wearing his baggy old golf coat, which seemed to sag and bulge more than usual.

He teed his ball very low, took his stance, and sighted the line to his antagonist with extreme care.

Herr Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch faced his foe squarely, fearlessly, defiantly. He despised the hurt that any little game-ball might be able to inflict upon him. His head was erect, nose disdainful, eyes glaring, shoulders drawn back, chest thrust out, stomach a little farther out. He appeared solid and indestructible as the Fatherland itself.

VI

PERRY grasped his putter and hit the hardest swat of which his sinewy wrists were cap-

able. The ball flew from the tee, aimed precisely at that portion of the oberleutnant's form which was nearest.

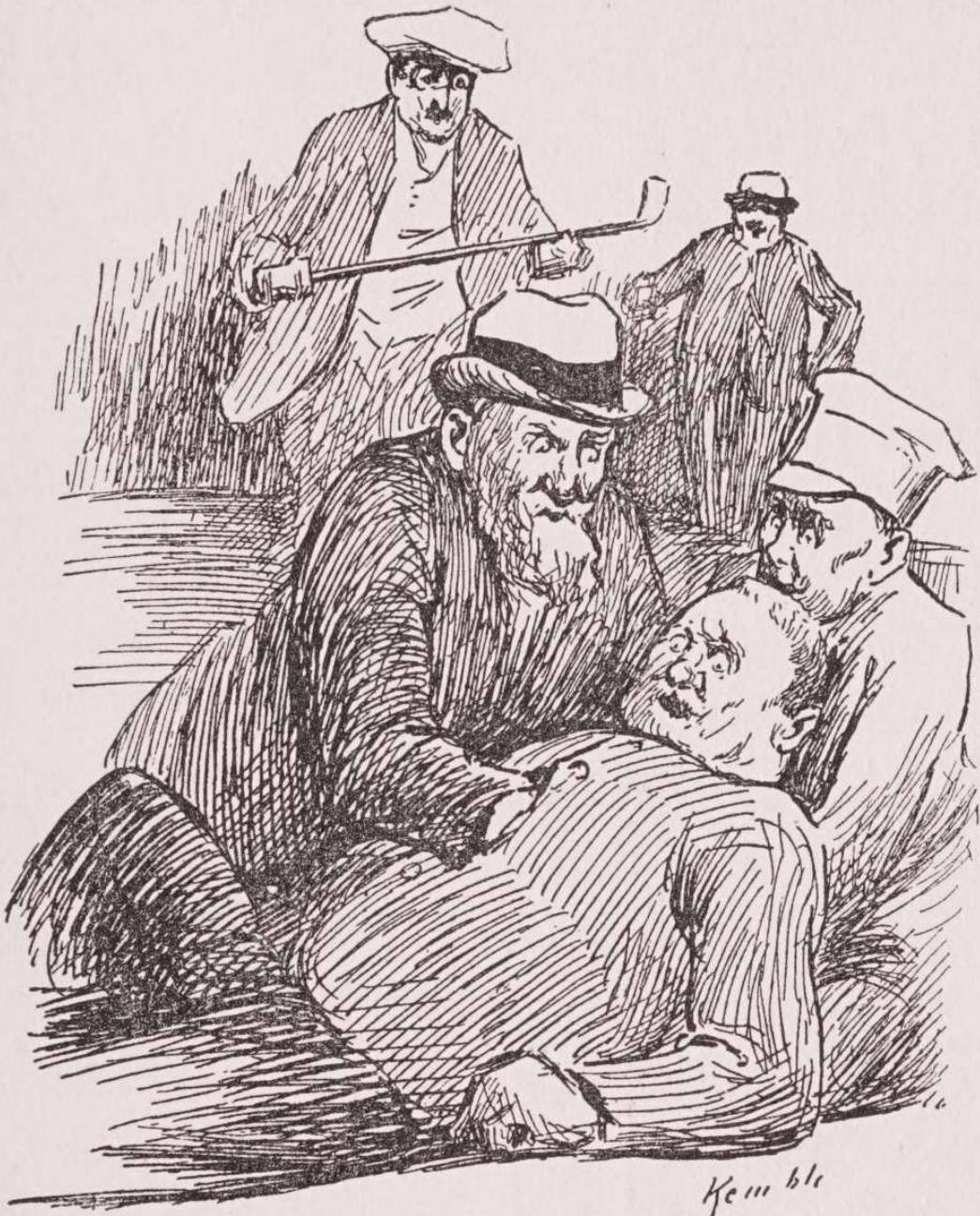
Scientists have figured out with great exactness that a golf ball driven two hundred yards must leave the tee with a force of some hundred tons.

Herr Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch was only fifteen yards from the tee, and the ball hit him squarely in the midriff.

The scientists are probably right.

It all happened so swiftly and suddenly that the gal—that is to say, the seconds' breath was taken away. One instant Herr Oberleutnant Kaffeeklatsch stood erect and grand as the Niederwald Denkmal. The next he lay crumpled up like an autumn leaf.

Whether the ball actually penetrated into his midst or not, the spectators could not determine, because he was folded up in the middle in a way which completely hid the ball from observation.



Kemble

“ACH! I AM DEADED”

His little second and the surgeon rushed up to the stricken duelist.

"*Ach!* I am deaded," he moaned, writhing in agony. "It vass like a gannon-pall. He haf slaughter' me."

Perry came up, too, while the surgeon was pawing over the German with quick, deft fingers.

"I say, old man, I'm sorry I put quite so much beef into that shot," he said anxiously. "I just *had* to catch the 8.43, so I had n't any time to waste. I'm sorry if I've really hurt you. You must be a bit soft. I wish you'd drop me a postal and let me know how you get along."

The *Oberleutnant* only groaned, and it may be doubted whether the American's request was within the strict etiquette of the dueling code. The chevalier touched him on the arm.

"You have exactly sixteen minutes to reach the station. I will take on myself the

duty of letting you know how your victim recovers from his first golf duel.”

“Thanks, old man. I can’t tell you how much obliged I am to you for all you have done for me. If you ever come to America, be sure to look me up. And now I must hot-foot it. I hope they have sent all my things down from the hotel.”

VII

IT may be mentioned here that the *Oberleutnant* was really rather badly hurt. The blow from the golf ball brought on an attack of peritonitis, which kept him in bed for six weeks, and caused his doctor to order him to abstain from beer the whole of this time. Eventually he recovered his health completely, and incidentally his figure; but the affair was the cause of the famous order of the Kaiser forbidding any officer in the German army to fight a duel with other weapons than swords or pistols. Golf balls were considered too likely to cause permanent injury.

CHAPTER VI

HOME AGAIN

I

PERRY PERK was the last man to catch the train. On the other hand he was the first passenger to board the Lusitania. We will skip the voyage home. Perry was a poor sailor, and you are missing nothing that any lover of his kind would care to know. Let us pass on to the grand reception given him on his return by the Medchester Club.

It was a neat idea of the reception committee: a fifty-foot-high putter, in electric lights, to shine forth over the hills and dales of Medchester in honor of the man who had carried its name conqueringly over the whole golfing world. The golfers had it all their own way that night; the hunting men just trailed along behind.

Had Perry been what in those far-off days

was quaintly termed a "drinking man" — but why contemplate the awful possibilities: he was n't. (A few of my older readers will doubtless remember a curious custom that used to prevail, when men forgathered joyously together, of imbibing certain liquids "to steal their brains away," as it was technically called. These liquids — the preparation of which is now reckoned among the lost arts — had an exhilarating effect on mankind, followed by deleterious after-effects.)

If Perry was intoxicated this evening, it was with something far subtler than champagne. Claire was there in a wonderful sea-foamy sort of dress that made her look like a mermaid, and you could easily imagine any man diving into the sea to follow her if she beckoned.

II

AND she did beckon. In the Age of Chivalry one would have hesitated to say it, but the Rise and Triumph of Feminism emboldens

us, and we may say that of the two Claire was rather the wooer. Her color came and went ('t was not the sort that stayed put) as with almost proprietary pride she hovered about him. Yet, in spite of the "comither" in her glance, an unaccountable constraint possessed our hero. His timidity, his embarrassment — whatever you choose to call it — did not lessen even when, along in the shank of the evening, he managed to convey Claire off to a lonesome corner of the moon-bathed porch, where his clubmates did the square thing by him. For a time, in this ostentatiously deserted spot, he was silent, until under the stimulating rays of the moon he plucked up courage to speak.

"There is something I have wanted to say to you for a long time."

Claire gave him a fluttering look and cast down her eyes. (The eyes still behave much as if the Rise and Triumph of Feminism were not.)

"Yes," she murmured, her slender figure swaying a hair's breadth toward him.

"I — I'm not really a golfer at all," Perry blurted out desperately.

Claire glanced up at him in surprise. Although the club had met to do honor to Perry as a golfer, she had not expected his words to treat of golf.

Slowly, one would have said sadly, Perry went on:

"I think you like me — a little."

"Who would n't?" she replied softly.

"If I were still twenty-four handicap — if I could n't play golf any more than I used to —"

"But you can," she interrupted proudly.

"Golf is an unworthy life's pursuit for a man," Perry muttered.

"I'm afraid you're a bit over-golfed," Claire said anxiously.

He shook his head gloomily.

"I'm not a golfer. I'm a scientist. And

my playing is n't golf — it's science. I want to tell you about it because I — I can't try to — to get you to — to like me under false pretenses."

Claire grew pale in the moonlight. The way Perry mixed up golf — and other things — was trying to a girl's nerves.

"Last year when Sharples was baiting me about my game," he went on earnestly, "I told him and the rest of the fellows that, if I chose to apply science to golf, I could beat them all at it. And I proved it. But I did n't do it by muscular skill, and I did n't do it just to win their money and prizes and championships and things. I did it because they would n't look at my torpedo in Washington, and I knew if I were to become golf champion — "

Perry broke off as he saw Claire's eyes widen with horror.

"I don't wonder you think I'm crazy, but listen a little longer and I will tell you all about it."

And he did — told her all about his fears for his country's future safety, and his desire to defend her with his torpedo; of how his money was all but gone when his torpedo was done, and of how Washington refused even to look at his invention. Told of his decision to levy toll on his countrymen so that he might defend them in spite of their indifference, and of his resolve to make a name for himself that would force Washington to listen to him.

Claire breathed a sigh of relief when she became convinced that Perry really had not lost his wits.

“But I don't see what all that has to do with your not being a golfer!” she exclaimed.

“I'm coming to that. Do you happen to understand anything about wireless telegraphy?”

“Oh, yes. You telegraph, only you don't have any wires to telegraph on — just as if

— as if I combed my hair without a comb,” she illustrated.

“But you could n’t do that, could you?”

“That’s what makes it so wonderful,” she assented eagerly.

III

OUT into the moonlight at the other end of the porch came one of the club stewards, a blundering fellow whose absolute willingness and good-nature alone kept him in a post for which he was eminently unfitted by nature. When he caught sight of Perry, he joyously ambled toward him.

“A letter for you, sir,” he exclaimed with a wide smile. As if the only person whose letters could excuse an interruption on such a night were not already sitting beside Perry.

“Thank you,” Perry said, and mechanically held out his hand. But when he saw the letter, he, too, turned pale in the moonlight. It was a long official-looking envelope

and the outside bore no stamp. Instead, in the right-hand upper corner was printed the notice that there was a fine of \$300 for using the envelope for other than official business. Without a word of apology he tore it open.

“Did n’t I tell you so?” he shouted.
“They’re waking up already.”

“Oh, what do they say?”

Claire clutched one corner of the sheet of paper, Perry clung to the other, and their heads bent together over the letter in the brilliant moonshine.

The steward *did* have sense enough to go away. (His smile was as wide as ever.)

“Dear Sir,” began the letter (most letters do). “There has recently been brought to my notice the important communication which you addressed to the Navy Department now more than a year ago. Only the negligence of a subordinate prevented me from seeing it before. I have now given careful consideration to your invention, as out-

lined in your letter, and that it possesses merits of a very distinguished order seems patent to me. I shall be most happy to confer with you further on this subject. Could you make it convenient to come to Washington some time next week? If it would be agreeable to you, we could give the subject an informal discussion on the Chevy Chase links while following the rites of the ancient and honorable game of which we are both devotees — you at the top, I at the bottom. If this will fit in with the plans of the golfer whom the United States delights to claim as her son, it will afford me the greatest satisfaction to — ”

Perry skipped to the signature.

“It’s from the Secretary of the Navy himself,” he said weakly. He was fairly faint by the emotion caused by this recognition of his invention, tardy though it might be.

“It ought to afford him satisfaction, the stupid thing!” Claire commented, not in the

least impressed by the signature. "Now go on and tell me some more" — she wrinkled her brows in puzzlement — "about how your torpedo helped you to play golf."

"Why, don't you see?" Perry explained eagerly; "it was n't an ordinary rubber-cored golf ball. It was a sort of miniature torpedo, and I carried some strong storage batteries in the pockets of my coat, and was able to control the flight of the ball much as I did that of my torpedo. Only being round, it was much harder to manage the direction: the distance was easy enough."

Perry grinned as he remembered his long drive at the sixteenth hole at Baden-Baden.

"If I could only have made the ball cigar-shaped, I could have shown them *some* golf. But I was afraid of the St. Andrews Rules Committee. You remember they barred the Schenectady putter after Travis won their Amateur Championship with it, and I was pretty certain they would n't let me play

with a cigar-shaped golf-ball long. That's why I used my putter so much. With it I *could* manage the direction better."

"Oh!" Claire exclaimed.

"It does n't matter," Perry went on cheerfully, "now that I have gained the ear of the United States Government. I shall be too busy installing my torpedoes to play golf again for a long time. When I do — " he made a wry face — "I am afraid you will find me back in the twenty-four class again."

"You are not going to use your wireless ball any more?" Claire asked.

"No, of course not."

There ensued a long pause. Perry had been so carried out of himself in telling about his torpedo that for the moment he had forgotten a more personal aspect of the case. At length he shook himself and took the plunge.

"I don't mind about the others. It was for a worthy end. But with you — now that

you know me as I am —” He laughed mirthlessly. “I used to think, when I saw you playing on the links and winning championships, that it was like a cat looking at a king for me to —”

“But, Perry, you know I used to want you to — to — to look at me just as much when you were twenty-four handicap as when you were conquering the world; only you would n’t think about anything then except your old torpedo.”

“Oh, Claire! Do you really mean it? Can you — Will you — ”

“I can. I will,” she answered.

And with the words Perry suddenly discovered for what purpose a beneficent Providence has provided man with arms — and lips.

THE END



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