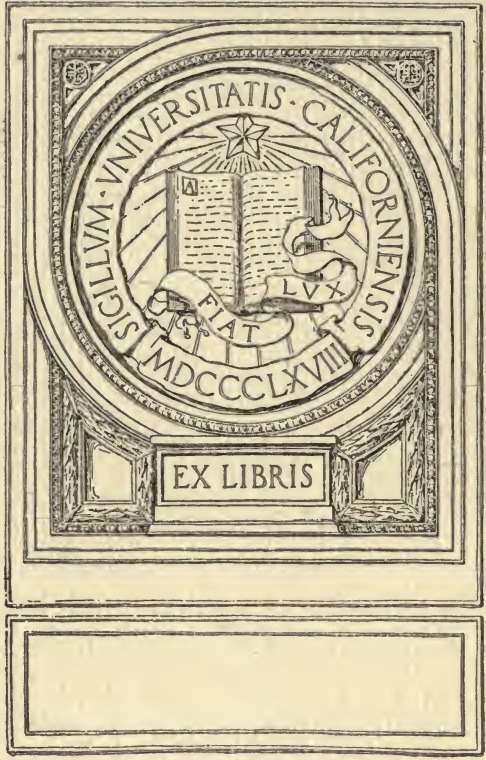


GOLF *for* WOMEN

BY A WOMAN GOLFER





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GOLF FOR WOMEN

THE
CANTON



MRS. CLARENCE H. VANDERBECK
National champion, 1916.

GOLF FOR WOMEN

BY

A WOMAN GOLFER

Hostkins, Mabel S.



UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

NEW YORK
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1916

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PREFACE

It might seem at first thought that, considering the great number of books on golf that have already been written by the most famous masculine players and students of the game, a book especially for women is unnecessary, and cannot hope to compare in usefulness with the dicta of the great ones who have so amply set forth the facts concerning their theories and their practices. There is another aspect of the subject, however, that has for some time appealed strongly both to my reason and to my imagination and has led me finally to write this book.

There can be no doubt that all beneficent development comes from within. It is the will to learn and the will to do that are the real basis of advancement. The words of a Solomon falling on ears that are accustomed to another language have no enlightening effect, but the simplest explanation made in a familiar tongue will accomplish what reams of incomprehensible wisdom could not.

Like most analogies this presents the case

in an extreme form, but it is nevertheless true that men and women do not speak entirely the same language, and that their minds and methods run along in quite different channels. It is for this reason that what men write for women, in the realm of sports, is so often unsatisfactory to a woman.

To-day women are thinking for themselves, acting for themselves and writing for themselves. They have entrusted their problems to the minds of men for generations, but they have now awakened to the fact that what is to be done well for oneself must be done *by* oneself.

Thus it follows that now, more than ever, women must help one another and, by helping one another, help themselves. They are grappling problem after problem and, as time goes on and their experience and strength grows greater, they are approaching each one with a clearer eye, a saner mind and a more firmly established sense of proportion. One of the most significant signs of women's advancement is the fact that they now realize their limitations as well as their capabilities. The mistakes of some of the enthusiasts during the earlier period of the feminist movement are now things of the past, and must be

regarded merely as stepping stones to the firm rock of mental poise and practical efficiency.

The foregoing may seem to be a digression from the subject immediately at hand but it serves as the real explanation of why I am writing this book. I feel that, as a woman, I understand a woman's needs better than can any man and can, therefore, I hope, be of real assistance to the ever growing number of women golfers in this country.

That the game of golf is taking a more and more prominent place in the list of women's sports each year there can be no doubt. Women are both playing and studying the game more seriously than ever before. The fact that the English women players on the whole excel the players of the United States should be an encouragement to the women on this side of the water, because the English women have been at the game longer than we have and, therefore, show us what may be accomplished. Before long, perhaps, we may be able to overtake their lead; in fact, I think there is very little doubt that this will be the case.

There is one advantage that English players (and with them I mean to include

both the Irish and the Scotch) have over Americans and that is the climate of their country. I have never heard any one make a point of this fact, but I think there can be no question but that the atmospheric conditions in the British Isles are more conducive to good play than they are in this country. Our clear, brilliant sunshine, our intense heat in the summer and nipping cold in the autumn do not offer such favorable conditions for golf as the more dull and equable climate across the water. Every one knows that it is easier to play on a gray and misty day than in dazzling sunlight, but our "gray and misty" days are rare, while they are so common as to be almost the rule in the islands embraced by the Gulf Stream. While this peculiarity of climate is probably partly responsible for the excellence of the English players, both men and women, it is not of such importance as to be an insuperable advantage and should not cause us any discouragement.

I predict that it will not be many years before matches between men and women on an even footing so far as sex is concerned will be quite common. It will naturally follow that a system of handicaps will be arranged for men and women that will be based on the

player's score regardless of sex. When this comes to pass it will be seen that many women will give their husbands a few strokes, and many brothers will have to take a stroke or two from their sisters. This state of affairs will add interest to the game, because any sport that men and women enjoy together increases the pleasure of all concerned. There will probably always be a few men who regard golf as their especial prerogative, and who will always resent the presence of women on the links no matter what their qualifications as golfers may be. Fortunately, however, their number is growing less.

I must say here that I believe that a woman's greatest handicap in the game of golf, a handicap far more important than the lack of physical strength that is so often urged against her, is her lack of interest in mechanical principles. Golf is, after all, an extremely scientific game in which satisfactory results can be obtained only by knowledge of the actuating causes and consequent results of each stroke. Women, on the whole, are much more interested in effect than in cause and, therefore, will play on, blindly striving to accomplish certain things, without taking the time or thought necessary to

analyze the methods by which such results must be obtained.

It is to beg women to understand more clearly the purpose underlying the construction of each club, the effect of each club upon the flight of the ball, and the reason for each one of the series of movements by which she herself accomplishes a shot, that I am writing this book. If I am able to clear away any problem that has troubled a player's mind and to show her that what she had thought difficult to understand is, after all false notions have been relegated to the rubbish heap, quite simple and comprehensible, I shall feel that I have not written in vain: if, further than this, my suggestions and my reasoning should awaken any woman's intelligent interest so that she decides that she will in future think out her problems for herself, I shall feel that this book has accomplished its real purpose.

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GOLF FOR WOMEN

I

BEGINNING THE GAME

NOT being a psychologist I cannot explain the reason, but I am sure that every one has had the same experience in regard to things that are committed to memory in childhood and those learned in later years. A proverb, a rule of grammar, a poem memorized in our school days will remain fixed in our minds all through life, but it is only those of us who have particularly well trained minds that can, when we have reached mature years, read a verse and, deciding that it is worth remembering, repeat it in its literal form after a few days have passed.

So it is that the things learned in childhood seem to become part of one's self, while things learned during mature years are a sort

of superstructure that may easily tumble down. For this reason it is well to lay the foundation of all games early in life when the imitative faculty is strong, and when mind and muscle fall easily into habits that, if permitted, cling all through life. Although it is desirable to begin at an early age to learn any game, it is especially advantageous in learning to play golf. Golf is a game that requires very exact coördination of the mind, the eye and almost all the muscles of the body. In other words, there are so many things to be done at once that, if one had to think of them all, it would be practically impossible not to neglect something important, and everything *is* important as there are no trifles in golf. It is, therefore, necessary to commit all the physical motions to muscular memory, if I may use the expression, so that the mind may be left free to concentrate on the one factor of prime importance, hitting the ball.

Every one has seen caddies, sometimes little fellows only nine or ten years old, surrep-

titiously swinging their employers' clubs, and has noticed the almost perfect form in which they do it. When one realizes that almost all the greatest professionals have been caddies and have acquired their early training watching and imitating the best of the players that have employed them, one can appreciate the value of beginning early.

For a woman I believe the best age at which to start a golf career is about fifteen. The mind still has the imitativeness and adaptability of childhood and the muscles the flexibility of youth, while nervousness and self-consciousness, two formidable foes, have not yet made their appearance in the personal make up. Unfortunately every one is not able to begin at this early age and not doing so does not preclude the possibility of acquiring a good game, especially if the beginner, no matter what her years, will make a determined effort to approach the game "as a little child" in spirit and will add that indispensable factor of perfect golf, her own mature intelligence.

The grown woman who wishes to start playing, should immediately put herself into the hands of a good professional teacher. It is far better to go to some one whose business it is to teach and who has had experience along that line than to heed the instructions of well meaning friends. It has been demonstrated over and over again that even the best players are frequently absolutely unable to describe accurately their method of making strokes, so it is not at all safe to suppose that because a person can play well he or she has also the faculty of imparting information to others. The novice should select a teacher who has had experience in teaching women and should, if possible, observe some of his pupils in order to judge the results of his instruction. She should keep in mind also the fact that there are two sides to teaching golf: one, the ability to demonstrate clearly what should be done; and the other, the ability to see the pupil's faults and to correct them. Many instructors can tell a pupil what to do, but when the pupil appears not to be getting

the desired result, cannot perceive where the fault lies and so correct it. Once having chosen an instructor, the pupil should put herself entirely under his tutelage and obey his behests as well as in her lies. She should not dispute with him at every point and above all should never say or think "I can't," but, on the other hand, she should not hesitate to ask any question that comes to her mind. She should know the "reason why" for every move she makes, and no false shame at displaying ignorance should prevent her from asking even what may seem a foolish question.

That the business of teaching women the game of golf is not one without its difficulties from the point of view of the instructor is apparent from the rather rueful statement of a well-known professional who says, "They are hard to teach as from the first they persist in forming theories of their own, which, needless to say, are far from being correct.

. . . They are full of strange fancies, and having once made up their minds on a certain

point it takes the tact of a court chamberlain and the diplomacy of a Bismarck to make them alter." This poor man apparently has had many troubles, and his remark, though probably not intentionally so, is rather a reflection on his pupils. There is no reason why women should require at the hands of their teacher diplomacy of any kind, and certainly "strange fancies" have no rightful place in a player's mental equipment.

It is rather amusing to note what some of the most famous professionals say about teaching women. J. H. Taylor in "Taylor on Golf," page 106, says: "Ladies, however, I fear are not always absolutely obedient to the dictates of the tutor. They have probably spent more or less time upon the links watching other players, and so have formed opinions of their own as to how this or that particular stroke should be played. Then, generally speaking, the idea of a novice is altogether wrong, and it becomes necessary to explain it away. This is always a difficult task for an instructor, but it has to be done,

and once this feat is accomplished, the pupil becomes terribly keen upon improving her game by the regular methods. Once a lady can be induced to think out what will be the results of a certain method of playing a stroke, it is quite certain she is more open to conviction than a man, and she should improve quite as rapidly in her play."

Harry Vardon, in "The Complete Golfer," page 201, speaks rather more cheerfully of his women pupils when he says: ". . . I am bound to say that for the most part I have found them excellent pupils—better generally than the men learners. They seem to take closer and deeper notice of the hints you give them, and to retain the points of the lesson longer in their memories." So far so good, but a little later, page 204, Vardon, on further consideration of the peculiarities of womankind, unfortunately feels it necessary to add, "But it must be confessed that in too many cases they do not treat the difficulties of the game with sufficient seriousness, and are inclined to think that they can get on best

in their own way and by the adoption of their own methods.”

Throughout the chapters “for the ladies” that are inserted in many of the books of the most famous golf players and teachers, it is apparent that the writers are somewhat vague and troubled in mind as to what they should say or leave unsaid. It is evident that they wish to speak a kind and helpful word for women, but it is equally evident that they do not in the least know how to go about it, and that they close the chapters with a feeling of relief. Let us hope that they teach with more conviction than they write; otherwise their “learners” must have rather a discouraging time of it.

When a woman engages the services of a professional teacher her whole mind and attention should be given to finding out everything she can in the time at her disposal. If she will do this assiduously and will practice between lessons what she has learned, she will soon become well grounded in the rudiments of the game. When she has reached this point

she must keep on practicing patiently and intelligently, returning now and then to her teacher for advice and criticism if she finds she has unconsciously fallen into errors that she cannot correct by herself. Golf is a game that requires a great deal of practice at all stages, even when one ranks as a really good player. It is so easy to fall into careless habits of stance or swing that there must never at any time be any mental slackness while playing, for, if there is, a carefully built-up form will fall to pieces in a few days.

Speaking of form brings to mind an error that many players make. They regard "good form" as the goal to be striven for, whereas, as a matter of fact, "good form" is merely the outward and visible sign of strokes made correctly as to stance, grip, swing, and timing. If one learns to stand, to hold her club, to make her swing and to time her stroke correctly, she will find that she has achieved good form without being aware of it, but no one can obtain "good form" by trying to cultivate it for its own sake.

The first requisite in beginning to play is, of course, to have the proper clubs and balls. In the selection of clubs it is best for the pupil to be guided by the advice of the instructor as he will know from his experience what lengths and weights will be most suitable. It is well, however, for the pupil to have in mind the fact that her clubs should be well matched, and, for that reason, she should, if convenient, get them all at the same time and at the same place. This is not necessary, of course, but, if the player wishes to buy her clubs separately, she should have with her the clubs she already possesses when selecting a new club so that she can compare the new with the old and match them accordingly.

For the player who is not under the immediate tutelage of a professional I will make a few general comments about the different varieties of clubs and for what qualities they should be chosen. The essential clubs are the driver, the brassie, the cleek, the mid-iron, the mashie, the niblick, and the putter. These are the clubs most in use and are all



MRS. RONALD H. BARLOW
Stance and address for approach.

that are really necessary, although as the player becomes expert and feels the need of other clubs for special situations there are the spoon, the driving iron, the light-weight mashie, the jigger, and various rather hybrid clubs.

It is commonly supposed that a woman shorter than the average should have clubs correspondingly short and that a tall woman should have clubs proportionately long. This is just the reverse of the truth, especially as regards the wooden clubs from which the greatest distance is expected. A moment's consideration will show that a woman shorter than the average will need a longer club in order to give her a length of swing that will enable her to compete with a taller opponent, and, conversely, a woman with long arms can well afford to use a shorter club. The average length of a driver, the longest club, is from forty-one to forty-three inches. The shaft should be slightly springy and the "lie," or angle between the head of the club and the shaft, should be such that,

when the player is addressing the ball, the sole of the club will rest evenly on the ground. The face of the club should be slightly lofted and should be neither very long nor very short, as either extreme is apt to develop difficulties for the player.

The brassie should be of the same general construction as the driver, the differences being that the shaft is a little stiffer, the face a little more lofted, and the club head, of course, soled with brass. Braid says that the shafts of the two clubs should be the same length, but I believe that for a woman it is just as well to have the shaft of the brassie an inch or so shorter than that of the driver.

The iron clubs, beginning with the cleek and proceeding in the order I have mentioned, grow shorter as to shaft and more upright as to lie until the extreme is reached in the putter. It is advisable to select iron clubs with the shorter and broader type of head rather than the long, narrow one. Some persons feel that a narrow-headed club gets under the ball more easily and therefore raises the

ball more surely and also puts more back spin on it than will a broader faced club. This is a mistake, however, as the narrow-headed club is inclined to cut under the ball entirely, while a broader-faced club, if sloped back properly, will raise the ball sufficiently, especially if weighted correctly along the lower edge. All iron clubs should have their faces scored with some horizontal lines or squares as a certain roughness of surface enables the club to get a better grip on the ball and so put on the desired spin. It is said that some old Scotchmen deliberately allow their clubs to become coated with heavy rust in the belief that they thereby obtain a better hold on the ball, a practice that is followed by some players here.

This leads to the much-disputed question of the marking of golf balls. Many persons maintain that the brambly ball on account of its rough surface will take more spin from the club and will also hold its course more accurately while in the air than a ball without excrescences. It is a well-known fact,

and one that has never been satisfactorily explained, that an absolutely smooth ball will not maintain the course of its flight so well as a rough one, but it has been demonstrated recently that the brambly ball is not the best solution of the problem. The ball with indentations or dimples has been found more satisfactory for several reasons. Strictly speaking, the place of contact between a sphere and a plane is one point, but as the sphere under consideration is resilient and the plane generally meets it with decided force, the point of contact, in the case of ball and club, grows to a spot of some definite size. It may easily be seen that a ball covered with excrescences will not leave the club so smoothly as will a ball with a lined or dimpled surface.

During its flight through the air the brambly ball does not excel the dimpled one in holding its course, and, once on the green, it develops a new shortcoming. The tendency of the lumpy ball to rest on three of its points may, especially on a hard, close-cut green,

cause it to come to a stop before the dimpled ball would in the same circumstances. Although the difference in length of roll between the two balls may be only the slightest fraction of an inch, yet that little inequality may mean the difference between dropping into the hole and hanging on the edge. So it is that the dimpled marking for golf balls has become generally accepted as the most satisfactory, although whether or not dents have any superiority over transverse rings, such as were scored on the old guttie balls, is open to some question.

It is unfortunate that the manufacturers of golf balls have not produced as yet a mechanically perfect sphere. The rubber-core ball, the one generally in use, is made by winding on a small rubber core hundreds of feet of rubber stretched under tension. The sphere made in this way is then covered by two hemispherical, gutta-percha shells which are pressed on and cemented together. The facts that a cube is often used as a foundation, that the subsequent winding is not al-

ways done symmetrically and that the cover is frequently of uneven thickness, result in the balls being unbalanced.

It is especially important for putting that a ball should be correctly centered because otherwise it is certain to wander off its course in a greater or less degree, depending upon how unbalanced it is, with what force it is hit, and the conditions of the green. For accuracy in rolling the old guttie balls are better than the modern balls because, as they were made of a solid lump of compressed gutta-percha, they are practically sure to be evenly balanced. They lack the resiliency of the rubber-core ball however, and because they will not spring off the club so elastically and, therefore, cannot be driven quite the distance of this new favorite, they have been relegated to the background.

There is one subject on which it should be unnecessary to speak even to beginners at the game of golf, but which is neglected alike by old players and those who are just starting their golfing career: this is, having a thorough

and exact knowledge of the rules of the game. Probably because counting the score is so simple and there are not so many "faults" to be considered as there are, for example, in the game of tennis, players start out, and frequently continue, without learning the well-defined restrictions and regulations that are laid down in the rules. Women are probably greater offenders in this respect than men. There have been many instances when, in a tournament, a woman has been humiliated by having her score questioned or rejected on account of an entirely unconscious breach in the observance of some general or local rule. The fact that the fault committed was a mistake of ignorance does not in any way mitigate the mortification of the unfortunate offender, but it should make her determine firmly never to be placed again in such a position; strangely enough such a resolution is not always carried out. It surely is a simple thing to buy a copy of the rules of the game and to study them carefully. Some women I have known carry a copy of the rules

in the pocket of their golf bags so that if any discussion arises it may be settled immediately without trusting to memory. This is a very sensible practice and if, added to this, a woman, when visiting a club strange to her, will look over the local ground rules which are printed on the back of her score card, the possibility of a mistake on her part will be eliminated.

There is, in a great many clubs, a rule that women shall not play on Saturday afternoons, Sundays, or holidays, except during such hours as make the rule practically prohibitive. This regulation is made on the theory that women can play at any time, while men have only their holidays and week-ends. It follows that the links are crowded at these times, so the women should keep away. There is some justice in this position taken by men, but it works out unfairly to a great many women. There are, on the one hand, an increasing number of women who work during the week and therefore cannot play, and there are, also, many husbands and wives

who are prevented by this rule from playing together. It seems to me that it would be a far more equitable arrangement if women were allowed to become active club members by paying full dues, and to have the rule read that any woman whose average score is under a hundred or even one hundred and ten should be allowed to play at any time. That would eliminate any woman that could possibly be accused of "cluttering up" the links. If it is found that a club's links are too congested for comfort on certain days, I think it might not be a bad plan to have a certain qualification as to score required of men players. This would probably raise a frightful howl among the disqualified ones, but certainly an arrangement by which poor players were eliminated during crowded hours would be much fairer than a prohibition based on sex.

In glancing over the index of this book it may surprise some of my readers to find that I have reversed the usual order of things and have started with putting instead of with driving, which is the customary method of pro-

cedure. I am doing this for certain, well-defined reasons, and I believe that, upon consideration, almost every one will agree with me that in learning to play golf the most sensible and logical course is to do first that which is the most simple and to progress by natural stages to the most difficult. There are now many professionals who are teaching golf in this way and they are thoroughly convinced by results that it is the most practical system.

In no other sport does the beginner aspire to accomplish the most difficult shots before having learned the simpler ones, but there is a certain fascination about swinging a driver that lures one away from the less exciting putter. Putting seems rather dull sport when taken by itself and the beginner is apt to get tired of it very quickly and to long to get on to something else. If, however, one can muster sufficient patience and self-control to practice on the green until a fair amount of accuracy is achieved in making short puts and long puts and puts on all



MISS ELAINE ROSENTHAL
Putting, stance and address.

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varieties of slopes, a foundation will be laid that will make the more complex strokes seem easy as they are taken up one after another.

Putting compels concentration of mind, delicacy and firmness of touch, a nice calculation of distance and slope, and, last, but perhaps most important of all, it forms the habit of keeping the eye on the ball. While putting, the eyes of the player are immediately above the ball and, as the body is held still and the stroke is made principally with the wrists and forearms, there is not the temptation to move the head and consequently the eyes that there is in making the more extended strokes. In this way the habit of attention, which is the greatest essential of the game, is formed.

II

PUTTING

IT is surely time for the foolish attitude of many good players toward putting to be abandoned once for all. It reminds me of the hysterical damsel who begged her companion to protect her from "that horrible creature with horns," and, when her companion pointed out to her the fact that the horrible creature was nothing but a peacefully grazing mooley cow that did not have any horns, grew very indignant and said that all cows had horns and that she had never heard of one that did not.

In like manner many players, metaphorically speaking, throw up their hands when they reach the green and act as though the smoothly rolling turf and the innocent white ball had conspired to defeat their best endeavors. When they are reminded that put-

ting, after all, is rather a simple process, they fall back on the assertion that some putters are "lucky" but cling to their distrust of the seemingly guileless ball and green.

Why the very best players have hypnotized themselves into this helpless and hopeless state of mind about putting is difficult to understand, but their own writings testify that they are suffering from some hallucination on the subject. J. H. Taylor, in "Taylor on Golf," page 83, says: "And here I may say at once it is impossible to teach a man to putt. Even the leading professionals are weak in this department of the game. Do you think they would not improve themselves in this particular stroke were such a thing within the range of possibility? Certainly they would." Later on he says: "Putting, in short, is so different to any other branch of the game that the good putter may be said to be born, not made."

If one were to take Taylor at his word one might as well give up putting before beginning unless one discovered oneself to be that

phenomenon, a born putter. There would then be occasion for great rejoicing because against such an especially favored mortal the conspiracy of the green could have no effect.

Harry Vardon believes that every one is endowed by nature with a certain putting style and it is quite useless for a teacher to try to do more than help him cultivate his own particular method. In "The Complete Golfer," page 143, after having referred to his teaching of other strokes, he says: "I have no similar instruction to offer in the matter of putting. There is no rule, and there is no best way. . . . The fact is that there is more individuality in putting than in any other department of golf and it is absolutely imperative that this individuality should be allowed to have its way."

On another page he says: "The heart that does not quail when a yawning bunker lies far ahead of the tee just at the distance of a good drive, beats in trouble when there are but thirty inches of smooth turf to be run over before the play of the hole is ended."

Truly, putting must be to him a fearsome operation. It is remarkable that, after having made these most discouraging statements, these eminent players proceed to do the very thing they say is impossible—tell their readers how to put—yet they do this and fill many pages with advice and instruction. Perhaps, though themselves lacking in faith as to the efficacy of such teaching, they think that a book on golf would seem somewhat deficient if the subject of putting were ignored and so seek to give the public what it wants, whether or not they believe the public will be benefitted thereby.

Whatever may be the opinions of these well-known men, however, makes no difference to me in my present purpose. I believe that any woman with sound faculties, moderate intelligence, and patience may be taught to put if she has the desire to learn and the willingness to work at it. Of course there are some women that pick up putting more easily than others, just as some have more aptitude in learning any game than their

less-gifted sisters, and these are the ones that have in them the stuff of which exceptional putters are made, but one does not need to be an exceptional putter to play a very creditable game of golf. There are some sports, such as shooting, for example, that seem to require some special faculty that is difficult to cultivate if one is not born with it, but putting demands only ordinary application and a great deal of practice.

There are two qualities that a woman who wishes to put well must make up her mind to cultivate at the start, concentration and self-confidence. It is a curious fact that players, after having gone through all the necessary preliminary motions, allow their attention to wander when they are just about to hit the ball. It is not that they actually begin thinking of something else, but that they "let up" just at the crucial moment and therefore make a weak, futile shot. That this is true in putting more than in any other stroke in the game is due to the fact that the put is made slowly and deliberately, and that

it requires a distinct effort to keep the attention absolutely fixed from the taking of the stance to the end of the follow through.

Probably it would not be necessary to make a particular point of self-confidence if it were not for the fact that there has been so much silly talk about the strange and peculiar difficulties of putting that the average player is in the state of mind of a child who has been sent to bed alone, and who is afraid of the dark; she is constantly dreading an indefinable something. It does not make a vital difference if the player's hands are a few inches higher or lower on the shaft of the club, or if her left foot is a little nearer to, or farther from, the ball than usual, but the spirit in which she undertakes to roll the ball into the hole will make all the difference between its getting there or not. The woman who says to herself, "I am going to make this put," will probably do so, whereas the woman who says, "Oh, dear, I shall never be able to do this," has practically failed already.

Do not think that I mean to say that it is

easy to become a good putter. It is not. The principles of putting are simple enough and one can readily learn all the theory of it in a very short time, but to become anywhere near perfect in execution takes practice and care and care and practice until one's patience is stretched almost to the breaking point. However, although perfection can never be attained, a sufficient degree of skill and accuracy may be reached by any one who desires it strongly enough.

There is an encouraging thought that should cheer the player while she is faithfully practicing putting, and that is the fact that she is meanwhile laying a sure foundation on which to build up her other strokes. The habits of close attention, keeping the eye on the ball, firmness of grip, and accuracy of swing and follow-through will become a part of her golfing self and will make the subsequent, more complex strokes easy additions to the structure of her game.

SELECTING THE PUTTER

A chapter of considerable length could be written on the different styles of putters that have been put on the market and the various theories of the people who have advanced them. There is no other club about which there is so much difference of opinion among players and about which an individual player changes her opinion so frequently. When a player is putting badly, after she has blamed every conceivable disturbing element for her lack of success, she generally ends by deciding that there is something wrong with her putter. Generally there is some well-meaning friend at hand who suggests that she try some other variety of club, which she straightway does. For a few weeks afterward she will loudly proclaim the merits of her new club, but later she will become dissatisfied again and will try something else. This is a very common course of procedure and one which does not get a player any farther on the road to consistently good putting.

Of course, if a player is convinced that her putter is wrong, the only sensible thing to do is to cast it aside and get another, but the new one should be selected with care and thought so that it will surely meet with the player's requirements, and then it should be cherished long and affectionately. Constant changing of clubs cannot fail to unsettle one's play and to result in confusion of mind and inaccuracy of stroke.

On the whole the putter that has the most good qualities to recommend it is that with an iron head of sufficient weight to feel firm in the hand, the blade rather broad with the face just lofted enough to be visible, and the lie fairly upright. The length of the shaft depends, of course, on the height of the player, but it is well not to have it so long that in playing short puts, when the hands are placed somewhat down the shaft, there is so much of the grip between the hands and the body as to be awkward.

Some players maintain that a good piece of the shaft extending above the hands acts

THE GOLFERS



MRS. BLAKE
Playing a chip shot.



MRS. W. J. FAITH
Finish of put.

as a sort of counter balance and steadies the club when a short put is being played. Others claim that each player should have two putters, one for long puts, and one for short puts. Neither of these theories is altogether correct. It is true that, when the hands are down the shaft of the club, the club feels lighter and more easily controlled, but carrying this to an extreme cannot help resulting in the projecting shaft becoming a nuisance. On the other hand, there is great danger in changing frequently from one club to another when the conditions are very nearly the same. The necessary physical and mental readjustment is apt to give the player a feeling of strangeness that will impair the delicacy of her stroke.

Some time ago I had the opportunity of observing closely a class of jewelry makers. The novices were surrounded by rows of shiny, new tools, and as they worked they constantly laid down one tool and picked up another. The master of the class, an old German who had been making handmade jewelry

for many years, had a few well-worn implements and he would rarely change from one to another unless the character of his work changed. It occurred to me then that the finest workmen do not burden themselves with a superfluity of tools and I believe that the same principle holds good in golf. It is better to have a few clubs, carefully chosen so that they may be made to meet all possible requirements, and to learn to use them expertly than it is to have a great number, each for one specific situation, and to keep constantly shifting from one to another.

In the past decade the character of the club heads has changed somewhat. Both the iron and wooden clubs have shorter and broader heads than was formerly the custom. This change is a marked improvement in club structure. Taking the putter as an example it is easy to see that a club of this class with a narrow blade, even though it has very little loft, strikes the ball below its center and so has the tendency to give the ball back spin which is exceedingly undesirable in putting.

If the blade is narrow and also has a decided slope back it may even cause the ball to hop off the grass. As the object in putting is to keep the ball close to the green and to roll it smoothly into the hole, a narrow-bladed putter is decidedly unreliable. Probably the best way to determine the proper width for a putter is to compare it with a ball. If the width of the blade is the same as the diameter of the ball, or even a trifle more, then the center of the blade will meet the ball at the point farthest from the hole and the ball will be rolled evenly forward.

There has been a certain vogue for wooden or aluminum-headed putters, and many players claim that they find them very steady and that the ball rolls off them more smoothly than it does from the regular iron-headed variety. Whether or not these qualities exist is a question open to discussion, but there is no doubt that there is a very decided objection to all broad-soled putters. The objection exists in the fact that the wide sole immediately penalizes the slightest error at the

moment of contact of ball and club, and in beginning of the follow-through. If, for example, a slightly faulty stroke is made with an iron putter and the club is too much on the rise at the moment of contact with the ball, no serious trouble, in all probability, will result, but, if a wooden putter is being used, in such a situation the back edge of the sole will drag the ground. So, also, after the moment at which the ball is hit, if the club is on an upward sweep, the breadth of sole will cause the club to be grounded. In other words the broad-soled putter makes it necessary for the sole of the club to be kept parallel with the ground before and after the ball is struck; this, of course, should be done, but the broad-soled club leaves much less room for error than the iron one.

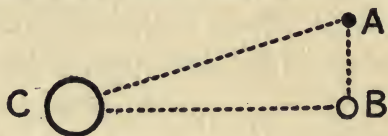
TAKING AIM

The lie of the putter should be fairly upright so that the often cited, pendulum-like motion may be maintained as nearly as possible. It is a physical impossibility to put

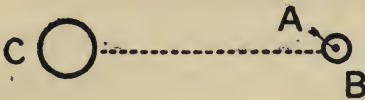
this simile into practical use in an exact form as, if it were attempted, the hands would come between the eyes and the ball, and a strange and unnatural grip would have to be adopted. It is obviously necessary that the hands must be nearer the body than the ball and that the body must be slightly stooped. Any extreme of this stooping position may well be avoided, since an attitude that approaches a crouch will certainly cramp the muscles of the entire body and result in stiff and awkward play. The slope of the shaft of the club away from the perpendicular should, roughly speaking, correspond with the slope of the body from the hips upward so that as the player stands, club in hands, her eyes will be directly above the ball. This last is a very important point and deserves special consideration. If the eyes are above the ball, then the eyes, the ball, and the hole will lie in the same plane of vision, and it will be comparatively easy to get an accurate aim. Mr. P. A. Vaile, in "Modern Golf" calls this the "triangle of vision," and I can think of no other phrase that expresses

the idea so well. So far as I know there is no other writer who has dwelt especially on this method of insuring a true aim, but it is so important that I must speak of it fully even at the risk of appearing to borrow from him. After all, a true aim is the most essential quality of a successful put. The ball may be tapped, or chipped, or pushed, in short it may be hit any way at all and, if the direction is correct, it has a good chance of going into the hole, but if the direction is faulty the most perfectly executed stroke possible will be futile. It is supremely worth while to take every precaution that will insure the ball's starting its journey in the line that will lead it to the cup.

The accompanying diagrams will show perhaps more clearly than words the usefulness of the "triangle of vision." Let us look at the green from a bird's-eye view and consider C the cup, B the ball, and A the eyes.



In Figure 1 the eyes are beyond the ball so that the player looks back toward her feet, down the line AB to see it, and then away toward the hole, down the line AC. This necessitates her looking down two different lines, AB and AC, and makes the calculation of the third line BC difficult. If, however,



the eyes are directly above the ball as in Figure II the player is able to look *along* the intended line of run of the ball instead of *at* it, thus having a much better chance of getting a true aim.

THE STANCE

Aside from emphasizing the importance of having the eyes above the ball, there is not a great deal that need be said about the stance while putting. A great deal of latitude is allowed for each person's physical and mental peculiarities. I might say that this latitude is allowed by necessity because the players

take it anyway. Nowhere in the game of golf are so many mannerisms exhibited as on the green, but so long as they are harmless it is no use trying to correct them. It is, after all, the results that count, and if players differ somewhat as to their methods it is of no consequence so long as good results are obtained. However, there are certain "don'ts" that must be observed by any player who seriously wishes to be a good putter. They may be briefly stated: don't cramp yourself; don't sway the body; don't move the head; don't tap or shove; don't forget to follow through; don't take your eye off the ball. If the array of don'ts is carefully observed, the exact position of the feet and body is not of importance.

I believe, of course, that there is a "best way" to stand as there is generally one best way for doing anything, but because it is most expedient for the majority does not mean that it must be followed by all individuals. It is well to notice, however, that the greater number of good players stand with

feet far enough apart to give a firm base, the left foot a little farther from the line to the hole than the right, and pointing somewhat toward the hole. This is a fairly open stance and gives the player ease and freedom of movement. The ball should be a little nearer the left foot than the right in order to avoid the possibility of striking down upon it.

While speaking of the position of the body to be adopted for putting, it may be well to add a suggestion that applies not only here but to all the strokes of the game and that is the fact that it is well at all times to keep the line of the shoulders almost parallel to the line in which the ball is to travel. Each arm has a tendency to act as a check or pull on the other, and, if the shoulders are out of parallel, the inclination of the player will be to pull the club in across the ball when the left shoulder is too far back, and to thrust it out across the ball when the left shoulder is too far advanced. In order to overcome the difficulties that arise from playing with two hands supported from points approximately

eighteen inches apart, some players advocate using the left hand as the master hand, others advocate using the right. The fact remains, nevertheless, that we have two hands to use and that we use them both in playing golf. It seems much more reasonable to use them together as nearly as possible as one, so that we may have the advantage of the double strength where strength is needed, and a nicely adjusted balance where delicacy is needed, than to abandon at least part of the usefulness of one or the other.

THE GRIP

It would appear that to hold a golf club in the hands would be the simplest and most natural act in the world, but from the endless discussion that there has been on the subject it seems that it is not. For reasons best known to themselves, many persons have spent a great deal of time trying to exaggerate the difficulties of golf. There is no one who will deny that golf is a difficult game, but it is the practice and not the principles

of the game that brings despair to the aspiring player. A very little thought and study will make any even fairly intelligent person thoroughly conversant with all the simple science of standing, holding, and swinging the club, and hitting the ball. It is the skill to put the theory into effect that is difficult to acquire. After a player has read a helpful book on golf, or has culled the best points from several books, she proceeds to the links feeling within herself the ability to play as never before. When she finds that her score is perhaps not so good as it was on her previous round she feels disgusted and discouraged. If she has changed her method of playing in some respect, having been convinced by her reading that she had been playing wrongly, she is apt to declare that the old way suits her and that she cannot do differently even though her reason tells her she is mistaken. Nothing is more fatal to one's game than to keep changing about, trying first one thing and then another, but, on the other hand, when the test of pure reason has

been applied to a principle and it has been found good, it is foolish to stick to mistaken methods because, through habit, they have become easy. If every player would apply this test of reason to every theory she hears or reads about and would discard all those that do not bear the test triumphantly, she would lighten her mind of much useless junk.

After having freed my mind to a certain extent by this digression we shall now consider the grip of the club. It may be well to state here that what I say applies to all other strokes as well as to putting, as I believe that any obvious change in the position of the hands, while changing from one club to another, has an unsettling effect on the play. The only variation in the usual grip that may be advantageous for the shorter and more delicate put is the dropping of the shaft a little more into the fingers than is proper for shots requiring strength for distance. This variation is merely a suggestion and its adoption may well be left to the inclination of the player.

The grip that is used by most professional players and is most generally advocated among men is the overlapping or Vardon grip. This grip is accomplished by holding the shaft of the club, not in the palm of the hand, but well down toward the fingers, the right hand overlapping the left so that the left thumb is buried beneath the right palm and the little finger of the right hand hooks over the forefinger of the left. It will be seen that thus disposed, the hands act practically as one and the wrists are brought so closely together that they will of necessity bend in unison. These are the two great points of advantage in the Vardon grip, but there is an objection to the Vardon grip that has prevented its adoption becoming universal. This objection is that the right hand is pried away from the shaft of the club by the underlying left, and consequently the hold of the right hand is considerably weakened. A man with exceedingly powerful hands may be able to spare a little strength, but not all men can afford the loss and few, if any, women.

Such well-known players as Mr. Harold H. Hilton and Mr. John Ball do not use the overlapping grip. James Sherlock says of it that, "Its effectiveness depends entirely on the strength of the fingers and forearm. It would be useless for players to attempt it who have no more power in their wrists and fingers than I have." Further on, "New Book of Golf," page 190, he adds, "There is no need to think, however, that the overlapping grip has any particular value over any other grip."

It is interesting to note that whereas Sherlock frankly admits that his hands and wrist are not strong enough to make it desirable for him to use the Vardon grip, George Duncan insists that it should be adopted by women players. In his second article on "Golf for Women" in "Golf Illustrated," he says: "The overlapping finger grip will give all the power that is needed, and it has the overwhelming advantage of allowing the player to hold the club firmly without stiffening the wrist and the forearm. In my opinion, there-

fore, it is impossible to attach too much importance to this particular point.”

When eminent players disagree about such a fundamental point in the game as this, it is rather discouraging to the beginner; surrounded by so much diversity of opinion she does not know where to pin her faith. The majority of professional players among men use the overlapping grip, but, on the other hand, a number of very successful ones do not. Among her own sex there is Miss Ravenscroft, the famous English golfer, who places her hands on the club shaft in such a way that they hardly touch each other at all.

In order to consider this problem of the grip intelligently it is necessary to decide first what is the prime essential of a correct hold upon the club. There can be no doubt that having the hands close together and the fingers so disposed as to give them the advantage of all their strength is absolutely necessary to women players. To this end a modification of the Vardon grip may be adopted. All four fingers of the right hand must be firmly

placed upon the club, and the little fingers immediately against the forefinger of the left hand. The thumb of the left hand, however, may safely remain under the right hand as there is a natural groove at the base of the palm that will allow the presence of the thumb without loosening the hold of the right upon the club. By careful study of this method of holding the club it will be seen to have practically all the advantages and none of the disadvantages of the overlapping grip, and I would strongly urge its adoption by all women who do not at present use it.

OBSERVING THE CONDITION OF THE GREEN

We have now considered the stance for putting, the grip, and the relative position of the ball to the player, but there is one more point to be thought of before the player actually makes her stroke; this is the condition of the green. Whether the grass is short or long, and whether the ground is damp or dry makes a great difference in the amount of distance the ball will cover, given a blow of

a certain force. It is a common occurrence to hear players complaining of the fastness of the green when their balls overrun the hole, or of its heaviness when they find themselves "not up." Such complaints should never be made as excuses because, when a player first sets foot upon the smooth turf, she should carefully observe its condition. In fact, if she has a short approach shot, she would do well to look at the green before her ball is actually upon it, because a well made approach may often be run down in one stroke, and thus one stroke of the traditional "two on the green" may be saved.

TAKING THE LINE

The process of taking the line to the hole is accompanied by a great deal of useless and annoying delay by fussy players, but a certain amount of time may permissibly be spent in standing or crouching behind the ball and looking over it to its destination. The habit of looking from the hole to the ball is one that, so far as I can see, has little to recom-

mend it. The different line of view does not seem to have any particular advantage, while the time spent in looking this way and that tends to make the player self-conscious, and certainly does not tend to make her opponent more amiable.

SOLING THE CLUB

Having made herself aware of the kind of grass over which her ball must travel, and having allowed a conception of the distance that her ball lies from the hole to sink into her consciousness, the player takes her position, club in hands, and is about to play. But there is one thing more before the put can be made: that is soling the club so that the head of it will be at a right angle to the ball's intended line of run. There can be no doubt that the center of the face of the club head, considered both longitudinally and vertically, is the point at which it should meet the ball. In putting, any attempt to play off the toe or the heel of the club is foolishness, and should not be considered for a moment. In order to get an

unobstructed view of the imaginary T made by the face of the club and the line of run, many players first sole the club in front of the ball. Doing this is an unobjectionable habit and, if it makes the player feel more confidence in her aim, there is no reason why she should not indulge in this practice. On thinking it over, it would seem that the added accuracy of aim that would be gained by this unobstructed vision would be counteracted by the fact that the player must lift the club over the ball before she makes her stroke, and in so doing runs the risk of moving the club head ever so little out of its carefully arranged position. This question of whether the club shall be soled before or behind the ball, is, however, unimportant, and may well be left to the player's inclination.

THE STROKE

The line having been taken and the club soled, the time has now arrived for the all important put to be played. It has been said so many times that the motion of the

club head in putting is like the swinging of a pendulum that no sooner does one think "putting" but "pendulum" comes into the mind as an immediate corollary. As I have said before, this simile has been greatly overworked, and, at best, it does not bear too close following. It is at fault in two ways: one, that the wrists cannot be directly over the club head in a manner corresponding to the position of the point of suspension of a pendulum over the weight; the other, that the arc of a pendulum would graze the horizontal plane over which it is suspended at only one point and, being an arc, could at no time be parallel to that plane, whereas the head of the club during the correct putting stroke should be carried along a line almost parallel to the ground immediately before and after the ball is struck. Thus it follows that this simile, like so many others, is fallacious when applied too exactly; it serves better in conveying to the mind the idea of smooth and even motion, which is necessary to the proper ex-

ecution of the put, than in giving a true picture of the stroke itself.

The factor of prime importance is that the club should travel along the intended line of run of the ball, and that line projected, both before and after the ball is hit. The hands should hold the club firmly yet delicately, the body should be kept motionless, and the eyes should be fixed upon that portion of the ball which is furthest from the hole. The head of the club should be drawn back near the ground for several inches, the arms should be steady, and the wrists allowed to do most of the work. If the put is a long one, so that there must be an extended backward swing, the forearms must come further into play during the movement of the wrists. It is obvious that the put cannot be, as Vardon asserts, purely a wrist stroke, because if it were the club would rise into the air immediately after it leaves the ball, or, if the arc of the club's head should be in a plane more nearly parallel to the ground, the club, after having

retreated a short distance from the ball, would begin drawing in toward the body. Plainly the forearm must be used if the club head is to be kept in a straight line, both during the backward swing if it is a long one, and especially during the follow-through, when the arms must go out after the ball and the club head keep in the line to the hole as long as possible. I do not mean to say by this that the putting stroke is in any way an arm motion. Accuracy and steadiness are gained by keeping the arms as still as possible; the wrists should be used first, then as much forearm as is necessary to keep the club head in a straight line, and, last of all, and this only in case of an exceedingly long put, the upper arms may come slightly into action. To begin a put with the idea in her mind that every part of the body must be kept rigid but the hands and wrists, means that the player will be cramped and awkward. It is better to start with body comfortably disposed and quiet and then to make the stroke with only such motions as are natural and necessary.

Contrary to what a great many expert players say when writing, George Duncan in his article on putting for women in "Golf Illustrated" does not speak of the put as a pure wrist stroke. In fact, from what he says it seems that he considers it, especially in long shots, almost entirely an arm stroke. Let us see what he says. "For approach putting I advise the following methods to be adopted. . . . The club should be taken back with the left hand and arm, and the club head must be kept as close to the ground as possible. The right wrist must not be allowed to bend. The player will now hit naturally, follow through, and finish with the hands in a line with the club head."

It seems extremely doubtful that, if the right wrist is not allowed to bend, the player can hit naturally; certainly she must hit extremely awkwardly, and with her whole arm from the shoulder down. Duncan's idea appears to be that the left hand and arm shall do the putting and that the right shall act as a check or brace to keep the club head in a

straight line. The fact that such an excellent putter as George Duncan could formulate such a theory led me to examine the photographs of him in Mr. P. A. Vaile's "Modern Golf." In plate 15, the caption of which is "swing back for approach put," we have a frontal view of Duncan, and it may plainly be seen that his right wrist is bent back so much that the back of his hand is almost at a right angle to his arm. Possibly he thinks it best to advise women to use another method of putting from that which he himself practices, but it is difficult to understand why he should do so.

Underneath this picture Mr. Vaile has written, "In this case, as the put is a long one, the swing back is considerable, but observe that neither the forearms nor the body have moved. This is the secret of good putting. . . ."

Notice that he commends the fact that in the swing back for this long approach put the forearms have remained motionless, yet he says on page 66, "The Soul of Golf,"

“We are frequently told that a put is the only true wrist stroke in golf. As a matter of fact there is no true wrist stroke in golf, for it is evident that if one played the put as a true wrist stroke with a club whose lie is at a considerable angle to the horizontal . . . the instant the club head leaves the ball it must leave the line of run to the hole, and equally as certainly will it leave the line of run to the hole immediately after it has struck the ball. Now this is not what we require, so it has come to pass that the put at golf is to a very great extent a compromise.”

So it is that even the best of golf writers will contradict themselves and the student of the game must make the best of it she can.

To return to George Duncan's article, a little later he says, “For puts inside three yards one or two alterations should be made. The right hand should do all the work: the left elbow should point more at the hole: and the feet should be a little closer together.”

From this one is led to believe that, on reaching the three-yard limit, one should

abandon the left hand and transfer the work of putting to the right. If one must shift from one hand to the other in this way, it would seem more sensible to do the long puts with the stronger hand, which with the majority of people is the right, and leave the lighter work for the left.

PUTTING WITH "DRAG"

In the same article we read, "The club head should not come back so close to the ground: it should come back more abruptly, so that the player can hit slightly down on the ball (which should bite the turf a little)."

This admonition of Duncan's to "Hit slightly down on the ball" would result, if followed, in "drag" or "back-spin." Many players advocate "drag" in putting on the theory that a ball with back-spin keeps to the ground closely and is not apt to rim the cup. That is, in general, the explanation they give for advocating this style of putting. Statements to that effect are so numerous and so familiar that it is hardly necessary to quote

them. They all have this fundamental mistake: a ball with back-spin has a tendency to rise and it is the ball with "top" that clings to the ground. If one thinks for an instant of a drive that has been under-cut and remembers how the ball rose in the air and abruptly fell again, then recollects how a "topped" drive resulted in the ball's jumping from tee to earth, there to roll a little way to its inglorious end, one will readily comprehend that the inclination of the ball on the green is the same as that of the ball in the air.

"Drag" is obtained either by hitting down on the ball, or hitting it below its center, or by using a putter that is heavily weighted on its lower edge. "Top" is obtained by hitting the ball when the club is on the rise, or by striking the ball at a point above its center. A ball played with "drag" will be under the influence of two contending forces, the back-spin that has been placed upon it and its own natural forward roll. As a result of this conflict of forces the ball "skids" along until the

back-spin is beaten and it may then proceed in its regular way.

On account of the friction of the grass a ball cannot hold its backward rotation long, so, unless the put is a very short one, the ball is rolling forward by the time it reaches the hole. It is seldom, therefore, that when it arrives at the hole, a ball really has the back-spin that is going to insure its dropping in neatly. The question that arises is, why try to put with "drag" if the "drag" won't last all the way to the hole? Or, in case of a short put, why resort to an unnatural method when the natural one should be perfectly easy?

I believe that, as a matter of fact, the reason so many players, especially men, favor imparting back-spin to the ball is psychological. All through the fairway they have been making shots that required a certain amount of physical force. On arriving at the green the problem is changed, roughly speaking, from that of distance to aim, from strength to delicacy of touch. The mental

readjustment is difficult. The put played with "drag" may be hit much harder than one without it, consequently the player favors this method because, unconsciously, he has more faith in himself while delivering a fairly strong blow than he has while making a gentle swing at the ball. As having confidence in oneself is the greatest possible help in putting, gaining this advantage may be sufficient excuse for advocating the put with back-spin. Except on some such ground, however, there is no reason why it should be considered superior to a regularly rolled up put.

I would certainly not advise women players to cultivate this way of getting the ball to the hole. A firmly hit blow, with the center of the club face meeting the portion of the ball that is farthest from the hole, and a clean follow-through, is the safest and sanest method of putting. It is far better for a player to master this simple and natural stroke so that it is completely at her command than to be led away by the factitious advantages of backward rotation. At best,

the putting stroke is difficult to perfect in spite of its apparent simplicity. Possibly in its very simplicity lies the explanation of why it is not easy to accomplish. To aim straight, to hit the ball with the center of the face of the club, to carry the club head in the line from hole to ball as far as possible, to use the proper amount of force—there is nothing complicated about any of these acts; yet consistently to make what might be called thoroughly harmonious puts requires an infinite amount of patience and practice.

THE LENGTH OF THE BACK-SWING

The problem of gauging the force of the blow by the length of the backward swing is in itself a difficult one. The longer the put the longer the swing is practically axiomatic in golf, but facility in carrying this into effect is not easy to acquire. It is generally agreed that one should not rely on "muscular memory" in putting, and it is, therefore, with some amazement that one reads in Mrs. Ross's (formerly Miss May Hezlet) contri-

MISS MARION HOLLINS
Finish of a long drive.



MISS MARION HOLLINS
Finish of a long drive.

bution to "The New Book of Golf," page 303, the following statement:

"The club head is taken back some distance even for short putts, and the length of the shot is regulated by the force with which the club is brought forward again. A putting stroke in this way differs from all other strokes in golf, as in driving and iron play the length of the shot is regulated by the distance back the club is taken, not by the pace of the swing."

If, as Mrs. Ross advises, the club head is taken back some distance for a short put it is certain that the descending swing must be very slow and gentle so that the ball shall not run too far. It is also certain that a slow and cautious swing will soon degenerate into a loose and wobbly one, and that proper control of the club and the ball will be gone. There is no reason why the putting stroke should differ in this respect from all other strokes in golf. The underlying principle is the same whether one has a driver or a putter in one's hand.

The judgment that is required to estimate correctly the amount of force necessary to carry a ball a certain distance comes only with long practice. It is essential not only that the distance be gauged, but also that the condition of the turf and level of the green be taken into consideration. The one warning that can be sounded is: "Always be up." If the ball is "up" or overruns the hole, it has a chance of dropping in, but a ball that is "short" is doomed from the beginning. Women, especially, are inclined to be over cautious in putting, and their fault is rather being too gentle than too strong. This is a failing that must resolutely be overcome at the very beginning. Firmness and determination are qualities that must be cultivated constantly by any woman who aspires to become a good putter. If a player finds that she is consistently falling short of the hole, it is a good plan to aim the ball at the farther side of the cup, or to a point six inches or so beyond.

SLOPING GREENS

The foregoing remarks in this chapter have been made on the supposition that the green on which the player finds herself is level, and that the ball may be aimed straight at the hole. Sadly enough all greens are not laid out in this convenient way, and one finds oneself confronted by hills and dales, hummocks and arenas, that are none the less terrifying on account of their being miniatures. It is not possible for one person to give another any satisfactory instruction how to surmount these difficulties. Each player must meet the problem as it presents itself to her and solve it to the best of her ability. Her natural instinct and the judgment gained by experience are her best guides, and any advice given by another person must be entirely inadequate as it is impossible to cover a fraction of the situations that may arise. In general it may be said that it is better to allow too much, both as to length and direction, than too little, but beyond that any remarks are apt to be inade-

quate to cover the many situations that may arise.

It might seem that a chapter on putting would not be complete without some comment on playing stymies. As I have said before, it is my purpose to take up the various factors in the game of golf as they present themselves to the beginner. The playing of stymies is a difficult undertaking and should not be attempted until one has mastered the more usual strokes of the game. We may, therefore, well leave stymies alone, and be content for the present with getting the ball into the hole when its course is unobstructed.

III

APPROACH SHOTS

ESTIMATING roughly, those shots that are made from any spot within one hundred and twenty yards of the green may be called approach shots. A well-directed stroke with the brassie from, say, one hundred and seventy-five yards from the pin, may deliver the ball upon the green, but, in such a fortunate circumstance, the player has not in reality made an approach shot; she has luckily or skillfully eliminated the necessity of making one.

There is no more exasperating shot in the game of golf than the very short approach. When the ball lies within ten or fifteen yards of the green it would seem that almost any player could get it not only on the green but also within easy putting distance of the hole. That such a feat is not nearly so easy as it

appears, even experienced players will testify. With the possible exception of the short put, there is no shot in the game of golf so easy to miss as the short approach. The fact, that, on the whole, women are much more inaccurate in playing this stroke than men proves again to us that lack of strength is not women's greatest handicap, but that her besetting sin is lack of firmness and exactness. From observation of the average woman golfer, I should say that, in playing these delicate and difficult approach shots, her greatest fault lies in making a too extended backward swing. As in putting, the length of the swing should be determined by the distance of the ball from the hole. When a player carries her club back too far she must bring it forward very gently in order to avoid overrunning the green, and this enforced gentleness invariably becomes looseness and uncertainty. Approach shots must be made with great firmness and decision or the player loses all control of the ball. Like everything else in golf, the attainment of even a fair

amount of accuracy comes only after much practice, but the woman who has carefully built up her short game will find herself amply rewarded for her trouble. The feeling of satisfaction that comes from seeing the ball rise in the air, soar over a bunker and drop dead within a few feet of the pin is greater, I believe, than that which follows a long and beautiful drive. Certainly the fact that a player has such a shot at her command is a better guarantee of a low score than the fact that she can drive a long ball. Too much importance cannot be placed on the necessity of playing a good short game. There is nothing more disheartening than to arrive within twenty yards of the green, after having made a fine drive and good brassie shot, and then to fall short of the green by a miserable approach shot. The likelihood of making the hole in four is gone and it is more than probable that, in such a situation, the player will take two puts and hole out in six. It is on and about the green that strokes are mercilessly added to the player's score,

and it is for that reason that the short game is the test that differentiates the expert player from the ordinary performer.

Approach shots may be divided into three classes: the run-up; the pitch-and-run; and the pure pitch. I have used the terms "run-up," "pitch-and-run," and "pure pitch," rather arbitrarily. Unfortunately the terminology of golf is somewhat deficient in clearness. Writers of golf books and articles frequently ascribe to a word or an expression quite different meanings, and from this lack of uniformity arises a certain confusion in the reader's mind. In order that there shall be no misapprehension in this case I should, perhaps, define what I mean by the terms that I have adopted. According to my classification of these shots a "run-up" approach is one during which the ball is not intended to leave the ground; a "pitch-and-run" is one which combines the ball's flight through the air with a calculated run; and a "pure pitch" is one in which the ball rises into the air and drops with as little run as possible.

Which of these shots the player shall employ must be decided by her own judgment. The factors to be taken into consideration are the distance to be covered, the character and condition of the ground over which the ball must travel, the peculiarities of the green, and the presence or absence of wind. There can be no hard and fast rule laid down on this subject because there are so many conditions that must be taken into account. The goal to be striven for is that the player shall have all three shots absolutely at her command and use the one that seems best in the circumstance in which she finds herself.

The clubs that are used for these shots are many and various. Beginning with the putter, they proceed through all the degrees of slope-back and weight until the extreme is reached in the niblick. The club most frequently used is the mashie in one or another of its numerous styles. The putter, the jigger, the cleek, the light mid-iron and the niblick all have their places and their uses, so it depends greatly upon the individual

player to decide which club meets her requirements best and with which she can do the most effective work. If the ball lies a few yards off the green, and the turf before it is smooth and even, the player may take her putter and treat the situation as though she were running down a long put. If, on the other hand, the ball has a bad lie, must cross a bunker, or must rise abruptly to a plateau green, it is very probable that the niblick is the club that she will select to help her out of the difficulty. The important point is that she shall know the possibilities of each club and use the one that is best adapted to the work at hand. Too much cannot be said in urging the necessity of knowing at all times exactly what to expect of each club, and especially when an approach shot is to be made. If the ground is examined carefully, the kind of shot determined, and the club selected wisely, then the difficulties of approaching are well on their way to solution.

The question of whether the running-up style of shot or the pitch shot shall be used



MISS CECIL LEITH
A fine follow-through.

must be left to individual decision. No really good player invariably uses either the one or the other, but, given a situation where legitimate reasons for using either one can be urged, some players will invariably favor the run-up and others the pitch, according to their personal predilection. The wisest plan is to be master of both but slave to neither. Possibly a player is unconsciously prejudiced in favor of the stroke that she can manage best and in doing which she feels most confidence in herself. However that may be, it is interesting to observe that Braid is very serious in urging that the run-up or pitch-and-run should be employed in all cases except where it is manifestly impossible, and that Vardon and Taylor, with almost equal vigor, maintain that the pitch shot should be used except in such cases where it is obviously impracticable to use anything but the run-up or pitch-and-run. Having considered the general aspects of these two strokes, let us proceed to the study of the principles that underlie the execution of each one.

THE PITCH SHOT

If the player has adopted the modified overlapping grip, or if she is using the Vardon grip, she will find that no change is necessary for the approach shot from that which she used while putting. For the shorter shots she will naturally slide her hands down the leather grip of her club in order to keep control of the club during the abbreviated swing, just as she did while on the green. The position of the body should be somewhat stooped with the knees bent a little, and she should stand fairly close to the ball. It is a general principle that, in the shorter shots, the player should "get down to the ball" more than in the longer shots where a full or three-quarter swing is used. The arms should be kept close to the sides and the hands held low. The stance should be fairly open, with the left foot pointing toward the hole, but the actual arrangement of the feet is, within certain limitations, not so important as the fact that the player must be firmly settled.

Although the body bends forward there must be no sensation of tipping forward on one's toes, in fact the forward pull of the body must be counter-balanced by the weight being adjusted evenly along the soles. During a short swing the left heel should not leave the ground, and even when a three-quarter swing is made the heel should be no more than loosened from its position in the turf. The object to be attained is that the body shall be kept steady, and that there should be no possible suggestion of swaying from side to side.

In making the pitch shot the ball must be raised in the air and, if possible, back-spin must be put upon it, so that when it drops to the ground it will not run forward but will stay where it falls as closely as possible. Either a mashie or niblick may be used, depending upon the distance to be covered and the sharpness of the curve that must be described by the ball's flight. There is a club called the mashie-niblick that finds favor with some players, as it combines the sharp lower edge of the niblick with the weight and gen-

eral formation of the mashie. It is possible to do very good work with this club as its thin edge allows it to cut clean under the ball, and thereby impart considerable back-spin without raising it in the air as abruptly as would a stroke made with a regular niblick. The choice of clubs, however, must be left to the player's own preference and judgment. Such a variety of situations arises in making approach shots that it would not be practical to try to cover them all in making suggestions as to the use of different clubs.

In making all approach shots the player should act very deliberately. There must be nothing hasty or impulsive in her movements, and nothing that might suggest banging at the ball. As calculation of distance and of the ball's trajectory are necessary, the stroke must be accomplished by careful thought and execution. Some players go so far as to say that there should be a slight but perceptible pause at the top of the swing. I believe, however, that it is unsafe to try consciously for this; the idea of having to pause may very

easily result in a momentary relaxation of the muscles that would cause the stroke to be wobbly and uncertain. The better idea is to play only just so slowly as is entirely compatible with firmness and decision.

The ball should be nearly in line with the left heel, and the weight of the body should be mainly on the right leg. The club should be drawn back from the ball with an upright swing, the length of which should be determined, of course, by the distance the ball must travel. The stroke must be firm and decisive, and the follow-through upright and snappy. This snappy finish must not be tried for by any conscious motion. It is gained automatically. It is the upright swing and follow-through, combined with the loft of the club's face, that cause the ball to rise in the air. The club and the manner of the stroke, together, are planned to lift the ball. There must be no attempt on the part of the player to scoop up the ball or to urge it upward by lifting the body or hands.

A mashie shot played in the fashion just

described will have very little forward run, but to insure the ball's stopping dead where it falls (except for the kick which cannot be avoided unless the green is extremely heavy) a mashie shot with cut is employed. This shot is difficult and requires much practice, but it must be mastered by any player who wishes to be expert. The difference in playing this and the straight mashie shot lies in the fact that the club head in the backward swing, instead of being drawn back in the line between hole and ball produced, is carried outside that line. It follows that as the club is brought down the club head will meet the ball with a glancing blow, and will give it, not pure back-spin, but a rotary motion that is off the true perpendicular to the ball's line of flight. This cut stroke is very much like the sliced drive and has the same tendency to swerve to the right. To counteract this tendency, especially if there happens to be a wind blowing from the left, the player must aim her ball to the left of the hole.

Vardon says, "How to Play Golf," page

145, "From the nature of the upward swing, the club is necessarily coming down across the ball, but everything should be done to accentuate that effect. Do not be afraid to make a distinct attempt to draw the mashie sharply and clearly across the ball at the instant when the two come into contact."

Possibly Vardon, after his many years of golf experience, is able to see the instant the club head hits the ball and can think quickly enough to draw the club inward during that fraction of a second, but it is extremely doubtful whether the average player has such instantaneous control of her faculties. If she has not, it would be very unwise for her to attempt an action that must be done at such lightning speed. As a matter of fact, to make a sudden movement at the last instant is sure to spoil the shot completely. If the backward and forward swing and follow-through are in the line already described, across the line of the ball's intended flight, and the stroke is made with sharpness and decision, and the ball hit truly, then the desired

cut will be accomplished. It is certainly difficult enough to do all of this without adding to one's mind the totally unnecessary burden of doing something more the instant the ball is hit.

The average player is generally happy enough if she finds that her ball has come to rest on the green without cavilling at the particular portion of the green it has chosen to occupy. It is only the expert who can, with any degree of consistency, lay the ball within a short distance of the hole. The fact that she cannot accomplish a thing, however, does not relieve the player of the responsibility of trying for it, so it is well, early in one's career, to form the habit of picking out the most advantageous portion of the green for the ball to occupy, and to aim for that. It is by no means the proper play always to aim for the pin, in fact it may happen that it is not wise to aim for the green at all but, perhaps, for example, a steep bank that rises beyond it. The characteristics of the green itself and of the ground immediately surrounding it,

must be carefully considered, and the shot directed in such a way that it will benefit by any peculiarity that is advantageous and will avoid any that will bring trouble. There is even more necessity for this caution in a run-up shot than in a pitch shot, because, when the ball travels on the ground it is, naturally, more subject to disaster from any irregularity in the ground's conformation.

THE RUN-UP AND PITCH-AND-RUN SHOTS

There are not many occasions when a player will use the pure run-up shot. As its name indicates, such a shot causes the ball to make its journey entirely by running over the ground. It is, then, practically an extended put, and is admissible only when the ground to be traversed is smooth and free from obstruction that will divert the course of the ball's run. A putter is frequently used for this shot although many players prefer a light iron. If a club with a lofted face is selected the player takes her stance so that the ball is nearer the right foot than the left, and the

hands are held in advance of the club head so that the plane of the club's face is perpendicular to the ground. This arrangement has the effect of holding the ball to the turf.

For the pitch-and-run shot there are so many different kinds of clubs used that the question of choice of club seems to come down to the preference of the individual player. Braid uses an approaching cleek which he says he finds invaluable, both because its face has very little loft and because it is weighted along the back through that portion that is directly opposite where the club-head meets the ball. Vardon describes his favorite club for this purpose as a straight-faced mashie. He says it is a mongrel club, but one that serves him exactly. However, some style of cleek, mashie, or iron having been selected, the method of playing the stroke remains unchanged.

As the object now is to raise the ball very little and to send it on its way with a low skimming flight followed by considerable run when it strikes the ground, the upright swing of the

pitch shot is abandoned and a flatter swing is adopted that will keep the ball close to the ground. Not only is the style of swing changed but the position of the player in relation to the ball is shifted. Instead of standing so that the ball is near the left foot, the player advances so that the ball is nearly opposite the right heel. The feet are the distance apart that will give the player the feeling of the greatest firmness, and the left toe is pointing in the direction that the ball is to go. The hands are kept low and are a little forward of the ball. Great care must be taken that the ball is addressed accurately, as it is of the utmost importance that the ball be hit cleanly and truly. The club-head is carried back through a flattened arc as far as the distance to be covered by the ball warrants. The descending swing is made firmly, with the head and body steady, and the eyes never for an instant leaving the ball until after it is struck. While making approach shots, players seem to be particularly prone to raise their heads and consequently their eyes; this

failing is one that must be overcome early in one's career, and relapses must be guarded against at all times.

Like the backward swing, the follow-through is low, and the club head is allowed to go out after the ball. The finish of this stroke is very important as everything must be done with the idea of keeping the ball close to earth.

Unless the shot is played up-hill, or against a bank, or over very smooth ground, it is very difficult to calculate the distance the ball will roll when it arrives on the green. Frequently the ball will seem to have scarcely enough motive power to reach the green, and the player will watch it anxiously to see whether it is going to stop too soon, when, suddenly, on reaching the hard, smooth turf, it will seem to become imbued with new life, and will go bounding merrily forward at quite an unexpected rate of speed. In this lies the danger of the pitch-and-run shot. To estimate the amount of force required to carry the ball across lumps or rough grass into the desired

position on the green, but not across it, requires nice calculation that can only be acquired after much practice. It is simple enough to understand what should be done, but the doing of it is quite another matter. This is the secret of the fascination of the game, and what, instead of discouraging the player, inspires her with ever-renewed determination to conquer.

IV

THE MID-IRON AND CLEEK

THERE is no club that can be made to serve in so many different situations as the mid-iron. Standing as it does in the middle of the list of clubs it can be pressed into use as a substitute for any club from the putter to the driver. Naturally, I do not mean to say that it will do the work of any one club so well as the club especially designed for the particular situation at hand, but, if a player were forced to play a complete round of the course with only one club, in nine cases out of ten she would select her mid-iron as the one that would best accommodate itself to the difficulties of the game. The mid-iron is a substantial club a little longer as to shaft and less lofted as to face than the mashie, but not so uncompromisingly severe as the cleek. If

one may be allowed to ascribe to it human qualities, it might be said to have a kindly and obliging disposition that endears it to the hearts of golf players as a safe and reliable friend. It is possible to put quite well with this club, if the player holds her hands well down the shaft, and stands rather in advance of the ball so that the face of the club is brought into an upright position; from the tee it will carry the ball a respectable distance and, in fact, it is occasionally selected as the proper club when, for example, the distance to the hole is short and the green is in an elevated position; through the fairway it is generally useful, and, perhaps, may pick a ball handily out of a shallow sand trap.

Although I have mentioned first what may be done with the mid-iron to show the possibilities that lie in the club, it is not to be supposed that a player would use it in any unnatural way from choice. It is only in a "one-club" match that the player could be forced to use the mid-iron in a bunker, but, as I have said before, in case the player did,

perchance, engage in one of these rather eccentric contests, it would be the mid-iron with which she would set forth to do or die.

Properly, the mid-iron is used in making approach shots when the distance is too great to be covered by a mashie (and I may say here that it is extremely foolish to try to force a mashie beyond its natural capacity); on the fairway when the lie is not good enough for a cleek or brassie, or where the ground rises abruptly; and in the rough grass, if the ball happens to be in a particularly unentangled position. It is dangerous to believe that the mid-iron may be used often when the ball is "in the rough." On account of its longer head and less sloping face it is far less safe than the mashie or niblick, but, if the ball happens to lie in an open space, it may be used. On account of the greater distance that can be gained by using the mid-iron it is a temptation to favor it in place of the mashie, but, if there is any doubt at all in the player's mind, it is far better to play safe. "Play safe" is a good rule to follow in general, al-

though there are, of course, occasions in match play when the player sees that the winning or losing of the hole depends on one shot, and then it is necessary to take a risk.

In playing both iron and cleek shots, the question that first arises is where to stand in relation to the ball. I say "the question" because I believe that only experienced players address the ball with the conviction that they are standing in exactly the right place. A beginner, or a woman who has not become firmly settled in her habits of play, is inclined to change her stance from time to time if her shots are not going well. When she has "topped" the ball, she will probably say to herself, "I must stand back of the ball a little more," and when she sends it too high in the air she will say, "I must move forward and try to keep the ball down." In this way she will change from one position to another endeavoring to correct her faults, but with no clear understanding of what really causes her bad strokes. That there is no absolutely fixed rule about where to stand in relation to the

ball while making iron shots is easily perceived when one reads what different expert players say on the subject. Taylor, "Taylor on Golf," page 231, says: "In playing the ordinary stroke with the cleek the ball is in a position fairly equidistant between the two feet. There is no hard and fast rule in this respect; it is a matter to be settled by the individual player; but the distance should, in the majority of instances, be as I have just stated." In speaking of the mid-iron, page 233, he says: "In playing with the iron the stance is different from that taken in the case of any other club. The right foot must be advanced, and the left thrown back, with the ball on a line that will be nearer the right foot than in the playing of a stroke with the cleek."

Vardon, "How to Play Golf," page 122, maintains that: "For a cleek or iron shot, as for a stroke with a wooden club, the ball should be on a line with a point a few inches inside the left heel." It is hardly worth while to give more quotations because to do so would simply be repetition of the same differences.

The opinions given by the group of players who have written books on the subject of golf seem, on this subject of the relation of player to ball, to advocate the ball being nearer the left heel, equidistant between the feet, or closer to the right, according to the manner that each writer has found the best. Probably the reason for this difference of opinion lies in the fact that no two human bodies carry out the action of swinging a club and hitting a ball in exactly the same way. The ball is a fixed object, lying quite still upon the turf until it is struck; the player, therefore, must take her position opposite the ball in such a way that, allowing for her personal peculiarities of movement, she will hit it squarely and cleanly. It is easy to concede that what would be the best position for one player might not be equally good for one playing in quite a different manner, so it must be left to each player's own decision where, within, of course, certain limitations, she will stand in relation to the ball. Her decision, it is hardly necessary to add, should be based on

a close observation of how she obtains her best shots.

George Duncan, in his article on "Iron Club Play" in "Golf Illustrated" makes the following statement: "We now come to the much-discussed 'push' shot, which should be used for every shot with an iron club from the three-quarter shot with the cleek down to a chip shot with the mashie. All these shots should be played with one object—that is, to put back-spin on the ball, which is the only way to make it fly straight and at the same time to get stop on it after its pitch."

The method of making the "push" shot has been described over and over again, and it is not my purpose to say anything about the stroke in detail at the present time, although I shall discuss it in a later chapter, but this extremely positive and unqualified assertion of Duncan's that it should be used at all times, especially when we remember that he is writing for women, can hardly be allowed to pass unchallenged.

The "push" shot is difficult to accomplish



MRS. RONALD H. BARLOW
Iron shot from a roadway.

NO. 1000
ABSTRACT

and, although it is most useful in some circumstances and should be at the command of every first-class player, it is obviously ridiculous to say that it should be used at all times and with all iron clubs. The ball played with "push" flies straight and low until the force of its forward impetus begins to slacken; at this point the influence of the back-spin becomes apparent in its flight and the ball rises in the air and finally drops and rolls but little. It is a beautiful shot but it is not the one required at all times with any iron club.

In this description of how to play the "push" shot (following the statement just quoted), Duncan says, "In the correct stance for this shot the right foot is a little in advance of the left, with the ball more nearly in a line with the left heel than with the right, and the hands in a dead line with the ball.' If we turn to "Modern Golf," by Mr. P. A. Vaile, and look at plate 40, we see Duncan addressing the ball for the "push." A very accurate description of his position is printed below the picture; I will quote from that.

“The ball is nearer the right foot than for an ordinary cleek shot, that is to say, the player is more in front of the ball than for an ordinary shot. It will be observed, however, that his hands are in front of the ball, that is, they have not moved back to keep in line with the head of the club.”

If it were worth while to follow the text of Duncan's article further, and to compare what he says with what his picture shows him as doing, it would be possible to perceive other contradictions besides the ones just noted concerning the relative position of the player to the ball, and the position of the hands; but enough has been said to show that Duncan does not himself do what he advises women to do. It is difficult to account for this but such, nevertheless, is the case. Without wishing to criticise Duncan in any way, it goes to prove what I said in the preface of this book—that what men have written for women about golf is very unsatisfactory. I might add that, in this article that has been under consideration, Duncan has not really described the

“push” shot, as the reader is led to suppose, but the regular iron or cleek shot.

As a general rule for ordinary strokes with the iron, the ball should be equidistant between the two feet or a little nearer the left, and the left foot should be drawn back somewhat so that the player faces a little toward the hole. The value of the open stance becomes apparent after the ball has been struck, because, in making all straight shots with iron clubs, the club should follow through in the line to the hole, and not finish above the left shoulder as it does after a drive. Sometimes, after an iron shot, the club-head finishes high in the air and sometimes pointing toward the pin, but, in either case, the fact that the feet are placed with the left drawn back makes it easy for the player to turn toward the hole after the ball is struck, and to allow the club-head to follow through in the proper direction. Care should be taken in addressing the ball that the sole of the club shall rest truly on the ground. The grip should be very firm, and at no time should the hands relax,

as the slightest looseness may result in the club's head becoming turned. The hands should be held so that they are in a line with the ball, that is, that the line between the hands and ball should be at right angles to the ball's intended line of flight.

Some players maintain that the hands should be slightly ahead of the ball for making all iron shots, but I believe that the position of the hands depends upon the position of the player in regard to the ball. If the player is standing so that the ball is nearer her left heel than her right, or if the ball is equidistant between her feet, the hands should be in a line with the ball as already described. If, on the other hand, a low ball with backspin is desired and the player stands so that the ball is nearer her right foot, then the hands will be held in advance of the ball. The danger in holding the hands forward is that the player is very apt to "top," or, if her faults lie in another direction, she may bring her hands through so far ahead of the club that, when the club-head hits the ball, its face is

turned back and out, and the ball shoots off to the right.

The question of taking turf after iron shots is a somewhat vexed one. It is maintained by some that turf should always be taken, but it seems that that is a hard duty, especially to impose upon women. If we consider for a minute the theory of iron shots, we can easily clear away this uncertainty. In order to get the benefit of the slope of the club's face it is necessary to get well under the ball; in other words the face of the club should meet the ball at a point midway between its lower and upper edges or a little higher. To accomplish this, and, also, to put back-spin on the ball by striking it with a descending blow, the stroke is made so that the lowest point of the arc described by the club's head is an inch or two ahead of the spot on which the ball lies. The ordinary grass on the fairway generally allows enough room for this without necessitating cutting the grass out by the roots, so, in ordinary circumstances, it is not incumbent upon the player to try to dig

up a section of turf. If, however, she does take up a divot *after the ball is hit*, well and good; no harm is done unless she digs so deeply as to ground her club and prevent a proper follow-through.

The backward swing should be steady and comparatively slow with no slackness in the hands or wrists. The length of the swing should be determined, as always, by the distance the ball must carry. With a mid-iron, a half or three-quarter swing usually serves the purpose; if greater distance is required than can be obtained by a three-quarter swing it is well to use some other club. It does not follow that a player must never make a full swing with a mid-iron, but the mistake to be guarded against is that of forcing the club beyond its natural limitations. If the player tries to get the last possible foot of distance of which the club is capable, she will probably over swing and lose control of the club. Beginners at the game, especially, are apt to make the mistake of over swinging; they make too great an effort, use too much strength.

One of the most difficult things in the game of golf is to learn exactly where to check the backward swing, and, as it is impossible for one person to teach this to another, each player must learn for herself by practice and observation of her strokes.

When a full shot is being played the club should not go back of the shoulders as it does when wooden clubs are used, but the swing should be fairly upright in character. The shaft of the club at the highest point of the swing should be above the player's head, or, more strictly speaking, above the back of her neck. The peculiarities of the construction of iron clubs demand this type of swing, and it is well that they do because it is much more accurate than the flatter one employed for wooden clubs.

As the club is carried back the body must necessarily turn at the same time. It seems useless to state dogmatically just what portion of the body should begin to move at certain fixed points in the club's journey. All of the joints of the body are capable of being

twisted with the exception of the knees and the elbows. From the ankles to the neck the body may be screwed around, but, as the knees refuse to screw, the left knee must bend in the only way it will go. There is nothing difficult or complicated about all of this—a child will do it quite naturally and gracefully. It is because, as our bodies mature, we are inclined to become stiff and awkward that so many instructions about how to turn the body have been considered necessary. In the long run these directions are confusing, and tend to make the player more stiff and self-conscious than she was in the beginning. For this reason I do not intend to go into the subject at all beyond emphasizing two fundamental principles. These are that the head must be kept steady and that the body must not sway from side to side. If the player will absolutely obey these instructions, she will not go far wrong in swinging the club. Ease and grace will come, if they come at all, by practice and self-confidence. It is better to keep in mind the thing that must be done

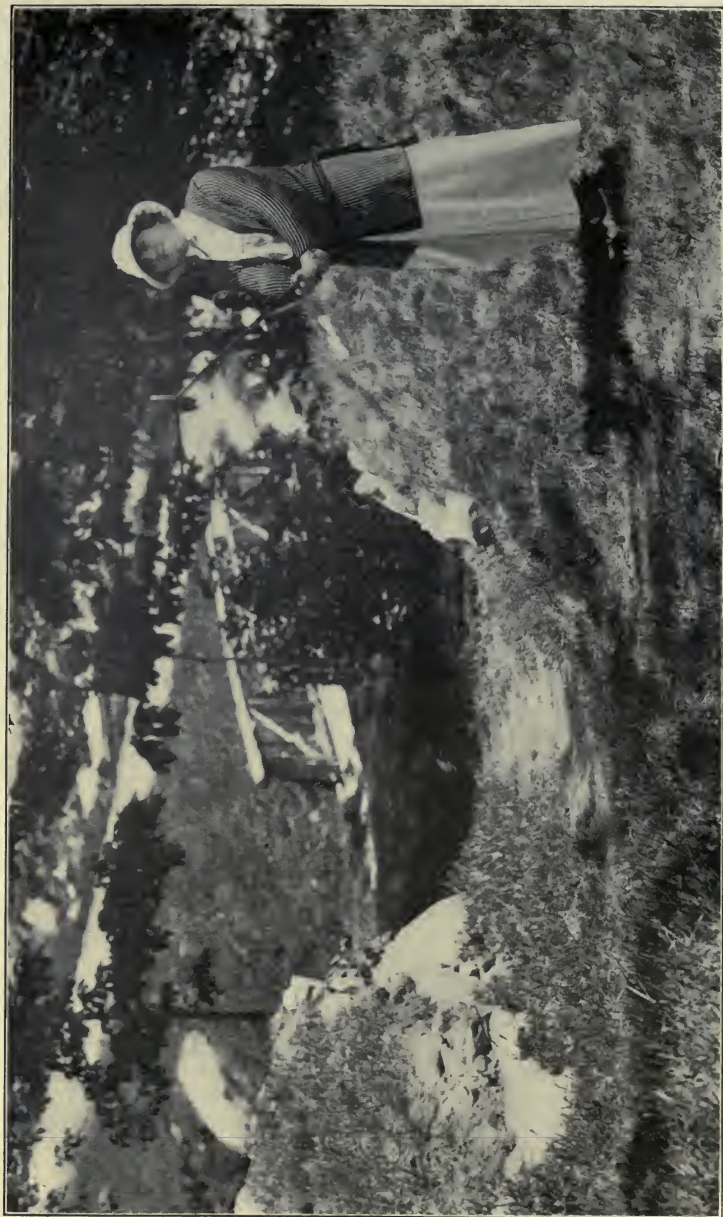
rather than the *way* in which the thing must be done. In the case under consideration the club must be carried back only far enough to insure the ball's going a predetermined distance after it has been struck, and it must be brought forward again so that the ball shall be hit fairly and squarely as planned when the ball was addressed. If the player does these things, she need not worry about the turn of her body. As I have said before, good form is a means to an end, not the end in itself.

THE CLEEK

Whereas the mid-iron is universally popular with the rank and file of golfers, the cleek is generally viewed with much misgiving. As a rule, it is the expert player who really enjoys using a cleek, and who has thorough confidence in his or her ability to manage it successfully. There is a certain uncompromising quality inherent in the cleek that demands that it be treated with great respect. It is not a club to be trifled with and, consequently,

as is frequently the case, excessive respect produces in the heart a suggestion of fear and trepidation. It is unfortunate that this should be true, and a golf player who earnestly desires to become proficient should early in her career rid herself of this somewhat superstitious awe of this exceedingly useful club. On account of its straight head and the moderate slope of its face, the cleek does not adapt itself readily to unfavorable conditions, but there are certain times at which the cleek is, without doubt, the only club to use. At such times the player should be able to take it from her bag with absolute confidence in the success of the shot she is about to make.

In general the stance and the swing for the cleek are the same as that employed for the mid-iron. The question of whether or not a full swing of the kind that is used with a driver and brassie should be used with a cleek is one on which there is much difference of opinion. Many players say that a full shot should never, or almost never, be played with an iron club. It is true that in a half or three-



MRS. W. J. FAITH
Getting out of the rough.

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quarter shot there is less room for error than there is in a full shot. On the other hand it requires very strong forearms and wrists to make the ball carry very far when a greatly curtailed swing is used. Discretion and common sense must guide each player in deciding this question for herself. As a definite rule, it can be said only that it is unwise to try to force a club at any time. It is better to play a three-quarter cleek shot than a full shot with a mid-iron; if there is any doubt about the mashie's carrying the ball to the green, the player should take a mid-iron and use a shortened swing. On the other hand, to cite another possible case, if the player wishes to send a long, low ball against the wind, there is no reason why she should not take her cleek, swing the club around back of her neck and hit for all she is worth. One of the distinguishing signs that differentiates an expert player from an ordinary one is the skill and accuracy with which she can make half shots with her iron clubs. It is far from easy to learn just how far back to carry the club, and

to learn to keep the body and club under absolute control during the stroke, but steadiness and accuracy in iron shots must be attained if the player is to raise herself above the level of ordinary slashers. Women, on the whole, are inclined to over-swing with their iron clubs and for this reason they should make a special effort to practice half and three-quarter shots long and diligently. Patient work in this direction will bring its reward in the sureness and finish it will give to the player's game.

In using iron clubs it is a common fault among women to make the ball rise too high in the air and, by so doing, to lose the distance that the ball should carry and, also, to expose the ball to the dangers of a crosswise or contrary wind. Usually it should be the earnest endeavor of the player to keep the ball as low as possible. Unless there is rising ground to be surmounted or a bunker to be cleared, there is nothing to be gained by the ball's abruptly climbing into the air. I must except, of course, such shots as pitched mashie shots when the ball is played so that it will drop

dead upon the green; I refer now to ordinary mid-iron or cleek shots. The reason a woman's iron club shots are inclined to fly high is because she picks up the ball at the bottom of the swing. In order to overcome this failing it is necessary to hit the ball while the club is still on its downward journey. A slight change of stance, so that the ball is a little nearer the right foot than the left, will accomplish this result, and if a player finds that she is regularly hitting the ball too high into the air, it would be wise for her to try standing a little ahead of the ball in this way. It follows naturally that when she is making the address her hands will be a trifle in advance of the ball. Such a position is perfectly correct; in fact, as I have said before, many players believe that, in playing all shots with iron clubs, the hands should be ahead of the ball. The danger, which I must again emphasize, of this position lies in the fact that, if it is at all exaggerated, the player may, in making the stroke, bring her hands through so much before the head of the club that the

face of the club will be turned out and the ball will fly off to the right.

It is generally conceded that in iron play it is better to aim at a point a little behind the ball than at the ball itself. Theoretically this advice is unsound, but practically it works itself out as a convenient concession to safety. If one were playing with an iron ball on an iron floor, one would not take an iron club and aim at the floor in order to hit the ball. The resulting shock would hurt the hands, and, by the time the club had rebounded from the floor to the ball, there would be little force left in the blow. With an outfit of iron such as I have described the player would undoubtedly aim at the ball and at nothing else, but—and here is the point of this illustration—unless she were a wonder of accuracy, she would almost as undoubtedly “top” the ball. It is for this reason that, when a player has springy turf or loose sand before her, she may safely and wisely aim behind the ball and thus greatly lessen the chances that a little unsteadiness on her part will cause her to spoil her

shot by "topping." Although the game of golf is based on scientific principles, a few concessions must be made to the inexactness of the movements of the human body.

THE DRIVING MASHIE AND THE SPOON

For those players who cannot feel themselves comfortable and confident with the cleek, there is the driving-mashie that may be used as a substitute. The slope of its face is a little more upright than that of the mid-iron and a little less straight than that of the cleek. In this respect it stands between these two clubs, but in general shape it resembles the mashie. Like the mashie, the face is rather broad and is decidedly wider at the toe than where it joins the shaft. It is an easier club to use than the cleek as it will more easily pick a ball out of an indifferent lie, but it is not so strong a club and it is not possible to get so great a distance with it. However, it has its uses and its disadvantages and has found favor with a great many players.

Another club that may be used instead of

the cleek is the spoon. The spoon is more nearly similar to a brassie than any other club on account of its wooden head and brass covered sole. Its head, however, is not so deep nor so broad as that of a brassie and its face is more sloped back. On account of the fact that its sole is curved from toe to heel, it can readily pick a ball out of a cuppy lie, and therefore it is an easy club to use in situations where a brassie would be impossible. Recently the club has come into quite general popularity after having lain in oblivion for some years. Before iron clubs were used at all, the spoon, or baffy as it was then called, served the purposes for which the mid-iron and cleek were afterward designed. With the general acceptance of iron clubs the spoon fell into disuse, and has been taken up again only comparatively recently. It is not such a difficult club to use as the cleek, and it will get a long ball without a great deal of run. It cannot, however, be used to produce such precise and accurate shots as can a cleek when in the hands of an expert, but for the ordi-

nary player it is a very convenient club. I have J. H. Taylor as my authority for the statement that "A professional golfer is never known to use the baffy." If this is true, it does not mean that the club must be banished by less proficient players, but it may be taken as a warning not to rely on the baffy-spoon to the exclusion of the mid-iron and cleek, because in the long run it will not prove so satisfactory.

Against this remark of Taylor's, we have the fact that George Duncan has been using his spoon very successfully, but whether or not he will continue to favor it, is impossible to predict. Among those professional players who speak of using a spoon it is possible to detect a somewhat apologetic air. In "The New Book of Golf," page 197, Sherlock says: "I must confess to a distinct liking for playing my spoon. It has a fairly long shallow face and a stiff shaft only two inches shorter than that of my brassie. I swing for a full shot with this club in just the same way as I do with a driver. I frequently use it for

short shots—checking the backward swing—and much prefer it to a cleek.” That this is a sincere expression of Sherlock’s opinion no one can doubt. The spoon is a very convenient club, it must be admitted, but it is not wise to range oneself on the side of those players who favor it above the iron clubs, nor yet to stand with those who systematically despise it. When the ball is in such a lie that a spoon is required there can be no question but that the spoon must be used, but it weakens one’s game to force it into precedence over the cleek when the cleek is obviously the club that is right for the particular shot that is to be played.

V

IN AND OUT OF TROUBLE

IN the game of golf, as in the game of life, it is much easier to get into difficulties than out of them. It is almost beyond human capability always to proceed directly down the fairway without straying a little to one side or the other and becoming ensnared in rough and tangled places: or, if the feet walk straight toward the goal, the pace may be too fast or too slow, so that the unfortunate one finds herself facing an obstacle difficult to surmount, or entrapped in an unseen pitfall.

Fortunately, in the game of golf there are well-known and clearly defined ways of recovering from unpleasant situations, and the player has only to keep her head clear, her eyes steady and her grip firm and, ten to one, she will not come out too badly. It may be

well to add that she must also carefully bear in mind the rules of the game. Too much stress cannot be laid on the necessity of a player's knowing exactly what she may and may not do when she finds her ball in a bad lie. Frequently players who have had several years of golfing experience will be heard to say, "May I move this stone?" or "I just touched the grass and my ball rolled, what shall I do?" Such exhibitions of indifference to learning the rules of the game cannot but reflect discredit on the person who asks such questions. She lays herself open to adverse criticism not, perhaps, concerning her honesty, but certainly concerning her common sense, or rather her lack of it. There should be no doubt in a player's mind as to what she is privileged to do, and she should waste no time in discussing the subject with her opponent or her caddy.

There are times when a player's heart sinks as she sees her ball drop into long grass or on rough and bumpy ground, yet, on approaching the spot, she may find that the ball has



MISS MURIEL DODD
Bunkered.



MRS. DOROTHY CAMPBELL HURD
A good bunker shot.

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settled in a fairly open space comparatively free from grass and surrounding bushes. In such a case, she would probably take her mid-iron and try to forget everything except the fact that her ball is lying clear, and that she has room in which to swing her club. Such fortunate accidents are not usual, however, and it would be a great mistake to imagine that a mid-iron may frequently be used in long grass. The mashie-niblick and the niblick are safer clubs, and, if there is any doubt at all in the player's mind, it is a wise rule always to consider safety first. Of course, there are occasions when the only chance of winning the hole is by making a long shot and then risks must be taken, but "safety first" is the motto to bear in mind along with "keep your eye on the ball."

It seems to me that, in this connection, the words "keep your eye on the ball" are very well in intention, but that they are really inexact in expression. When a ball must be taken out of long grass or heavy sand, it is not the ball that must be eyed but the spot

behind the ball—in other words the spot that the player expects her club to hit first. A better admonition would be “look where you’re hitting and hit where you’re looking.” Nowhere is woman’s lack of powerful muscles such a handicap to her in playing golf as it is when a ball must be chopped out of thick grass or excavated from heavy sand. It requires powerful forearms and wrists to separate the ball from its resting place and to send it any considerable distance on its way to the hole. For this reason it is foolish for a woman to attempt too much; she should be satisfied to get the ball well out, and in such a position that her next shot will be an easy one. Sometimes, if, for instance, there is some obstruction such as trees or a steep bank that prevents the swinging of the club, it may be necessary to play to the left or the right or even directly back, but it is far better to swallow all pride and be content to get the ball clear, than to try a shot that is practically doomed to failure from the start. Head work counts a great deal in getting out of difficul-

ties, and women have no reason for admitting inferiority when it comes to the use of mental faculties.

When the ball is lying in grass so that the player must use her mashie-niblick or niblick to get it out, careful judgment is required to ascertain just how far back of the ball the club head should strike first. If the player aims too far back, the progress of her club will be checked and probably the face turned outward by the tough grass blades; on the other hand, if she aims too closely behind the ball, there is great danger of topping. Experience and observation alone can teach the player the safest course, but woe to the one who refuses to be taught and goes blindly thumping and whacking among the bushes. If such is her state of mind she may as well give up at the start, pick up her ball, and walk on to the next tee.

Firmly settled feet, a steady head, a tight grip, an upright swing, and grim determination are the necessary requisites for chopping a ball out of tough grass. No thought of

“sweeping” the ball anywhere must be allowed to enter the mind, and the follow-through must be left to take care of itself. In all probability there will not be any follow-through worth considering if the grass is very unyielding. The one object is to hit the ball and hit it hard. When the ball is lying in sand a different set of conditions presents itself to the player, but the player’s mental reaction should be the same as when the ball is in “the rough.” If the ball is lying free and clear, the player may forget the fact that she is in a sand trap, and use her mid-iron with the same stroke and the same confidence that she would if the ball were safely on the fairway. A little sand should be taken in front of the ball in the same way that the turf should be grazed in an ordinary mid-iron shot. Soft sand, if the ball is lying free, offers no difficulties at all.

The case, of course, is different if the ball is partly buried, or has come to rest in a heel print, or has a steep bunker before it. In any of these situations the player would use

her mashie or niblick, probably her niblick because, if there is any digging to be done, the heavier club is far more effective. She must be sure to settle her feet firmly in the sand because it is of the utmost importance that the body should be kept absolutely without swaying while the shot is being played. It is advisable and quite permissible that she wriggle her feet from side to side until she feels that her position is fixed and comfortable. There are occasions when the ball is lying in such a position that it is impossible for the player to stand evenly, and she must adapt her stance to the circumstances as best she can. Even though her position is awkward, however, she must do her best to make it so secure that, in swinging her club, she will not inadvertently sway her body. Firmness of stance and firmness of grip are two prime essentials to play in bad ground. Never for a moment must the player allow herself to relax, nor to waver in her determination to accomplish her shot and in her confidence of doing it.

The stance having been taken, the question of where to aim again arises. In order to get under the ball, it is necessary to aim back of it and to take sand. The ball may be in any one of so many possible positions that it would be useless to try to make a rule that would fit all cases. The only course for the player to adopt is to bear in mind the fact that she must not be afraid of taking sand, and, also, that she must not overdo the matter and cut completely under the ball or ground her club. The fine line that lies between enough and too much she must draw for herself.

If it is necessary to make the ball rise very abruptly into the air to clear some obstruction, a variation of the ordinary niblick shot is demanded. The player stands well behind the ball, with feet planted as firmly as the exigencies of the situation permit, and holds the hands low. The face of the niblick is turned back and out, and the ball is addressed by the heel of the club. The backward swing is very upright, and the club is brought down sharply

so that the face of the club cuts under the ball from right to left. This is a "cut" stroke and the ball will have a tendency to go to the right. To counteract this, the aim should be taken to the left of the direction in which the player desires the ball to go. It is invaluable to a player to be able to use this stroke with confidence and precision, because situations frequently occur (such as when the ball is under the edge of a bank or has a steep bunker rising before it) when this is the only stroke that will surely and safely extricate it.

Braid, in speaking of this shot, "Advanced Golf," page 124, says, "Grip the club firmly, though not in an absolutely tight and unyielding manner, such as would be recommended when playing from heather or gorse. The reason for the distinction is just this, that we want a little play in the wrists, and some slackness of the muscles, in order to nip the ball up and screw it out of its place, as it were, at the moment of impact. This screw-jerk, with very much the same kind of wrist action as is employed when a man is en-

gaged in uncorking a bottle with a corkscrew, is a very necessary feature of the well played niblick shot." If we take Braid at his word and form a mental picture of him playing a niblick shot as he here describes, we would see him in our mind's eye coming down behind the ball with his niblick, screwing the niblick around, and then jerking the ball out. Such a course of action would be so absurd that it is needless to say that no one ever saw Braid in flesh and blood¹ do this remarkable feat. However, I have quoted this passage, not so much to call attention to the fact that Braid has been unable to find words adequately to describe his own actions, as to emphasize again the point that students of the game of golf must consider carefully not only what they are told but also what they read, and must apply to each statement the test of their own intelligent reasoning. It is natural to say to oneself, "If Mr. Open Champion says so, it must be true," and let it go at that. The danger that lies in this mental attitude is that, although Mr. Open Champion is a

wonderful player, when he tries to tell others what he does he finds it difficult to describe in words the motions that are easy enough for him to perform. It follows that his words are frequently misleading. I do not wish to decry the usefulness of the books that have been written by great players, but I wish to urge the importance of each woman's sifting out all instruction and advice, and keeping for her own use only what her mind tells her is sound.

These remarks may seem to be a digression but, through the quotations from Braid, they lead back to the execution of the niblick shot. Nothing could be more disastrous to the player getting her ball out of heavy sand behind a bunker than any attempt to "screw-jerk" it out. The niblick is a heavy club, with a sharp lower edge and a face much sloped back. The player has only to hit under the ball at the proper spot with sufficient strength and the club will force the ball out and up. To try to jerk up the ball leads to that gravest fault in bunker play, raising

the shoulders and head. Although it may be the natural impulse to try to scoop the ball out, the conditions under which the shot is played demand that in order to hit the ball up one must hit the club down.



MRS. CLARENCE H. VANDERBECK
Good form in the follow-through.

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VI

THE WOODEN CLUBS

IT is with some trepidation that I undertake to write this chapter on wooden clubs. When there is so much that may be said on a subject it is sometimes difficult to select the essential from the non-essential, or, to express it differently, to push back into oblivion all the useless notions and fancies that cling about this part of the game of golf, and to present only facts that are really worth consideration. Stripped of all entangling ideas, the theory of driving a golf ball is simple enough; the most elemental mind can readily understand what must be done, but the doing of it, involving as it does the coherent action of the whole body, can be accomplished only after the most conscientious practice.

The reader has now been led through all the usual strokes of the game; she has started

at the putting green and has proceeded, or perhaps I should say 'receded, through the broad fairway with its surrounding spots of danger, to the tee. If she is a beginner and has practiced her shots in the order in which they have been discussed, she will have laid such a foundation of experience and muscular control that, when she has arrived at the point where she is ready to take up driving, she will have only a very little more to learn in order to complete the structure of her game. If she is a beginner, and is perverse enough to insist on learning to drive first of all, she will meet with much discouragement before she has mastered this art. However, with patience and persistent trying she will get on. The order in which a player masters the different clubs is not of vital importance but, as it is the logical method to start with the easiest and work up to the hardest, I have advised that course. A player who has a different mental conviction on the subject should follow her own way of thinking. An honest belief, even though a mistaken one, will not

do a player real harm. If she thinks enough to form an independent opinion, she will think enough to correct it when she finds she has been wrong. So long as a player is actively thinking for herself, she is on the high road to becoming a good golfer. It is the woman who believes everything she is told and drifts from one notion to another as she happens to read a book or to receive friendly advice, whose case is well nigh hopeless.

Undoubtedly the best way for a woman to learn to drive, or to improve her driving if she is already well along in the game, is to put herself under the tutelage of a good professional teacher. It is possible to read and study and to teach oneself, but it is a long and difficult process. Where books fail is in the fact that, while they can tell a player what to do and what not to do, they cannot follow each individual onto the links and see whether she is obeying instructions. In an act such as the golf drive, involving as it does the whole body from the head to the toes, there are many opportunities for unconscious error on the

part of the player. She may think she is doing a certain thing and not really be doing it at all. A professional teacher will immediately point out to her her mistakes and she will lose no time in correcting them, whereas, if she is practicing entirely alone, she may easily persist indefinitely in the same error without discovering it for herself.

One may ask then, "What is the use of books?" Unfortunately all players are not so situated that they may engage a professional teacher as frequently as they would wish, and, also, there is not always a good professional at hand. Books may be read at times of leisure when the mind is undisturbed by the necessity of action, so that their words receive more calm consideration than do the words of the instructor. It is a wise plan to read and to take lessons at the same time, as it frequently happens that the teacher may clear up some difficulty that has confronted the player in her reading. If, however, the book and the teacher seem to be at variance in their statements, it is well for the pupil to

suggest that fact to her teacher rather tentatively. If he clears up the seeming disagreement, well and good; if, however, he answers shortly, "I don't know anything at all about that," it is wise for the pupil not to pursue the subject further, but to think it out for herself, otherwise the psychological harmony between the teacher and the one taught may be disturbed. No professional enjoys having a book, metaphorically speaking, hurled at his head.

Not only is it helpful to seek a professional teacher for instruction in the art of driving, but also for advice in the selection of a club. It is not possible to say what the length of its shaft, nor the weight, nor the lie of the club should be because the club must be fitted to the size and physical peculiarities of each individual just as her shoes would be fitted to her feet. All advice on the choosing of this club must be of the most general character and may serve only as a guide if the player is left entirely on her own responsibility in this important matter. Duncan gives the

proper length of the shaft for a woman as forty-one and one-half inches. This length is probably the average, and the player can judge for herself whether she will need a longer or shorter club. The shaft should be springy when compared with the stiff shafts of the iron clubs, but not so springy that, when the club is swung, it will bend so much as to endanger in any way the accuracy of the shot. It is well to avoid extremes of any kind, especially for a beginner. The lie of the club and the length and breadth of the head should all be moderate. Too long a face leads to inaccuracy in addressing the ball and too short a face gives too much chance of toeing or heeling. As in the length of the club's face, so also in the depth, should a happy medium be found. If there should be any predetermined preference about the depth of the face of the club, it should be away from the shallow type. They are apt to emphasize one of women's most common faults in driving, that is, sending the ball too high in the air and thereby sacrificing distance. For

the same reason it is well for a woman to select a club whose face has only a very little loft.

When a woman has been playing for some time and has fallen into the habit of her own particular style of play, she will, without doubt, have certain changes made in her driver when it is practicable to make the alterations she wishes, or she will buy a new club that will meet her requirements as she has come to know them. By that time she will be able to judge for herself what peculiarities of the club, if any, suit her own individual method of playing.

THE STANCE

In dissecting the golf drive into its component parts for the purpose of detailed consideration we find that it naturally falls into four divisions; the stance, the grip, the swing of the club, and the action of the body during the swing. Following our usual procedure we shall first present the subject of the stance. The reasons for beginning with the stance are

that it is the easiest part of the act of driving, and that the somewhat complicated action of swinging the club and twisting the body cannot be properly executed if the feet are not placed in the right position in relation to the ball. It is difficult to follow the reasoning of Mrs. Ross when she says, *The New Book of Golf*, page 272, "I am inclined to think that the grip should be attended to first, then the swing, and lastly the stance. The stance is the easiest problem of the three to tackle, and may quite well be postponed." Why not attack the easiest problem first and clear it out of the way, especially when, as in this case, the most difficult problem, which is the complete act of swinging, depends directly upon the stance? There can be no doubt that the arrangement of the feet has a decided effect on the way in which the club comes through to the ball and beyond it. The slight turn of the body that is caused by placing one foot or the other in an advanced position makes itself felt from the shoulders to the arms and so on down to the head of the

club. The movements of every part of the body are so closely inter-related during the drive that it is necessary, in order to piece together the whole action, to begin, literally, at the ground and to proceed from there upward.

It would be futile to attempt to state in feet and inches just how far the player should stand from the ball. Her height, the length of her arms, and the way in which she holds herself, whether erect or stooping, are all factors in determining where she should stand. By drawing too near the ball the player cramps her arms, loses distance by the shortening of her swing, and runs the risk of overreaching and thereby hitting the ball with the heel of her club. The dangers of standing too far away are loss of control of the swing and the tendency to hit with the toe of the club. A medium position must be taken, far enough away to insure free action of the arms and a wide swing, but not so far that the player will have the sensation of reaching out or straining for the ball. It is

not possible to drive a long ball when the player stands in too closely, and, therefore, if a player is convinced that she is not getting the distance she should, considering the amount of strength she is using, she should first take her usual position on the tee, then wriggle her feet back an inch or two and try making her shot from that position. By moving back only an inch at a time, the player can gradually accustom herself to the change without upsetting her regular stroke, and she will find that her ball is gaining in length. She must stop this backward movement, however, the moment she feels that she is losing her sureness and her control of the club.

Because of the fact that, even when one uses the most closely interlocked grip, the left hand is nearer the body than the right and the left arm is consequently a little slack, it is not wise to stand so that the feet are exactly square with the ball. The expression "standing square with the ball" means that a line drawn from toe to toe would be parallel to the line in which the ball is expected to travel. In



MISS MARION HOLLINS
Good foot work in finish.



order to take up this slack and to make the arms draw evenly so that the right shall not dominate the left more than is natural, the left foot is drawn back a few inches. This slightly open stance has also the advantage of affording the body a firmer base on which to move. In a greatly modified degree it may be likened to the position of the feet of a person who is standing in a moving train. Those of us who are so unfortunate as to have had experience standing in trolley cars or subway trains know that to stand squarely facing the front of the car or the side windows is to court disaster. The expert "strap hanger" stands with her feet in a diagonal position so that she is braced against a jolt from any direction. So it is, in a lesser degree, that, by withdrawing the left foot slightly, a firmer base is established from which to make the concerted movements of the drive.

It is not to be supposed, however, that a player can safely stand with her left foot drawn back to any great extent. Ten or twelve inches would be far too much for the

average person and would immediately cause her to slice, unless she had some personal peculiarity of swing that counteracted the effect of this decidedly open stance. It is to avoid the tendency to pull in the club that may follow even a slightly open stance that James Sherlock, "The New Book of Golf," page 194, in speaking of his own game, says: "Another important point that I have alluded to is what I have called hitting away from you. This is not easy to explain on paper but easy enough on the golf course. . . . Now if you keep well in your mind the idea of hitting away, you will be pretty certain to avoid the hitting towards; and it is this which is so important in driving.

"I am not afraid that many will succeed in actually hitting past the ball, because of the stance and the position of the ball, but the effort to do so will invariably result in the ball taking a straight flight.

"If this idea were more generally understood and acted upon, chronic slicing would be much less common than it is."

This is a practical hint that may help some player who is slicing even when she is standing normally. It is not my purpose to be led away to the subject of slicing in general, however, as I am reserving that for another place. These remarks of Sherlock's seemed to have pertinence here because it is very natural to suppose that, even when the stance is only slightly open and the ball a very little in advance of the player, there may be a slight inclination to draw the club in across the ball's intended line of flight. If a player should have this feeling, she may do well to keep in mind Sherlock's suggestions about hitting away. There can be no legitimate reason for adopting the position in which the left foot takes the lead and the right foot is placed in the background when the player wishes to make a straight drive. That is, of course, the position for the intentional pull, but for straight driving there is nothing at all to recommend it.

Having now arranged her feet to her liking, the player must see to it that she stands

on them properly. By that I mean that the weight must be evenly distributed between the two feet and that she must not tilt forward on her toes. If it is impossible to reach the ball comfortably without throwing the weight upon the toes, the player must move nearer the ball and settle back a little on her heels, or at least be sure that the entire length of both her feet is firmly and flatly on the ground. This is another factor towards maintaining a steady base from which to begin the operation of the drive.

THE GRIP

In the chapter on putting I spoke at some length on the subject of the grip. Although I stated there that I should strongly advise the modified overlapping grip for women, it is not imperative that women should adopt this method of holding the club, nor, in fact, that they should use any overlapping grip at all. A great many women have already formed the habit of holding the hands separately and, if they are doing well, there is

no reason why they should change and go through the uncomfortable period of accustoming themselves to another fashion of holding the club. The essentials of a good grip are that the hands be pressed closely together, that the club be held at the base of the fingers and not in the palms of the hands, and that the hands be held so that the V's formed by the thumbs and first fingers are well toward the top of the shaft. If a player's grip is such that she combines in it these three essential qualities, she may rest content. Certainly she should not let any one persuade her to attempt the Vardon grip, as it is extremely doubtful whether it is ever desirable for a woman, and it is surely not worth while for any one to give up a good and satisfactory grip in order to cultivate it.

While we are speaking of the grip, another aspect of the same subject must not be neglected nor forgotten. This is the comparative strength of the hold of the left hand and of the right hand. There has been so much confusion and misapprehension on this sub-

ject that few players who have not given it especial thought can tell exactly what their ideas on the subject are. All through the books that have been written on golf there are constant references to the left hand as the one that must take charge of the stroke. We find frequently such remarks as, "now let the left come into play," "grip firmly with the left and allow the right to relax," "in this part of the stroke the left takes the lead, the right acting simply as guide." There are, in fact, so many admonitions of this kind that it would be hopeless as well as unnecessary to hunt them all out and to quote them with their context. In summing them all up, however, I may say that, in rather an indefinite way, they give one to understand that, at certain times and in certain places, the right hand gives up its natural mastery and is superseded by the left. The curious fact about all of this is that when the great players who have written these books come down to saying what they themselves do, they never admit that in their own game they force the left hand into

the place of supremacy. They will preface their advice by saying "The theory is . . . ," or "you should do . . . ," but when it comes to this question of giving up their own strong right hands they never say, "I do it."

This notion of advancing the left hand into unnatural leadership has, in a more or less confused form, been clouding players' minds for a long time. The only man to face the question and to clear it away as a question once for all has been Mr. P. A. Vaile. In "The Soul of Golf" he argued the point exhaustively, and has completely routed those persons who had advocated for others the favoring of the left hand. It would be an ideal condition for golf players if both hands were of equal strength because in such a case it would be much easier to maintain the proper balance between them, and the strokes could be made more evenly and smoothly. However, even if the right hand and the left were of equal strength, the fact would still remain that, on account of the anatomical arrangements of the arms, the left hand, at

the time of hitting the ball when the most force is needed if it is to be a long shot, or the greatest delicacy if it is to be a shot requiring nice calculation of distance and direction, is working backward. The energetic housekeeper who wishes to drive a nail into the wall certainly would not hold the hammer in her left hand, and, keeping the back of her wrist to the wall, attempt to strike the nail. If she is a right-handed person, as I am of course supposing she is, the result of such an attempt would be disastrous to the plaster if to nothing else. There can be no doubt that with normally constituted persons, the right hand is the master hand. Why, then, anyone should try to supplant it with the left which is not only weaker, but is also working at a disadvantage, is incomprehensible. Let us once and for all forget such false doctrines and give to each hand no more and no less than its due. It follows, then, that the endeavor of the player should be always to grasp the club firmly with both hands, and to

allow no thought of separating their functions to enter her mind.

Nothing can be more dangerous, especially for women, than heeding any instruction that involves relaxing the hold on the club. In putting or in making a short approach shot when there is the possibility of the ball's going too far, it is exceedingly easy to allow the club to become loose in the hands. The player instinctively feels that in curtailing her shot she must let up on her grip. The result is always a weak, uncertain stroke that sends the ball anywhere except the place where it is expected to go. The habit of holding the club firmly with both hands cannot be cultivated too soon or too persistently; at the same time, the player must not fall into the way of clutching at the club so rigidly that the muscles of the wrist are stiffened and prevented from free action. Men such as Vardon and Braid may be able to allow themselves the freedom of relaxing their grip now and then, but it must be remembered that

what they would consider a light hold on the club is, when one remembers the strength of their hands and fingers, as firm as the average woman's tightest grip. Relaxation of the muscles, except in unusual cases, means, for a woman, looseness of hold and should be avoided from the start to the finish of her game.

There are so many preliminaries to this wonderful operation of driving a golf ball that it is no wonder that, by the time a player has gone through all the stages of making ready for the stroke, she finds it impossible to concentrate her mind on hitting the ball. It is inability to fix her thoughts entirely on the act of hitting that, at the last minute, spoils many a carefully arranged shot. The only way to overcome the distracting effect of preparation is to make the preparation become automatic. This can be done only after long practice. It takes a very experienced player to tee her ball, look toward the hole, decide how long a shot and what kind of a stroke she must make, take her stance and



MISS CECIL LEITH
Playing a niblick shot from the rough.

make her address, without allowing one doubt or one question to enter her mind that will distract her attention from hitting the ball. The self-confidence that allows a player to tee up her ball and hit it, without showing a trace of hesitancy or uncertainty, can be acquired only by having thought over and practiced previously all the movements that make the shot up to the time the club begins its downward journey to the ball. It is only by having settled all questions to her satisfaction and by repeating certain motions so many times that they become mechanical, that the player can reach the point of proficiency where she can free her thoughts of all complications and give her whole mind to striking the ball.

It is for this reason that it is profitable to study the preliminaries to the drive one by one, and in their correct order, so that they may be settled when the player's mind is not under the tension that the necessity of action creates. We have already considered the stance and the grip, and now we reach

the next step, which is the method of address.

THE ADDRESS

As the center of the face of the club is the point at which it is destined to meet the ball, the club should be placed in such a position that its face meets the ball at this spot. The sole of the club should be fairly on the ground. If the club does not fall into this position easily and naturally, there is something wrong either with the lie of the club or with the way in which the player is standing or holding her hands. The fault should be observed and immediately corrected. It is of great importance that the ball should be addressed truly, as it is hopeless to believe that a fault in the address can consciously be corrected as the club is descending to the ball.

George Duncan, Article II, "Golf Illustrated," says: "The hands must be in a straight line with the ball and the toe of the club immediately behind the center of the ball," and again in the following article he

states: "After addressing the ball correctly with the toe of the club behind the center of the ball, and the hands in a line with the ball (as explained in a previous article), the player is ready to make the up-swing." As a matter of fact he did not explain in the previous article why he advocates addressing the ball with the toe of the club; all he said about it is what I have quoted. His explanation, if he had made one, would have been interesting because we cannot help wondering why he would recommend for general adoption this rather irregular style of address. It is true that a great many players do address the ball with the toe of the club, but to imitate them without reason would be extremely foolish. As a matter of fact, the players who lay the toe of the club back of the ball are using one fault to correct another. They have probably found that, when they address the ball truly, they come back to it with the heel of the club, and to avoid doing this they begin the shot with the club pulled in a little. Hitting with the heel is a common fault and is

due to one of two things; either the player lets out a little, and, on the downward swing, allows the club's head to describe a larger arc than it did on the up-swing, or she sways her whole body forward as she brings the club down. Lurching or leaning forward is a bad fault and should be corrected at once. The letting out of the arms on the downward swing is the result of the player's determined effort to hit the ball. As she carries the club up she is using some caution, as the club comes down the one thought is to hit the ball and hit it hard; it is almost inevitable that the arms should go out a little and that the head of the club should come through a little farther away from the player than it did on its slower upward journey. If the player finds that she is doing this, and that, otherwise, her swing is all that it ought to be, she may permit herself to counteract this defect by addressing the ball with the toe of the club. She should not, however, be too ready to adopt this style of address, and should resort to it only as the last expedient when she feels quite sure that

it is the only way by which she can be sure of meeting the ball squarely.

The complete swing of the golf drive is, from the viewpoint of mechanics, one of the most curious feats that a player has been set to accomplish in any game involving a ball and an implement for hitting. Theoretically, we have here the object that is destined to strike the blow describing a full circle, or, more correctly speaking, a circle and a half, and at only one instant is it in the line of the ball's intended flight. It is to this unusual situation that the great difficulty of driving straightly and truly is attributable. In all the club's journey, as it completes one circle and laps half-way over on a second, there is only one point at which it may meet the ball. Surely, the margin for error is very great, so great that the player helps herself a little by starting the club's head back parallel to the ground for a few inches in the hope that it will return in the same way, and, after the ball has been struck, allows the club and the body to follow after

the ball. By doing this a little of the curve of the circular swing is removed, but not enough to relieve the player from using the greatest care throughout the whole stroke.

THE SWING

Let us now follow the club on its journey; back from the ball it starts, not rising abruptly, but keeping close to the ground and in the line from hole to ball produced for a little way, then ascending until it has reached its highest point, and from there descending above the player's shoulders until it reaches such a place that its shaft is parallel to the ground and its toe is pointing downward. So much for the course of the upward swing. The speed at which it should be made must be carefully regulated. To go back too slowly makes a sluggish shot, to go back too quickly leads to over-swinging and forces the player to exert too much energy in starting the club back again. As usual, a happy medium must be found.

In the downward stroke the club should

retrace its course, gathering speed as it descends and until the ball is struck. Once the ball is away, the club follows for a short space, then rises until it is once again over the player's shoulders, and thus its circle and a half is finished. If describing circles with the head of the club were all that is necessary, the golf drive would, indeed, be a very simple thing. But there is a great deal more involved in it than that. The arms, legs, body, and weight must be managed in such a way that, at the moment the club hits the ball, all of the player's available strength is behind the blow. To accomplish this requires the most careful adjustment of all the player's various motions, so that they may be made in absolute harmony with each other. When so many parts of the body are moving simultaneously, it is somewhat difficult to follow the action of each one in connection with every other one. For that reason it is an easier task to show a player how to use her arms and legs and how to turn her body than it is to tell her about it in writing. However,

we will not let such an annoyance as the limitations of the English language, or our own imperfect use of it, disturb us at this time, but we shall bravely return to our player while she is addressing her ball, and try to follow her subsequent actions as best we may.

The preparatory motions that the player goes through in order to drive her ball have frequently been called a system of "winding up." Whatever the name is, the action must be started immediately after the club leaves the ball. By the time the club head is a very short distance on its upward journey, the left knee must begin to bend and the heel come away from the ground. The forearms turn naturally, as the club goes up, and the body twists at the waist. The elbows are kept down and as close to the body as is compatible with freedom of movement. As the club nears the top of its swing the wrists come under the club and the weight of the club falls across them. When the club has reached its momentary pause at the top of the swing, the left shoulder should be pointing toward

the ball, the left knee bent forward, the heel raised so that the weight falls across the ball of the foot, the right leg should be stiff, the right foot firmly planted on the ground, and the head should be absolutely steady and in the same position that it was when the player was making the address.

Now the "unwinding" process begins as the club starts on its return path. Whatever anyone may say to the contrary, it is the turn of the body that starts the club on the downward stroke. This is a matter of vital importance which has not received the recognition that it justly merits in any book on the game that I have read.

There can be no doubt, however, that it is the body that takes the lead from the top of the swing. So quickly does the action of one set of muscles follow another that the eye is hardly quick enough to perceive which it is that starts the club on its downward course. If we consider for an instant the action of the body of a boxer, a bowler, a weight thrower, a tennis player, we shall see that in

each of these cases, where strength is required, the body comes in first. It is the weight and strength of the body that backs the arms and enables them to develop the necessary force.

Almost simultaneously with the starting of the club on the downward stroke the arms begin to unflex at the elbows which, of course, is where the main speed of the stroke is developed. Much has been written about the wrist action in the downward swing. To attempt to tell anyone about this in writing or even to show it with club in hands would be futile, for that which is so commonly mis-called wrist action is merely another name for the unrolling or unwinding of the forearms which is spread gradually and insensibly over the whole of the downward stroke so that they absolutely reverse the process through which they went in the upward swing.

As the arms begin their action, the left knee straightens, the right knee bends, the right heel leaves the ground, and, as the ball is struck, the whole body follows the club so that



MISS MARION HOLLINS
Top of swing in short approach shot.

the left leg receives nearly all the weight and the right foot comes up onto the toe.

The foregoing is a brief statement of the movements necessary to making the drive. They are not in themselves so complicated that any person with ordinary suppleness of body and limbs need have any trouble in accomplishing them. The difficulty lies, however, in the fact that, while keeping the head steady and the eyes fixed on the ball, the player must so co-ordinate all these actions that they are brought into perfect rhythm, and that their cumulative effect must be regulated so that, at the instant the ball is struck, the player is exerting her greatest strength. To do this is to "time" the stroke correctly.

TIMING THE STROKE

This expression, "timing" the stroke, is very vague and indefinite unless the player knows exactly what it means. One frequently hears it used quite wrongly, probably because the word does not in itself suggest what it stands for in this connection. In order that it may

be quite clear what actions this word has been selected to represent, I shall add Braid's definition to what I have already said. On page 59 of "Advanced Golf," he says: "In broad principle, timing, of course, is the maintenance of perfect and scientific harmony between the movements of the head of the club and the shaft on the one hand, and those of the arms and the body on the other. . . . The chief object of the timing, simply stated, is to make the moment of impact and the attainment of the supreme force of the swing simultaneous, and the great danger is lest the swing, wound up under such high tension as we have seen, should go off too soon, so to speak."

Certainly, each player should make it her earnest effort to time her stroke correctly. To do so is the only course by which she can hope to become proficient at driving, but she must be very careful to make the timing of the stroke the result of the development of all her movements toward one end, the hit-

ting of the ball. To attempt to do anything at the last instant just before the moment of impact is very unwise, if, indeed, it is not impossible. Players have been advised time after time to "Speed up" the swing during its last foot or so before reaching the ball, or to do something of a "snappy" nature with their wrists at the instant of hitting. Just how these things are to be done no one has made at all clear for the very simple reason that they are not done at all. By this I mean that they are not done in the last fraction of a second before the ball is struck. If, as is the case, the club, as it travels through the lower part of its arc, is going at such speed that when photographed with a camera whose shutter is of the very fastest type, it becomes a blur, then it would clearly be impossible for a player to put on extra speed during the last foot or to "snap" it by jerking her wrists. In other words, the player cannot start any action in the last fraction of a second and keep the club head in its proper arc. What-

ever is done immediately before the impact of club and ball must be the natural sequence of her previous actions.

THE ACTION OF THE WRISTS

The consideration of the action of the wrists during the drive is very important, not only on account of what they must do but, also, on account of what they cannot be expected to accomplish. Strong and supple wrists are a great asset to a golf player, but they must not be called upon to act in any way independently. While the club is going back they turn at the same time that the fore-arms roll over, until at the top of the swing they are bent toward each other under the shaft of the club and the weight of the club crosses them sideways, or, in the way they bend least easily. As the club comes down, their action is reversed so that when the club head reaches the ball they are in the same position as they were at the start. If they do not come back to their original position the ball will not be hit truly, therefore any

thought of jerking or snapping that the player may have been harboring in her mind will, if put into execution, pull the hands out of position and spoil the shot. On the other hand, rigid and inflexible wrists are bad because they stiffen the swing with the result that the ball does not go the distance that the player is justified in expecting of it. In order to get a long ball the whole body from the ankles to the wrists must be under perfect command.

IRON CLUBS FOR DRIVING

If the player believes that the length of her regular drive will carry the ball too far, it is better for her to use another club, possibly her cleek or her mid-iron, than to try to curtail the length of her swing. In this respect she must regard her driver in a different light from her iron clubs. I have said several times in previous chapters that it is unwise to force a shot with a club when it is possible to use a half or three-quarter swing with some other club that is capable of greater distance. To

give a concrete example: if the distance to be covered by an approach shot is the exact limit of what the mashie will do, it is better to take a mid-iron and use a shorter swing. All shots made with a driver, however, should be forced. This may seem an extreme statement, but a moment's consideration will, I believe, prove it correct. The drive is, as we have seen, a complicated shot requiring the nicest co-operation of arms, legs, and body. In order to get all these members working together in harmony, it is necessary for each one to do its full part. If a player wishes to make a shorter shot than usual, the swing must be shortened; it follows, then, that each movement must be correspondingly reduced. Here lies the great difficulty. When a player thinks she must lessen a certain group of actions it is probable that she will leave out some one action entirely. The idea of making a three-quarter shot with the driver will work out in her standing stock still and doing all the work with her arms, or in her pivoting with her body and holding her arms

as stiff as sticks. The fault of omission may be any one of several, but it is certain that she will leave out something and, in spoiling the harmony of her swing, she will spoil the efficacy of her shot. It must be remembered that I am not speaking for men players; they must manage as suits them best, but there can be no doubt that, while making a drive, a woman must be "hard at it" all the time.

OVERSWINGING

In order not to waste any strength it is necessary to guard against overswinging. If the club head is allowed to drop behind the shoulders so that the shaft is carried beyond its normal position parallel to the ground, a certain amount of force is required to bring it up again, and this force is sadly misplaced. A woman needs all her energy for the downward swing, and it is extravagant to waste any of her somewhat limited supply in struggling with the club somewhere behind her back. Overswinging is usually caused by the player's relaxing her grip at the top

of the swing. As the hands loosen their hold, the club head drops toward the ground, with the result that the player must then tighten her grip and pull it up into position. It is very easy to fall into this bad habit, so easy, in fact, that many players regularly over-swing without being aware that they are doing so. The cure is, of course, to keep a firm hold of the club and to cultivate the "feel" of the proper position at the top of the swing by practicing, preferably under the observation of some other person.

RELAXING THE GRIP

Whether or not it is advisable ever to relax the grip of the right hand at the top of the swing depends upon the personal peculiarities of the individual. If a player is sufficiently supple to make a full swing without loosening her right hand, it is far better that she should do so. However, if the player experiences difficulty in getting the club around properly, she may perhaps relax the hold of her right hand a trifle, but must maintain her

grip with her thumb and forefinger. Immediately the club begins to rise she must resume her hold with all her fingers or she will lose control of the club on its downward journey. From the moment the club begins its downward swing the player must concentrate all her strength in order to hit the ball effectually. She must not clutch at her club, nor make any violent or untoward movement, but, following the sequence of actions that she has already planned for herself, she must carry them out with all the energy of which she is capable. She must not let up for a fraction of a second until the ball is clear away and her club is well beyond the place where the ball lay.

THE FOLLOW THROUGH

Even after the ball has been hit, however, the player is not relieved of all responsibility. The follow-through is a very important part of the shot. Not that anything that the player or her club can do can in any way affect the ball once it has begun its flight

through the air, but, by *a posteriori* reasoning, if the follow-through is correct then the swing of the club up to the time it hit the ball must have been correct. The action of the club after the ball has been struck completes the swing and makes the act of driving a rhythmic and harmonious whole. As I have said before, in its practical demonstration the course of the club's head is not a perfect circle. Immediately after the moment of impact of club and ball the player continues the transference of her weight to the left leg, and allows her club and her body to follow after the ball as far as possible without disturbing her balance. As the arms arrive at the limit of their reach the club rises naturally and ends its journey by coming to rest over the player's left shoulder. A fine, free follow-through is the necessary finish to a good drive and should be carefully cultivated.

DISTRIBUTION OF WEIGHT

After the player has learned to go through all the motions of the drive correctly, there is



MRS. ANTHONY J. DREXEL
Finish of a drive.

still another point to be considered and that is the way in which her weight is distributed during the making of the swing. If she stands, and uses her feet and arms in a proper manner, there will not be any question about her weight; it will take care of itself. However, there have been innumerable discussions on the subject and every conceivable suggestion has been offered as to where the weight should be at certain points of the swing. So it seems necessary that the final conclusion of those who know best should be stated here. This conclusion, to put it in its briefest form, is that during the swing and up to the beginning of the follow-through there is very little, if any, transference of weight from one foot to the other.

The player takes her stance with her weight equally divided between her two feet. If she does not draw away from the ball, or, in other words, if she keeps her head still, as she is strictly bidden to do, how can she move her weight to her right foot? Yet we are told many times that during the up-swing the

weight is chiefly on the right foot. It is interesting to try a little experiment to decide this for oneself. By dropping a string across a fairly large mirror and standing before it so that the string bisects the reflected image through the forehead, nose and chin, and then going through the motion of swinging a club, it is possible to find out just how much extra weight can be put onto the right foot without moving the head. In making this experiment the tightening of the muscles of the right leg from torsional strain must not be mistaken for a sign that they are carrying weight. A few swings made by a player arranged before a mirror in this way, will, I believe, convince her of the fact that her weight cannot be shifted to any noticeable extent, provided she keeps her head still. It is possible that, as the arms and the club are to the right of the player's body midway in the upward and downward swing, they change the center of balance slightly, but the change would be so little as to be practically negligible.

Now as the club reaches the top of its swing,

the left knee has bent forward and, on account of the pull of the twisted torso, has the appearance of bending slightly inward. Although the head has not moved, the left leg has come in under the body and therefore it is reasonable to suppose that at this time it is bearing a little more than its half of the player's weight.

As the club descends and the shoulders swing around and the body is returning again toward the ball, the left leg straightens and the weight is once more divided between the two feet. When once the ball is struck, however, the whole body moves after it and the weight is practically all thrown onto the left foot.

Although I have said that, during the course of the upward swing and the downward swing, the weight may be a very little more upon the right foot than the left, it would be a fatal error for the player to attempt in any way to transfer her weight to the right foot. To do so would surely result in her drawing away from the ball, moving her head, and all

the subsequent disasters. It is far the best plan for a player to take her stance with her weight evenly divided between her two feet and to resolve to keep her head still and her eye on the ball; if she can stick to this course until she hits the ball she may forget all about her weight and rest assured it will look after itself.

SLICING

Probably the most common fault of beginners is slicing the ball. Although I say that this is a fault of beginners, it is by no means confined to them. Even experienced players suffer from attacks of slicing and, once a player falls into the habit, it is very difficult to overcome the faults that are at the root of this evil. There is something particularly discouraging about a sliced ball. The player, full of confidence in herself, makes her shot and feels that all is going well, when, on looking after her ball, she sees it suddenly leave its straight line of flight, curve off to the right, and, dropping rather abruptly, roll aim-

lessly a little way, and come to rest generally in some very undesirable spot. When a player tops her ball, she knows it the instant she hears the sound of the impact, and she is not at all surprised to see the ball skipping along over the grass instead of soaring in the air. At the same time she realizes that she has raised her head, or has taken her eye off the ball, or has hit the ground with her club and caught the ball as the club came up; whatever the cause of her bad shot may be, she can identify it and guard against repeating the error another time. When a player is slicing, however, she is apt to have a helpless and hopeless feeling because the reason that she is doing it is not so evident as it is when she tops her ball, and she is apt to keep on slicing drive after drive without being able to correct her fault.

If a player finds she is slicing frequently, she should take a box of balls to the practice ground and engage a professional teacher to show her where she is in error and how to correct her mistakes. If a teacher is not avail-

able and she is obliged to work out her difficulties for herself, she will probably find on analyzing her swing that she is either bringing her hands through in advance of the head of the club, or that she is allowing the club head to go outside of the line between hole and ball produced and, consequently, bringing the club head in across the ball so that its face meets the ball with a glancing blow.

The first of these faults is caused by starting the hands ahead of the body at the top of the swing. When the player starts the club on its downward course, she has probably had some lurking and mistaken notions about using her wrists. It follows, then, that the head of the club has been lagging behind all the way so that, when it meets the ball, the line from toe to heel is not perpendicular to the ball's intended line of flight. The fact that the face of the club does not meet the ball squarely results in the ball's starting on its journey with side spin, which, when the force of the forward blow slackens, causes it to turn abruptly to the right. The other fault that

results in slicing is much more difficult to correct. The arc of the club's swing may extend beyond the line before the ball is hit either because the stance is wrong or because the player leans forward while making the downward swing, or because she lets out her arms, or because, after she addressed the ball, she did not carry the club back in a proper line. It is, first of all, necessary to find out which of these faults is being committed, and then the player can make such changes in her method as will correct it.

There is a very simple device that a player, who is struggling alone to correct her faults of swing, may find helpful. I offer it merely as a suggestion and anyone who cares to try it can soon find whether or not it will be of use to her. The plan is to take a few short twigs and plant them about two inches apart and in a straight line, beginning an inch or so beyond the ball and continuing back parallel to the line from hole to ball projected, until a fence a foot long is constructed. The player should then forget her little fence and

make her usual swing, keeping her eye faithfully on the ball. If, in the course of the club's downward swing, the twigs are knocked over, it is proof that the player is reaching beyond the ball. By patiently rebuilding the fence time after time, the player can accustom herself to keeping her club head in the proper line and thus overcome her tendency to slice.

PULLING

Pulling the ball is not nearly so common a fault as slicing, if, indeed, it may be called a fault at all. The pulled ball travels well and will roll a considerable distance. Some expert players habitually aim to the right and play every drive for a pull in the belief that by doing so they get a more reliable ball than they do with a straight drive. Pulling as a fault can be remedied generally by a change in stance. If a player stands with her left foot well back, it is practically impossible to pull the ball. It is evident that when a player takes her position with her right foot drawn back and her left in advance, her body is

turned in such a way that it is easy, if not necessary, to carry the club out across the ball. This is the puller's stance and may be corrected when the player finds she is getting more pull on her ball than she desires.

I shall not speak of the intentional pull and slice at this time. I will reserve discussion of those strokes until later when I shall take up various special shots.

THE BRASSIE

Although the heading of this chapter contains the words "Wooden Clubs" I have up to this time mentioned only the driver. The brassie, it would seem, has been completely relegated to the background. Such a slight to the brassie is by no means intentional, but it has been necessary, for simplicity's sake, to deal with only one club at a time. Practically everything that has been said about strokes played with the driver is equally applicable to those made with a brassie.

The club itself should closely resemble the driver, and the two should be well matched as

to weight and lie. The sole of the brassie is shod with brass to enable it to pick the ball more readily out of the grass or a somewhat cuppy lie. Because its work is a little rougher than that of the driver, which is used only from the tee or when the lie is particularly advantageous, the shaft should be a little less springy and an inch or so shorter. Many players prefer having the shafts of the two clubs of equal length as they desire to get the greatest distance possible with the brassie. It is better, however, for women players in general to use a brassie with a slightly shortened shaft as they will then have more control over the club. The average woman player is inclined to be somewhat wild in her brassie shots, and she can well afford to run the chance of losing a little distance in order to steady herself in the use of the club. The stance and grip and general characteristics of the swing are the same for brassie and driver. If the shaft of the brassie is shorter than that of the driver, the swing will be rather more upright, but that is practically the only



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difference between the two. As it is not possible to get the distance from iron clubs that it is from the wooden, a player should be assiduous in her practice with her brassie. If she cannot use it well, she will find herself sadly left behind in playing long holes. There is no doubt that it is a difficult club to master, but perseverance and intelligent practice will accomplish a great deal and the reward is well worth the effort.

VII

SPECIAL SHOTS

THE PUSH SHOT—THE SLICE—THE PULL—
PLAYING STYMIES

WHEN once the regular shots have been mastered, the player's mind immediately turns to learning to execute those more difficult strokes, the command of which stamps one definitely as an expert at the game. For all ordinary playing a woman will get on quite as well if she leaves these alone, and contents herself with playing a straight ball with whatever spin comes to it naturally from the face of the club that she is using. By following such a course, however, she can never hope to rank as a player of the first class; but, before deciding to add to her game these difficult shots, she must be sure that her skill in playing in the ordinary way has become so great that she is ready

to progress beyond the grade of a regular club player and to enter the lists as a possible champion of her club or of the group of clubs surrounding her. To attempt to learn the slice, or the pull, or the drive played with back-spin, or any shot requiring special skill, before she has attained complete control of herself and her club is to court confusion and disaster. The mental and physical adjustment necessary for playing ordinary shots can be acquired only after the most painstaking effort and it is one of the most discouraging facts about the game of golf that, just when the player has reached the point where she is beginning to feel really sure of herself, some slight change in her manner of playing will throw the whole combination completely out of gear. To express the same idea in the vernacular of golf, a change in her stance or swing or in her mental conception of the physical motions she is about to make will put her "off her game." It is for this reason that I have, through the pages of this book, so strongly urged the necessity of building up

the correct method of playing each shot, so that, once the habit is established, it will not have to be changed and the player subjected to the unsettling effect of abandoning one method in order to adopt a better one.

If, however, the player has reached such a state of perfection that she feels she can safely risk the addition of special strokes to her game, she has before her a group of shots that, when thoroughly at her command, will place her high in the list of women golfers. Which of these shots is the "master-stroke" is a subject on which players disagree, and it is hardly worth while our entering into the discussion of this point. Each shot has its own merits and its own uses and there is no particular advantage to be gained by proclaiming any one of them "master." It would be convenient, however, if players would agree upon a name for the push shot when played with a wooden club. There appears to be no definite name for this shot and it is rather curious that there should not be because it is certainly one of the most important

shots of the game. The word "wind-cheater" has been used by some players to designate this stroke and as this term seems as well known and as reasonable as any, I shall adopt it for lack of a better.

THE PUSH SHOT

The push shot and the wind-cheater may be classed together because, although one is played with an iron club and the other with a wooden club, the fundamental principle of the two shots is the same. Both are played by coming down on the ball. The moment of impact occurs before the club head has reached the lowest point in the arc of its swing, so that the ball is sent away with a backward spin that helps it to hold a straight course through the air and prevents it from rolling too freely when it reaches the ground. These two shots are exceedingly valuable and are a source of great satisfaction to a player who has them at her command. They are not by any means easy to manage because they require very great accuracy. Anyone who undertakes to

learn them will go through a discouraging period of tapping or of banging the ground before she learns that absolute control of her club that is necessary to play these shots successfully. The reward of persistent trying will be great, however, and these strokes, once mastered, are an invaluable addition to the player's game.

The push shot is usually played with a cleek or mid-iron, although a mashie or a jigger may be used. The jigger is rather a dangerous club on account of its narrow blade, but it is well liked by some players and if one is successful with it, it needs no other argument in its favor. Duncan says that all shots played with iron clubs should be push shots. That is a very extreme statement, but, as it seems to be a common fault among women to make the ball go too high when they are using iron clubs, it would be well for those that are conscious of this failing to consider the method of keeping the ball low that is a part of the push shot, and to profit by adopting something of this method of playing.

The player, in taking her position for playing the push shot, stands more in advance of the ball than she is in the habit of doing for an ordinary shot with an iron club. Her hands, instead of being in a line with the ball, are somewhat ahead of it. This position of the hands causes the face of the club to lose some of its loft so that the ball is not forced up as it would be if the club were soled in the regular way. Everything in the method of playing this shot conspires to keep the ball low. The stance is fairly open, the left toe pointing toward the hole and the weight equally divided between the two feet, if anything, more on the left than the right. The player aims for the back of the ball, not for the top of the ball as is sometimes advised, or she will surely get into trouble. The club head should meet the ball as it is still on its downward journey, and should graze closely or bite the turf an inch or two beyond the spot on which the ball rested. The swing for this stroke is upright and should never be fuller than three-quarter because the idea

of coming down on the back of the ball must be strictly maintained. The club should follow the ball and its action, after the ball has been hit, should be somewhat restrained. There should be no grand flourish at the end of this stroke; the club should be kept down so that it does not rise materially past the point where its shaft is parallel to the ground.

Some persons advise turning the right wrist over at the moment of impact with the idea of helping to keep the ball low. This advice falls into that class of impractical suggestions that cannot be carried out. It is, however, the correct finish of this stroke to allow the right wrist and forearm to turn over as the club follows out after the ball so that, as the limit of the follow-through is reached, the toe of the club is pointing toward the ground.

The stroke for playing this shot with a wooden club is the same in theory and the same in application, with, of course, whatever modifications are necessary on account

of the difference in the structure of the two types of clubs. When this shot is played from a tee, it is well to build the tee rather high as such an arrangement gives more opportunity for the club's face to cross the ball with a downward motion. The idea that a high tee necessarily leads to a high line of flight is an erroneous one. The upward curve of the ball's flight is governed by the way in which the club meets the ball and not by the height of the tee on which the ball rests. When there is a head wind there is no better shot than the wind-cheater for holding a straight course and for carrying a long distance. The ball played by this stroke flies low for the greater part of its journey, then rises in a graceful curve and falls to the ground. During the early part of its flight the force of its forward impulse prevents its back spin from having visible effect, but, as its speed begins to decrease, the fact that the ball is revolving backward causes it to mount gradually higher until its force is spent and it drops to earth. By the time the ball has

reached the ground the back spin has been nearly, if not quite, exhausted so the ball is, after all, a fairly good runner. In this it differs from such a shot as the pitched mashie shot. In the case of the mashie shot the ball rises abruptly as soon as it leaves the face of the club and falls to earth before the spin of its backward rotation has had time to wear off. For this reason the mashie shot has sometimes a kick or, in any case, very little run, while the wind-cheater, by the time it reaches the ground, acts very much in the manner of a ball that has been played with no back-spin at all.

Valuable as this shot is, it is a pity that there are few women players who can execute it at will. As a matter of fact, it requires a good deal of strength. The shot may be played perfectly as to the action of the player's body and the movement of the club, but, if there is not a good deal of force behind the blow, the shot will not be successful.



MISS ELAINE ROSENTHAL
Finish of brassie shot.

THE SLICE

It is not often that we can turn our mistakes into virtues, but such is the case in playing the slice. Slicing is one of the most common faults among players, and it is very difficult to correct when one desires to play a straight ball. The most contrary fact about this fault is that it is just as hard to commit it consciously as it is to correct it. The inveterate slicer, when asked to play for a slice, will go through all kinds of grotesque motions and will end by declaring that she does not know how it is done. The reason for this is, of course, that she has fallen unconsciously into the habits of stance and swing that conduce to a slice and is, therefore, unable to reproduce her own actions when invited to do so.

The spin that causes the sliced ball to swerve sharply to the right as soon as its forward momentum has slackened is produced by the face of the club cutting across the ball's intended line of flight at the moment of im-

pact. A slight slice may result from the player's pulling in her arms at the moment the ball is hit instead of allowing the head of the club to follow straight after the ball. This is a fault in the follow-through that falls into the class of unintentional slicing and should not be tried for when the player is endeavoring to cut across the ball. It is one of the general assortment of last minute jerks that may be done unconsciously, but which the mind is not quick enough to control when attempted as a regular method of play.

For the true slice the player must plan her stroke so that the path of the club's head will cross obliquely the line from ball to hole produced. To accomplish this the stance should be quite open, the ball nearly in a line with the left toe and that toe pointing toward the hole. From this position of the body it follows that the reach of the left arm is shortened and that the head of the club, as it is carried back, will go outside the line from hole to ball produced. As this path of the club's head is the inevitable result

of the player's position and not a conscious pushing out of the club, the club's head will return in the same plane in which it went back. The swing for this stroke is of a more upright nature than that for a straight drive, and the follow-through correspondingly vertical. The fact that, at the moment of impact, the face of the club is cutting across the ball causes the ball to start on its journey with a spin from left to right. The axis on which the ball rotates is very nearly vertical so that the ball is spinning in a manner very similar to a top. It is this decided side spin that causes the ball to turn abruptly to the right as soon as the pace slackens sufficiently for the spin to affect the direction of its flight. It is this side spin that also prevents the ball from running freely when once it has reached the ground.

THE PULL

To the casual observer the pulled ball seems to be the reverse of the sliced ball, but if such were the case, the curve of its flight and its

action on the ground would be the same except for the fact that it would curve to the left instead of to the right. It requires careful observation of the conditions under which a ball is pulled for the player to ascertain why it is that the ball with a hook is a good traveler and runs freely. Everyone knows that to play a ball with a slight pull is no disadvantage, and that many players use this shot in preference to a straight drive. Whether or not they are justified in doing so raises another question. It is extremely doubtful whether the hooked ball offers any advantage over the straight ball with back spin unless, of course, its curve is utilized to get around some obstruction.

If we consider carefully the stance and swing for the pull we will, in due course, discover wherein the nature of its spin differs from the slice, beyond the fact that it has in a general way the reverse motion.

The object now is to cause the ball to rotate, roughly speaking, from right to left. I shall risk appearing somewhat pedantic by

explaining here that when an object is revolving in the same direction in which the hands of a clock, laid flat on its back, move, its rotation is described as going from left to right. When the object is moving anti-clockwise, its motion is called a spin from right to left. When playing for a pull, in order that the ball may have this right to left rotation, it is necessary that the face of the club should cut across the ball's intended line of flight in such a way that the friction of the club's face against the ball should produce the desired spin. To accomplish this the player takes her stance so that her right foot is withdrawn behind the imaginary line that crosses her left toe and runs parallel to the line from hole to ball produced. Braid says, on page 77 of "Advanced Golf," that ". . . we place the right foot back and make the stance an exaggerated square." It is somewhat puzzling to understand how a thing can be more square than square. This quotation emphasizes the fact that I have already mentioned that the game of golf is deficient in terminology. We

have, in this case, the square stance and the open stance but there is, so far as I know, no word or phrase that is generally accepted to denote the open stance that opens the other way. However, we must get on as best we can with the words at our disposal until some clever person supplies some new terms.

The player should take her position so that the ball is opposite the right foot. It is impossible to say whether the ball should be in a line with the toe, instep or heel of the right foot, and, when a slice is being played, it is equally impossible to state exactly where the ball should be in relation to the left foot. The slight peculiarities that differentiate one person's style of play from that of another make it impractical to attempt to be definite to the point of hair-splitting. If a player has the proper idea in mind, she can and must work out the smaller details for herself.

The swing for the pull is decidedly flat. The club head draws away from the ball toward the player and continues in a curved line around the player's body. If, as some writers

suggest, the club is drawn back in the line of the ball's intended flight, it is certain that, on account of the position of the player's whole body, it will not come down in the same path in which it went up. It is better to allow the head of the club to leave the straight line as it is carried back and to bring it in toward the body, then, as it returns on the downward swing, it will cross the ball's intended line of flight and reach out beyond it. In this manner the desired side spin is imparted to the ball. Soon after the ball is hit and the club starts on its follow-through, the right wrist is allowed to turn over, and, as the club reaches out beyond the ball's line of flight, the right arm is carried across the front of the body in a position that is almost straight.

To return to the downward swing of the club, it is, as I have said, of a decidedly flat variety. As the head of the club meets the ball, the club is already beginning to rise and therefore a certain amount of top spin as well as side spin is given to the ball. It is this

fact that accounts for the difference in the action of the pulled ball and the sliced ball. Whereas the ball played with slice has almost pure side rotation, the ball played with pull has side rotation, modified by an over spin which makes it fly long and low through the air and run freely when it has reached the ground.

Some players slice a ball into the wind if the wind is coming from the right, and pull the ball if the wind is coming from the left. To do this successfully requires very exact judgment of the direction from which the wind is blowing or the player will suffer more damage than benefit. If, for example, the wind is a cross between a head wind and one blowing at a direct right angle from the right of the fairway, its action on the sliced ball will be to push it still farther around in the curve that it makes naturally. If the wind is coming from somewhere behind that line which makes a right angle to the fairway, there is no reason why the player should try for a slice. A straight ball under such conditions

would go farther and be much safer. To have in mind that it is advantageous to slice into a wind that is coming from anywhere at the right, is very dangerous. In certain combinations of circumstances, when the player feels that she can be sure in her calculations of the effect of the wind on the ball, and when it is not her object to gain as much length as possible, she may find it desirable to use the sliced ball, but such a combination is far from frequent.

On the other hand, when the fairway slopes decidedly to the right or to the left, the ball with a sidewise curve in its flight may be made to stick to the side of the hill when a straight ball would roll down. Occasionally one finds courses that have one hole or several holes that must be played along a side slope. When such a situation is encountered it is very convenient to be able to pull or slice against the rising ground. It seems unfair that a straight ball should be penalized by the permanent conformation of the ground, but golf architects slip into a course, now and then, a

hole that must be played over a side sloping fairway, or one that has an angle or elbow guarded by some obstacle such as a building or a group of trees. Such holes as these test the player's skill and, if they are discouraging to the beginner, they add to the variety and interest of a course to those who have become skillful players.

PLAYING STYMIES

One might think that rolling the ball into the hole presented enough difficulties for the player without having the task of getting around or over her opponent's ball added to her troubles. However, the rules for match play demand that stymies must be played, so the player has no choice in the matter but to do the best she can in the circumstances.

There are so many different positions in which the two balls may lie in relation to each other, to the hole, and to the possible slope of the green that it is hardly possible to mention each one of the situations that may occur. Each separate case presents its own



MRS. LILIAN HYDE FEITNER
A free finish.

problem and must be dealt with as seems best according to the player's judgment. Lack of confidence in one's own ability is perhaps the greatest difficulty that must be overcome. Stymie shots must be played with a great deal of firmness and decision, and the player who doubts her ability to make the shot has already defeated herself. When a clean, sharp stroke is required, as it is in playing stymies, any suggestion of uncertainty on the part of the person who is wielding the club immediately communicates itself to the ball with the result that the shot goes wrong.

If the two balls are lying sufficiently far apart to permit a cut stroke being used, the player has the choice of pulling the ball around to the left or of slicing it to the right. As the sliced shot is far easier to accomplish one is generally predisposed in its favor, and this attitude of mind is quite right if one does not stick to it too rigidly. If the ground should happen to slope away to the left of the balls, it would of course be impossible to ex-

pect the ball to go down the slope and up again as it would have to if a slice were played. In that case a pulled ball would be the only one practicable, unless, of course, the ground should rise to the right of the balls, in which case a straight shot played against the rise would circumvent the opponent's ball. When, on the other hand, the ground rises to the left of the balls, if a curved ball is required at all, the conditions for a slice are ideal, as the slope of the ground will help the ball to curve back toward the hole.

The stroke for cutting one ball around another is the same in general theory as the stroke for a slice or a pull, only, of course, the whole operation is reduced to a much smaller scale. For the cut stroke corresponding to the slice, the player stands with her left foot drawn back and pointing toward the hole. She will grip her club, probably a mashie, firmly with both hands and will carry the club back outside the line from hole to ball produced. The forward swing will be strong and decisive, the club head meeting

the ball with a glancing blow and finishing to the left.

How far the hands shall be held up or down the shaft of the club and how far the club shall be carried back depend upon the distance that the ball must cover. It is important that the ball should be addressed squarely and that the burden of producing side spin should be laid upon the oblique blow given to the ball by the club's diagonal course. Some persons advise laying back the face of the club so that its toe slopes away from the ball in the belief that side spin may more easily be obtained when the club meets the ball in this way. Such a procedure, however, is far more likely to result in the ball shooting off to the right and not coming back, than in producing the desired curve.

When conditions require that the ball be pulled into the hole the player takes her position as she would for a pulled drive with, of course, the modifications that are necessary on account of the restricted character of the stroke. It is much more difficult to make this

shot successfully than it is the one just described, and the player may consider herself very fortunate if she has a favoring slope that will help the ball to curve around to the hole. The calculation of the result of the warring forces, forward propulsion and side spin, requires much experience. The player who has formed the habit of adjusting automatically the length of her backward swing to the distance to be traversed by her ball will find that she has gained for herself a great advantage in managing these cut stymie shots. The habit of holding the body steady and of keeping the eye on the ball will also be of the greatest assistance to her. As a matter of fact, it is only after a player has become a good putter, so far as straight putting is concerned, that she can hope to be able to play stymies with any chance of success.

When the two balls are so close together that there is no room for cutting one ball around the other, a new problem presents itself. If both the balls, so placed, are lying close to the hole, then one must be jumped

over the other and either dropped into the hole or allowed to run into it. This shot is best accomplished by using a club with a great deal of loft, a grooved face, and a sharp lower edge. A niblick or a mashie-niblick will probably be selected, as an ordinary mashie has too broad a sole. The ball is addressed squarely and the club carried straight back for a few inches, just grazing the turf. The object is to cut under the ball with the sharp lower edge of the club's head, so that the loft of the face of the club will force the ball abruptly into the air. In order to accomplish this, the club is barely separated from the grass at all but brushes over it as closely as is possible without actually digging into the ground. This shot requires great delicacy of touch, but it is not really so very difficult if the two balls happen to be so situated with relation to the hole that the natural proportion of the length of the ball's run to the extent of its journey through the air will carry the ball into the hole.

While describing this stroke J. H. Taylor,

“Taylor on Golf,” page 250, makes the following statement:

“Then, exactly as the club strikes the ball, the wrists must be turned in an upward direction smartly. The result of this is that the ball is lofted over the other, and if hit properly, it will run on and go out of sight as intended.”

This advice is very nearly as unsound as though he advocated scooping a ball out of a bunker. Even in such a restricted shot as this the ball must be hit with a distinct blow; it cannot be lifted up on the club's broad face and allowed to drop on the other side of the obstruction. The slope of the club will do the work if allowed to, so the player's one purpose should be to keep the lower edge of the club as close to the ground as possible. If she does that, and has gauged the force and direction of her stroke correctly, she has done all she can toward making the shot a success.

VIII

IRREGULAR STANCES

IF all golf courses were laid out upon flat ground many of the difficulties of the games would be eliminated. Fortunately this is not the case. I say "fortunately," because level courses are extremely uninteresting and any enthusiastic player is glad to have the problems of playing multiplied by legitimate difficulties. After the confusion that may have been implanted in the player's mind by false or irrelevant theories has been removed by her own clear thinking, she is glad of the opportunity for exercising her ingenuity in meeting the awkward situations that arise in playing a course where she must follow her ball up hill and down dale. Such a course as the one at Lakewood or at Garden City becomes monotonous after a time. Aside from the æsthetic pleasure that is de-

rived from picturesquely rolling country, there is an exhilaration of spirit produced by the necessity of adapting oneself to the exigencies of diversified ground formation. It is distinctly more interesting not to play shot after shot in the same manner, but to be forced to use one's mind and skill in playing the regular shots not only in the regular way, but also in ways that present fresh problems of stance and swing.

As I have said several times before, women's besetting sin is lack of clear and concentrated thinking. Once a woman can be rescued from the state of mind that causes her to do this or that because some one has told her to, and has been awakened to the joy of thinking for herself, she has made the first long step toward becoming a good player. It must not be supposed that I am recommending an omniscient attitude for anyone. When a person believes she cannot learn anything more about a subject, she immediately confesses her own stupidity. The wise woman is she who listens to each theory and sugges-

tion as it comes her way, but, sifting the true from the false, retains for herself only such as she can in her own mind prove sound. It is by the efforts of body and mind combined that one gets the most pleasure and benefit from any game, and this is especially true in the game of golf. In fact, it is only after a player has ceased thoughtlessly to hit her ball along from hole to hole, her moods alternating between joy and depression as she chances to make a good or a bad shot, and has learned to make an earnest endeavor to understand the scientific principles of all that she does, that she comes to a realization of the full pleasure of the game.

After a player has established her method of holding her club and has mastered the different stances and swings that are required in playing various kinds of shots on level ground, she must be able to adapt what she has learned to conditions when her feet are above or below her ball, or when she must play up or down a slope. Roughly speaking, there are these four different ways in which she

may be called upon to make her stroke when playing over rolling ground, but, of course, there are all kinds of gradations and modifications of these situations. To make successful shots from these uneven places requires experience in judging the special problem presented in each case and practice in modifying or changing the swing of the club to suit each condition. Any instructions on the subject must necessarily be of the most general character and can serve only as a starting point from which each person must proceed guided by her own good sense. It is hardly to be expected that a shot played under somewhat trying conditions will have the length that could be produced by the same club used in the ordinary way. A player must not expect too much of her shot when she is playing from very sloping ground. On the other hand, she must not allow herself to believe that she is excused for making a bad shot because of the somewhat awkward position in which she must take her stance. She must not try to accomplish the impossi-



MISS MURIEL DODD
A full follow-through.

ble, but she must not be satisfied with less than her very best.

In my comments concerning the different strokes I have frequently emphasized the importance of maintaining a firm base from which to make the swing. When the feet are above or below the ball, or placed so that one is higher than the other, the difficulty of holding the body steady is much increased, but at the same time the necessity of steadiness becomes, if possible, even more imperative. The inclination to draw back from the ball when the ball is above the level of the player's feet, or to straighten the body when the ball lies below, is hard to overcome, but overcome it must be if the player expects to make even a fair shot.

When the ball is above the player's feet the club suddenly appears to have become too long for the player's comfort. To counteract this she will without doubt grip the shaft well down toward the lower edge of its leather wrapping. To what extent she will shorten her hold will, of course, depend upon the de-

gree of the ground's slope and the length of the shaft of the club that she has selected to use. When the ball has a pleasant, open lie it is a temptation to use the brassie, but, on account of its long shaft, it is a troublesome club to handle when the distance between the ball and the player's hands has been greatly shortened. Generally when the ball is above the feet it is safer to use a spoon or a mid-iron, but, as I have said before, it is impractical to give detailed advice on this subject because the player must be guided by the special aspects of each different situation.

Having selected her club according to her own best judgment, the player must make it her endeavor to adapt herself to her surroundings in such a way that she will alter her usual method of procedure with that club as little as possible. She must be particularly careful not to hold her hands higher than is her habit because to do so will surely spoil her shot. She must be careful to address the ball squarely and to make her upward swing deliberately and firmly. On account of the

ball's elevated position the swing will be proportionately flattened, with the result that the ball frequently is pulled. Allowance for this possible pull must be made as the player takes her aim. If the player's position is such that she necessarily feels somewhat cramped, it is just as well to forego some of the usual twist of the body. Every precaution for keeping perfect balance and control of the club must be observed.

When the ball is lying below the level of the player's feet, it is, I believe, even more difficult to make a good shot than it is when the ball is in an elevated position. The player either plunges forward at the ball or straightens her body at the last instant. Either action is disastrous and yet, in trying to correct one of these faults, the player is almost sure to fall into the other. It seems almost inevitable that, in stooping over the ball, one will either tip forward on the toes or involuntarily raise the head in the effort to maintain the balance of the body. In order to forestall these natural inclinations the

player should try not to stoop over from the hips more than she usually does, but to get down to the ball by bending her knees. Correct balance can be maintained much more easily when the body is simply lowered in this way than when the center of gravity is thrust forward by the body's arching over. With knees decidedly bent it is not easy to make a full, free swing, so it is well to use caution and strive for accuracy rather than length. The character of the swing will in all probability be more upright than usual and, if a wooden club is being used, this will cause the ball to be sliced in a greater or less degree. As in the case described before when the ball is above the level of the player's feet, if she has any reason to believe that her shot will not be a straight one, she must make allowance for the curve of the ball's flight while taking her aim.

When the ball is lying so that the player must stand with one foot higher than the other her weight naturally will fall more on the lower foot than on the higher one. This

unequal distribution of her weight will add to the uncertainty of her being able to pick up the ball cleanly from the slope on which it is lying. It will be necessary for her to plan and execute her stroke carefully so that she may be able to get as full a swing as possible, hit the ball squarely and follow through without striking the ground either before or after the ball is hit. To accomplish this the swing should follow the slope of the hill-side. When the ball's flight must carry it up the hill, it follows that the swing will be low and flat and that the club will reach out after the ball. The follow-through must not be cut off abruptly, for fear of hitting the ground, but must take its course up the slope until it comes to its natural finish.

In the case of a hanging lie, the player must stand so that the ball is very nearly opposite her left heel. The hands should be held rather forward of the ball and the swing should be fairly upright. The position of the player and the character of the swing must of course be arranged according to the slope

of the ground. This is an exceedingly difficult shot to play, especially when the ground rises abruptly behind the ball. As there is great danger in this case of topping, the player must make a determined effort to prevent herself from raising her head or she will ruin her shot. The club must be brought down to the ball sharply and, in the follow-through, both club and player must follow out after the ball. It is not at all probable that this shot would be played with the brassie. Unless the downward slope is very gradual, the midiron would without doubt be the club chosen, as a wooden club would be entirely unsuited to the work.

IX

WHAT PRODUCES BAD FORM

IT is the ambition of every one to play in good form. Some thoughtless persons make an idol of this, and bend all their energies toward attaining the appearance of playing in correct style without serious consideration of the fact that the appearance of anything is, after all, only the husk. Strange as it may seem, it is quite possible for a player to go through all the requisite motions of the strokes of golf in a manner that is apparently faultless, and yet to lack that final something that would make her a good player. In vulgar parlance, this final something would be called "punch." In the language of golf, the term that most nearly expresses it is "correct timing." Throughout the physical action of turning the body and swinging the club there must be an un-

faltering determination to hit the ball that will make every movement focus on that one, final act. Without this concentrated mental effort a form that appears perfect must fail. It is necessary, then, that a player should avoid striving for the appearance of good form, and should make every effort to cultivate that mental habit that directs all her energies to the culminating instant of the stroke—the instant that the club hits the ball. It makes no difference what she does before or after the ball is hit, if she gets the results. But—and this is a very large and important “but”—it is not at all likely that she will consistently get good results unless she learns to manage her club before and after the moment of impact in the way that she knows, both from study and from practical experience, is most certain to send her ball the distance and direction that she desires it to go. It is to gain this certainty that the player analyzes her every action and practices diligently that method of play that she believes to be right. When she has formed the habit

of managing herself and her club in the manner that is most nearly sure of producing the shot she desires, she will have attained the only real "good form." Good form is of value when gained incidentally as the result of well executed strokes, but, if striven for as the end in itself, it profits the player nothing.

"Bad form" is the result of strokes executed wrongly as to grip, stance, swing, or action of the body. It may not be apparent to the eye that the player is doing something that she should not, but, if her shots fail in their desired result, it is certain that she is somehow wrong and the cause of her mistake must be found and rectified before she can regain any confidence in her game. Notwithstanding long and patient effort thoroughly to ground herself in the rudiments of golf, it is quite possible for a player suddenly to go "off her game" for some apparently unaccountable reason. She may be a beginner or she may be an experienced and seasoned player but, nevertheless, she is likely at any

time to be the subject of one of these discouraging attacks. It may be in the use of her wooden clubs that she suddenly develops strange peculiarities, or it may be that her irons refuse to act regularly, or she may do well enough through the fairway but miss put after put when she reaches the green. Whatever form her difficulties take, she will probably feel completely disheartened until she has managed to set herself right again.

The process of finding where the trouble lies is not an easy one. Frequently a player is absolutely unable to perceive that she is doing anything unusual and yet her shots persistently go wrong. In such a case, it saves time and temper to engage a professional teacher to watch each shot and leave it to him to discover and to correct the fault. When it is impossible to call in assistance, the player must examine her method of play carefully and in detail, and try to find for herself the root of the evil.

It is surprising but true that very often she will find that she is not keeping her eye on the



MRS. H. A. JACKSON
A full swing.

ball. This is the first rule of golf and is drilled into the player's ear at all times until from frequent repetition the words lose effect, and are unconsciously disregarded. A person who is told that she is not keeping her eye fixed on the ball is often resentful of the criticism; she feels that, no matter what else she knows or does not know about the game, she should not be accused of neglecting this perfectly obvious duty. If she is honest with herself, however, she will, in many cases, have to admit upon second thought that, although she may not be allowing her gaze to wander entirely away from the ball, she is, at least, not looking at it with the concentration of mind that she should. Sometimes the player suddenly realizes that she has been looking at the top of the ball, or at the ball as a whole, instead of that portion that she expects to hit.

A stranger to the game of golf will sometimes take a club and make a good, clean shot with no trouble at all. She is said to have "beginner's luck" but as a matter of fact there is no luck in it. The reason for her success

is that she is given a club and told to hit the ball and that that is all she has in her mind; her whole effort is directed toward striking the ball, which she promptly does. Later, when she has been instructed in all the details of the art of driving, she may be able to make the swing in the most graceful and approved fashion, she may twist her body, rest on her toes, and follow-through with great ease and style; she may be able to do it all—except that she cannot make a clean shot. This is a most discouraging state in which to find oneself, but, when once in it, the only course to follow is to forget everything and to go back to the first principle, and keep one's whole attention absolutely fixed on the ball.

Sometimes the player finds herself in a sort of mental maze on the subject of driving; the more she tries to get out of her difficulties the more entangled she becomes in all kinds of unexpected faults, and things go from bad to worse. When she finds herself in such a state of mind she may as well give up at once and practice putting

and short approach shots for a while. After she has given her mind a complete rest from the subject of driving, she can return to the tee and will probably find that her difficulties have fallen away and that she is quite all right again. If, however, she has developed some fault that appears elusive, she must strictly apply herself to discovering what it is and to correcting it. It may be her grip that is wrong and, if she suspects this may be the case, she should look at her hands carefully and make sure. Whether she is using the overlapping grip or not, her hands should be so placed on the club that the shaft of the club is resting at the base of her fingers and the knuckles of both hands should be facing in opposite directions along the line of flight. If she has allowed the club to drop back into the palms of her hands, or if her knuckles are facing skyward or groundward, she can easily see the fault and correct it.

It may be that her stance is wrong and that she has unconsciously fallen into the habit of arranging her feet in some way, either in re-

lation to each other or in relation to the ball, that is different from the position that she had previously adopted as the correct one for her. Possibly she is throwing the greater part of her weight upon one foot or the other and thus putting herself out of proper balance. Again, her grip and stance may be perfectly correct, but she may be swaying to the right as she draws the club back from the ball.

This is one of the most common of faults and it is very difficult to overcome once it has become fastened on a player. The easiest suggestion for correcting an error is for the teacher to say, "Don't do it," but such a simple and obvious suggestion is not especially helpful. The player may answer, "How can I prevent doing it?" and, unless the coach has some further advice to offer, the player will not be particularly benefited by his services. Although it is a bad plan to correct one fault by substituting another, in this case it seems necessary. When the player sways to the right, her weight will at the same time be transferred to her right leg. If, therefore,

she will take her stance with her weight a little more on the left foot than on the right, and see to it that she does not allow it to shift, it will be impossible for her to sway her body sideways. When she feels confident that she is able to keep her body and her head steady, she can forget about keeping her weight on the left foot, and resume her play with her weight evenly distributed as it should be.

Beginners are inclined, when addressing the ball, to hold the arms too stiffly and the hands too high. On being corrected for this fault they often go to the other extreme and drop the hands too low. There is a happy medium that must be adopted from the start and, once the habit is formed, the player is not apt to break away from it, unless she conceives the idea that she can correct some other fault by changing the position of her arms and hands. It is not easy to describe accurately the attitude that should be assumed while addressing the ball. One can simply say "Avoid extremes." The knees should be flexed, the arms bent a little at the elbow, and the hands

held so that they appear neither to be reaching out nor to be so close to the body that the arms will be cramped while they are swinging the club. It is necessary, of course, that the club be soled truly and if, in doing this, the player finds that her hands must be held awkwardly in some way the fault lies in the club and she should get a new one.

As the club is carried back from the ball there must be no suggestion of a straight arm motion. When the club is at the top of the swing it has turned upside down, its heel is toward the sky, and its toe is pointing to the ground, its face being towards the line of flight. It is a common mistake to be afraid of beginning this turning movement too soon. The player, having it firmly fixed in her mind that the club must meet the ball squarely, unconsciously tries to carry the club back as far as possible with its face toward the ball. This is unnecessary and leads to various complications. The turning of the wrists and forearms should begin almost immediately after the club leaves the ball, and the bending

of the left knee should follow closely. In other words, the whole action of winding up the body should begin soon; it should not be delayed until the lifting of the arms pulls the body around.

If the player feels convinced that she has started the upswing correctly, she may find that she has made some mistake on the way that will bring her out of position when she reaches the top. It is advisable for her to ascertain if this is true by pausing when she reaches the top of her swing and observing carefully how the various portions of her body are disposed. The faults that she is most likely to find are that her left wrist is curved out from the shaft of the club instead of being below it, that her right elbow is pointing out too much instead of lying fairly close to her side, or that she has allowed the club head to drop below the point where it must stop in order to have the shaft of the club parallel to the ground. It is very possible that her hands and arms are in the correct position but that her weight is decidedly on her right

leg. Perhaps she has allowed her left foot to turn around so that her heel is pointing out toward the hole. This turning out of the left heel is a very common error and I believe it arises partly from the use of the word "pivoting" to designate the movement of the player's feet. When a beginner hears about pivoting on the left foot she naturally forms a mental picture of the foot screwing around. She will think this and consequently will turn her heel outward, unless some one explains to her that she must simply raise her heel and allow her weight to fall across the ball of the foot.

The faults that result in pulling or slicing the ball I have dealt with in another chapter so I will not speak of them again here. There is another fault in driving that is common to beginners, but not often found among experienced players, and that is topping the ball. This is caused usually by lifting the head or the body, but it may also be caused by swaying the body to the right as the club is carried back and not swaying it forward again as the

club comes down. It will be seen, then, that the whole plane of the club's swing is moved to the right so that, when the club head reaches the lowest point in its arc, it is not at the ball but some distance behind it. As the club head meets the ball it is on the rise and consequently the ball gets away with a certain amount of top spin that causes it to duck to earth immediately.

Swaying of the body sideways, or forward and backward, or lifting it, or swooping down on the ball are responsible for all manner of erratic shots. Sometimes the player combines two or three of these motions in various degrees with the result that the club hits the ground before it reaches the ball, hits the top of the ball and then the ground, meets the ball with the toe or the heel, or makes any one of several other disastrous forms of contact. These are ignominious enough, but the most distressing fault of all is when the club simply fans the air and leaves the ball untouched. The remedy for this class of faults lies in cultivating the habit of keeping the eye on the

back of the ball and holding the head steady. It is not easy to do and, even after a player has apparently mastered the art of making all her body movement that of twisting, she is apt to fall back into some of her former bad habits. However, golf would not be the fascinating game that it is if it were possible to attain perfection, so the player must never be discouraged, but be pleased when she is making progress and patient when she is suffering from a temporary relapse.

Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the fact that, from the top of the swing, it is imperative for the body to take the lead. In order to get real power into a stroke it is necessary to draw immediately upon the strength of the body. A blow struck by the arms alone is comparatively feeble. To have real effect a blow struck by the arms must be backed by the weight of the body, or by the strength of the muscles of the torso. On account of the fact that, in order to retain accuracy, it is impossible in the golf drive to allow the body to plunge forward toward the



MRS. GEORGE J. GOULD
At the end of the swing.

ball, the required power must come from those muscles of the torso that are brought into use as the body turns.

Any one can see the evil results of the extreme fault of allowing the hands to come through first and no one could possibly advocate cultivating that error. Whether the downward swing is started by the arms or by the body, however, is impossible to ascertain by the eye. One can judge only by the amount of force the player has summoned, as shown by the ball's flight, whether or not she has effectively gotten her body into the blow. There has always been a great deal of discussion and disagreement on this point among players, and the rapidity with which the whole action of arms and body takes place has prevented positive proof of what the best drivers really do. Recently, however, there have been a number of cinematograph pictures taken of champion players making a full shot with either an iron or wooden club, and, from a careful study of a series of these photographs, it is possible to see exactly

where the player starts the downward swing.

The consideration of such a fine point as this should not concern the beginner. It is only when a player has become so proficient that her game requires only the finishing touches that she can afford to indulge in trying for the last factors of perfection. A beginner, on being told to start the downward swing from the body, would surely lunge forward or swoop down on the ball. The dividing line between starting the stroke with the arms or with the body is so fine that only an experienced player can consciously command either the one or the other method without sacrificing entirely the harmony of her stroke. It is well, however, even for a beginner to understand the ultimate end that she is striving for, even if she is not as yet prepared to put her knowledge into execution.

To attain that perfect concert of the various portions of her body that alone will result in the player's having a smooth and rhythmic swing is indeed difficult. To be able to apply force in the way in which it is re-

quired demands an even balance in the use of the arms that is difficult to adjust. In spite of what any one may say about favoring the left arm or the right, no thoughtful person can seriously believe that the best results can be obtained in any way except that of using both arms equally. This question of the mastery of the right or the left arm has been discussed in a previous chapter, but it is of such importance that a little repetition on the subject may well be allowed. To the query, "Which arm or hand should control the club?" the answer must be, "Both." Admonitions such as are frequently heard, to the effect that the right arm and hand supply the power while the left acts as guide, or vice versa, are entirely impractical and, if followed, would lead to an uncertain and ineffectual style of play. This is especially true in the case of women players because they particularly need the united strength of both arms as well as the smoothness of swing that can be obtained only by the combined effort of the right and the left.

The driver and the brassie are so nearly alike that the rules that govern the use of the one are, with a few slight changes, applicable to the other. It follows, therefore, that the faults that a player may develop in using her driver are almost sure to be repeated in making her brassie shots. Frequently a player who finds herself "off on her wooden clubs" will abandon her brassie for a while and use her cleek or mid-iron through the fairway. The cleek, as I have said before, is a most valuable club, but on account of its uncompromising nature it is not so generally popular, especially among women golfers, as the mid-iron. The mid-iron is a comfortable companion, and seldom fails to accomplish what is expected of it. Of course it happens sometimes that a player will go completely wrong on her iron shots but, on the whole, the iron is the most reliable club in the bag.

The mashie, on the other hand, is the source of a great deal of trouble. This is partly owing to the fact that a mashie is used generally in situations where accuracy is re-

quired. A few yards here or there, so long as the ball has good direction, does not generally make a great deal of difference in a driver or brassie shot, but when the mashie is used, especially in approach shots, the difference of a few feet, or sometimes a few inches, will mean success or failure.

After the freedom of the full swing of the wooden clubs or the slightly restricted swing of the cleek or iron, the player is inclined to feel cramped and stiff when she takes her position for a mashie shot. A half, or at most a three-quarter swing, is all that should ever be used for this club. If greater length is required than can be obtained by a decidedly curtailed stroke it is practically certain that some other club should be employed. No advantage can be obtained by forcing a mashie shot, nor, for that matter, should any other club be pushed beyond its natural limitations. It should be kept in mind that very little body motion is needed, and that the shot is accomplished chiefly by the arms and wrists. This recommendation is a dangerous one to

make because, if followed too closely, it may result in a stiffness that is very undesirable. It is impossible to describe exactly how much or how little the body is used; the player must work out the problem for herself. There are certain pitfalls, however, that must be guarded against and a brief consideration of them will be of some service.

The left shoulder must not be dropped but must swing around parallel to the ground as the arms are drawn back. The right shoulder, as the club is on its downward journey, must not be lowered or the club head will doubtless dig into the turf. This inclination, common to all beginners, to scoop up the ball is the cause of a great many bungled shots. It is only by the strongest effort of will that a player can train herself to allow the club to do the work without an assisting downward swoop of the right side of the body. If the right heel is kept flat on the ground, it will help to curb the natural inclination to drop the right shoulder and bend the right knee unduly.

The stance for a mashie shot should vary with the distance to be covered. The general rule is that the shorter the distance the more open the stance. The club should be drawn back, for a straight shot, along the line of flight and should follow out after the ball. Frequently players commit the fault of bringing the club around to the left after the ball has been hit, which is a mistake carefully to be avoided. During the upward swing the right elbow must be kept fairly close to the side and, as the stroke is finished, the left elbow should be pointing toward the hole. In making a cut mashie shot the club head crosses the intended line of flight as in the sliced drive. Some instructors suggest that while making this shot the toe of the club be laid out so as to counteract a possible tendency of the ball to go to the left, but such advice should be regarded warily. If the face of the club meets the ball in any way except at right angles to the line of flight, inaccuracy of direction is almost sure to follow.

As the object to be attained in making

pitch shots is that the ball should rise suddenly into the air, it is necessary that the lower edge of the club's face should cut between the ball and the ground. To insure "getting under" the ball sufficiently the eye should be fixed, not on the ball, but on the ground immediately behind the ball. The most concentrated attention is necessary, as the slightest wavering of eye or of mind will upset the nicest calculations.

I have, I believe, mentioned the points on which the golfer is most apt to fail when using a mashie, and a great deal of what I have said applies equally well when a niblick is the club in hand. The getting out of bunkers, sand traps, or any extremely difficult lie tests the skill and often the ingenuity of the player. Most remarkable stances have to be adopted occasionally and the player has to make up her mind to do the best she can in a bad situation. If she has thoroughly mastered the underlying principles of the use of each club and will maintain an unruffled spirit, she will

make a creditable shot, no matter how great are the difficulties.

It is the combination of knowledge, practice, determination, and good temper that makes the good golfer. As a corollary to these, there arrives a certain sense that might be called the "sixth sense" of the game of golf. This is more than a sense of direction or of distance—it is a sense of *place*. As an expert marksman can hit his target without taking aim along the sights of his rifle or revolver, so an expert golfer can lay his or her ball in the place selected by the exercise of a certain faculty that is acquired only after long experience. This faculty is the final and indefinable attribute of the greatest experts and comes, like "good form," not from conscious effort but as the result of the blending together of all things that go to make the finished golfer.

X

SOME WOMEN GOLFERS AND THEIR PLAY

WOMAN is prone to keep an eye on the fashionable modiste when it comes to style in dress, which causes man (with his stiff collar, temperature regardless) to smile or to ridicule. Woman is as independent as man when it comes to the style of her golfing stroke in which, like man, she employs many different methods to get the desired result. Perhaps, in a collective sense, she has not taken her golf quite so seriously as man, for her social and home duties do not allow her quite the same amount of time to brood or enthuse over the day's play. She does not linger so long about the clubhouse after the round, to dilate upon the three puts that she took on No. 6 green or the misfortune of taking two shots to get out of the footprint in a bunker, and she is not so



MRS. LILIAN HYDE FEITNER
Getting away a long brassie.

apt to give the impression that she has lost her last friend because of defeat in a championship round. The woman golfer is a cheerful loser.

In comparison with the time that she has given to golf from the competitive angle, her progress has been rapid and it would seem as if each year she is drawing gradually nearer to the standard of the sex which, from time immemorial, has devoted itself to athletic pastimes. Whether golf is to be the first athletic pastime in which woman eventually will take her place on a plane with man is problematical, but the possibilities are better than in perhaps any other sport. It might be so in shooting, except that woman's natural tastes hardly will lead her into that field in such numbers as into the field of golf.

Up to the present time, woman's inferiority in the Royal and Ancient game has been largely a matter of physical strength. She has not had the generations of muscle-building toil or athletic activities to develop along these lines. Even where endowed abnormally

in the matter of muscle and strength, she has not had the actual training, or the athletic heritage, to use her strength to best advantage in the pastimes of the field. What she can do, however, without this heritage or long training is being demonstrated more and more in golf, where in certain individual instances she is vieing with man in ability to hit the golf ball for remarkable distances. One reason for this, of course, is that distance in golf may be in one instance a matter of brute strength and in the other a matter of smoothness of stroke, plus suppleness of muscles and the knack of hitting the ball at just that second when the clubhead is traveling at its maximum pace,—in other words, perfect timing. Few men in the country can drive a ball as far as Mrs. Quentin Feitner (Miss Lillian B. Hyde) of Brooklyn, but many who normally would play the odd with her after the tee shots might leave her far behind in the matter of distance out of a bad lie in heavy grass, where strength of forearm and wrist are an absolute requirement.

Woman is naturally more of a stylist in golf than is man, or to put it another way, a greater percentage of her sex hit the ball with that easy graceful motion of a Vardon than can be said of the rank and file of men. One of the reasons doubtless is that a greater percentage of women than men begin their golfing career by taking lessons of a professional and practice more assiduously. If the professional under whom they study has any real fundamental knowledge of golf for beginners, and can impart that knowledge lucidly, the pupil at least has the advantage of starting on sound principles.

That women golfers come naturally by their fortunate habit of taking an easy swing, gaining their distance on timing, is exemplified in the achievements of some of the foremost golfers in the early days of women's competition. Lady Margaret Scott, winner of the first three championships held under the auspices of the Ladies' Golf Union, of the British Isles, in 1893, '94 and '95, is referred to by writers of her day as "possessed of a

fine, full, easy swing which won universal admiration. Her play throughout the competition (1893) was almost faultless." Mrs. Ryder Richardson, semi-finalist in the British ladies championship of 1895 at Portrush, when she was 4 up at the turn, only to lose the match by 2 up, also was noted for her "easy, graceful style." As a stylist, there never has been seen on an American course a girl who more closely typified the Vardon grace and ease of stroke, with perfection of timing, than Miss Florence Teacher, who came to the United States in 1909 with Mrs. Dorothy Campbell Hurd, Miss Grace Semple and one or two other British girls, that being the year that Mrs. Hurd (then Dorothy Campbell) won the American title for the first time. While it was Mrs. Hurd who won the title, it was Miss Teacher whose play was watched with profound admiration. This fairly tall, wonderfully lithe and graceful wielder of the golf club, champion of Scotland in 1907, had a full swing which was as smooth-working as a well-oiled piece of

machinery. She used a driver with the dread-naught head, so large that it was, first, a cause of constant wonderment that she could swing it at all; second, that she could get the head through after hitting the ball, so as to keep the ball on the line instead of slicing it badly, or getting off the line to the left by meeting the ball too late. The secret was that Miss Teacher was in perfect communion with the club, so to speak. She had her stroke perfected to the point where each time it appeared to follow a long familiar groove both in going back and in coming down, leaving Miss Teacher the sole task of keeping her eye on the ball and her body from swaying.

It naturally would seem quite essential that a woman, unless abnormally large and strong, should get a full swing for her distance, but it does not always work out that way. As reference has just been made to Mrs. Dorothy Campbell Hurd, we will take her as an example. Winner of so many championship titles, on both sides of the Atlantic, that she might find it difficult to enumerate them

all offhand, she rarely has been consistently and pronouncedly outdriven, though she is of comparatively small stature and played in her days of championship supremacy with a back swing possibly a trifle more than half. Where she held her own with the majority of her competitors in the long game was in the tremendous snap of her downward stroke, in which not one ounce of her strength was wasted. Had Mrs. Hurd lengthened her swing, there is the bare possibility that she could have added distance, but with that short back swing and not exaggerated follow through, she kept the ball as near the middle of the course, and as far from trouble, as Mr. Walter J. Travis in the ranks of the men. The consequence was that in the long run she probably gained as much distance from the tees as the women of longer swing but less control. Her short swing, moreover, was admirably adapted to the firmly hit and accurately placed iron shots of which she and a number of other British women golfers are such masters. She and Mrs. Bruce D. Smith



MISS MARION HOLLINS
Bunkered and well out.

(winner of the United States women's championship in 1905, as Miss Pauline Mackay) are two of much the same type,—the short back swing, snappy downstroke, modified follow through, with accuracy and match play courage as much factors in their success as their actual stroke ability.

The reverse of Mrs. Hurd and Mrs. Smith, in a sense, is Mrs. H. A. (Harley) Jackson, winner of the women's national in 1908 and 1914. She is a large woman, with an upright swing of quite fair length and one who might be expected to hit a tremendously long ball. Mrs. Jackson won two championships because, like Mrs. Hurd and Miss Mackay, she preferred to sacrifice distance for the sake of accuracy. Her stroke from beginning to end is smooth and under supreme control at every point. Could she get more wrist action and snap into her swing as it comes to the horizontal, nearing the ball, she would drive yards ahead of Mrs. Hurd, but her stroke, while so beautifully smooth, is what might be termed "tame." It has none of that fire that comes

of calling upon muscles to give, at just the final moment, not only their normal function of sweeping that ball away from the little pile of sand, but also their concentrated force at the moment of attack. There was, from the other point of view, Mrs. C. T. Stout (*nee* Genevieve Hecker), one of the most brilliant of all the American women golfers, a girl who might well have won the British women's championship had she gone abroad in the heyday of her game. There was a girl who, in spite of her shortness of stature, used almost a regulation St. Andrews swing of the old days of the gutty ball, with all the fire, dash and abandon of a violin virtuoso playing a favorite rhapsody. She swung as if the action typified the joy of living, little caring, as the spectator viewed it, where the ball went and for that matter, playing out of trouble with extraordinary power for one of her size, a distinct reminder, in all the essentials of her game, of Mr. Jerome D. Travers.

Miss Rhona Adair, the first of the British women champions who really made a pro-

nounced impression upon American golfing enthusiasts, upon the occasion of her visit a dozen years ago, was another like Mrs. Stout who hit at the ball as if her very heart and soul were in the stroke. She drove with an open stance, with knees a trifle bent at all stages of the stroke; the club was started back with the left hand, for about a three-quarters swing, but, when the head came down on the ball, it was with the force imparted about equally with both hands, for Miss Adair was among the women who believed in letting her right hand know what her left was doing.

While the rank and file of the women golfers are taught (quite wrongly, I believe) to start the club back with the left hand and allow that to be the leading factor in all of their wooden shots, if not pretty much the only factor, there are, in following this practice, a few notable exceptions, of which the greatest in this country probably are Miss Margaret and Miss Harriet S. Curtis, sisters and Boston golfers who have held the national title four times between them, Margaret

three times and Harriet once. For years Miss Margaret Curtis held the distinction of being rated as the longest hitter in the women's ranks this side of the water, and it was not until the advent of Mrs. Quentin Feitner with her tremendous distances that Miss Curtis had to grant superiority. Miss Margaret Curtis and her sister are largely self-taught in golf, acquiring knowledge through assiduous practice and perhaps occasional helpful suggestions from their brother James Curtis, himself a fine golfer a few years back. Very likely it was lack of professional teaching that led the Curtis sisters to get the weight of their stroke in with the right hand. They are unusually robust girls, to start with, and their ability at long hitting has been more or less of the downright slugging order, like that of a strong man, than the sweeping, well-timed stroke of the girls of slighter frame who hit a good tee shot. Both Curtis girls take a fairly full swing at the ball and their blow is distinctly a hit, as contrasted with a sweep. The chief trouble with their style of

stroke, especially so in the case of Miss Margaret Curtis when she is a little off her game, is the tendency to dip the right shoulder in the act of trying to get just a little more force into the blow. This of course is fatal, for the moment she dips that shoulder, the club is almost certain to hit the ground too soon and result in a badly schlauffed shot, without distance. That was exactly what happened when Miss Curtis met Miss Vera Ramsay in the final of the Boston District women's championship of 1915. The three times national champion simply could not hold herself up on the swing, or else, in noting what was wrong in her game, she involuntarily overdid the part of keeping the right shoulder up on the downward swing and consequently topped the ball.

In playing the irons, Miss Margaret Curtis at her best is about as fine an example of a woman golfer that this country has bred, for it is on the iron play that the American girls have been so deficient as compared to their English cousins in the upper rank. The

Curtises are not afraid of allowing the heads of their irons to hit the turf, for they have the wrist and forearm power to take the turf and yet get the clubhead through. It is a curious fact, and beautifully illustrative of what concentration, determination and practice will do, to note the evolution in Miss Margaret Curtis's short game. As far back as 1902, the year that the national championship was first held at The Country Club, Brookline, Mass., Miss Curtis, then a plump girl in her teens, familiarly known as "Peggy," was touted as a title possibility. Her long game was wonderful, but her short game atrocious, especially mashie shots from distances around fifty yards, also her long approach puts. She did not seem to have the remotest conception of the innate "feeling" of the club on a short shot and on a 30-foot approach put she was just as apt to be thirty feet over as anywhere else. The same trouble pursued her in 1903 and 1904, in each of which years she again was looked upon as a prospective champion, only to discourage her chief ad-



MRS. RONALD H. BARLOW
At the end of full swing.

mirers by her failure to master that delicacy of stroke so essential to the short game and the putting green. She became the title runner-up in 1905, to Mrs. Bruce D. Smith, and her failure to win the title on that occasion led the critics to break forth into doleful verbiage to the effect that now it was a certainty that Miss Curtis need never again be taken seriously in a national tourney.

The reverse of the picture was presented in full measure at the women's national of 1911, at the Baltusrol Golf Club, where Miss Curtis and Mrs. Hurd met in the semi-finals. Mrs. Hurd up to that time had swept all before her in this country and was considered unbeatable. What happened was that Miss Margaret Curtis won the match by 4 and 3 and the elements of her success, probably to her own supreme satisfaction, were in the supremacy of her short game. In other words, it was through mastery over Mrs. Hurd in her own stronghold, accurate approaching and good putting, that the Boston girl gave the Briton her first championship defeat this side

of the Atlantic. From that time criticisms of Miss Curtis's short game virtually ceased, except in an occasional instance such as every good golfer experiences, when nothing goes right. Application, pure and simple, is what did it.

For fear that the impression might be given that it is downright physical strength that enables the Curtis girls to get so much distance through the "punch" from the right arm, there can be presented as another example of the girl who derives a goodly part of her distance from the right hand, Miss Fanny C. Osgood, another Boston girl of comparatively slight build. Miss Osgood hits one of the longest irons of any woman golfer and while apparently she gets both arms about equally into the stroke, it undoubtedly is by pushing out with her right at the moment of impact, as well as applying extra power with it, that she gets quite a decided hook to the ball and an unusual run when the ground is the least bit hard. She probably learned early in her golfing experi-

ence that it was necessary for her to get in the punch with the right arm to hold her own in distance with girls of the Curtis type, but she also learned the equally important lesson that if it is the hook which gives additional distance, it is the same hook which leads to all sorts of difficulties unless under the best of control. That Miss Osgood can control it extraordinarily well has been proved time and again, her record in the Boston District in winning several championships, against fields inclusive of the Curtis girls, the late Mrs. E. C. Wheeler, Jr., Mrs. H. A. Jackson and others of the country's leaders, being proof enough.

This country of course has an especially high opinion of the play of British girls because so many of the best from the other side of the Atlantic have visited the United States, such as Miss Rhona Adair, Miss Lottie Dod, Miss Muriel Dodd, Mrs. Hurd, Miss Florence Teacher, Miss Gladys Ravenscroft, Miss Vera Ramsay and Mrs. W. A. Gavin. An admirable array they are, wonderful golfers

all, differing in some of their methods, but alike in their ability to play up to the standard of women's par almost day in and day out. If Miss Teacher might be considered the essence of grace and rhythm in her wooden club stroke, Miss Gladys Ravenscroft might be likened to the "Ted" Ray of the irons. She is a woman of the Amazon mold, a perfect picture of robust health. When she took an iron in her hand, the spectator indubitably felt that something had to go. The top of her swing on a fairly long iron rarely carried the club back further than horizontal with the shoulders, with the left wrist curved sharply inward, ready to come back with a snap at the proper moment. She held her body rigid, her eye on the ball religiously and went into the turf in just the same manner as do the male professionals.

Two notable exponents of the supremacy of British women's golf, of more recent date, are Miss Vera Ramsay, twice holder of the Boston District title, and Mrs. W. A. Gavin, 1916 winner of the women's Eastern cham-

pionship, a medal play competition. Miss Ramsay, a girl endowed physically along the lines of Miss Ravenscroft, has a touch of the professional male in the way she "hits" the ball, whereas Mrs. Gavin, compact but rather short, is of the type which gets distance through smoothness of stroke, plus perfect timing. Miss Ramsay stands up square to the ball in the most business-like fashion, makes up her mind almost instantly as to what club is best suited for the lie and the distance to be covered, goes back about three-quarters with the upright swing and when she hits the ball she puts into it every ounce of force to be derived from a powerful right shoulder. She has an unusually pronounced follow through, which is the natural result of the way she gets that right shoulder into the stroke. The same characteristic applies to her irons. How the weight of a club can affect the play was illustrated in Miss Ramsay's game in the 1916 Women's Eastern championship. She was trying out a new driver, weighted more heavily in the head

than her old one. It was noticeable that with abnormal frequency, for her, the ball was being pushed out to the right, not exactly a slice, but simply off the line. It was due, undoubtedly, to the fact that she did not quite have the feel of the heavier clubhead, which was a fraction of a second late in going through after its contact with the ball, as compared with her old and slightly lighter club. On her short mashie shots, Miss Ramsay stands with her feet just far enough apart to give a firm stance, takes her club back a short distance, compared with the average girl, and puts in the necessary punch almost exclusively with the wrists. She plays to hit the ball first and then have the clubhead take the turf, with resultant backspin.

Mrs. Gavin is of a different type, except that like Miss Ramsay she stands square to the ball, with feet fairly well apart and firmly placed. In fact, Mrs. Gavin is one of the most careful persons in the matter of her stance that the world of women's golf knows. She never attempts to start her swing to hit



MRS. C. H. VANDERBECK
Playing out of the sand.

the ball until she feels absolutely satisfied that her feet are firmly emplaced and that, on the tee, the ball is on a spot least likely to affect the shot adversely. Her backward swing for the drive is the essence of deliberation in a golf stroke. As the club goes back, to quite a full degree, the free elasticity of the body is shown and, when the clubhead comes back on the ball, it is with a smoothness which exemplifies how well Mrs. Gavin has learned the lesson of allowing the club to do the work, supplemented by the power imparted by supple wrists. Watching Mrs. Gavin take her driver back on the swing, so slowly and deliberately to the top of the stroke, is almost to gain the impression that she has a certain set of muscles which click a message of "Everything O. K. at this station" before the club continues its journey. That deliberativeness continues as the clubhead starts downward and there is nothing deliberate about it, although nothing jerky, when the blow goes home. Then Mrs. Gavin comes forward on her left foot with no uncertainty as to where

her weight has been transferred, to lose none of the power.

That there are no hard and fast rules governing women's play as judged from results, is exemplified in the styles of those already referred to, but another illustration may be taken from the play of Mrs. R. H. Barlow, the Philadelphia woman. Mrs. Barlow has one peculiarity almost exclusively. Instead of bending the left knee at the beginning of the back swing, she holds it rigid until practically at the top of the swing. Then comes the bend of the knee, with surprising suddenness. A natural impression of this eccentricity, at first glance, would be that it would have a tendency to make the stroke jerky or to sway the body, but the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and no one could criticise this unorthodox movement of the knee after witnessing the regularity with which Mrs. Barlow gets away her tee shots for distances quite the equal of a majority of the leading women golfers, if not beyond most of them.

As regards putting, many close followers

of both men's and women's golf are firmly convinced that the leading women golfers, as a class, are quite the equal of their brothers and that, taken right through all classes, the women may even excel. Possibly there is a strictly feminine explanation of this point. Woman is gifted naturally with more delicate fingers than man, and delicacy of touch presumably is an attribute to putting. There is no reason for doubting that woman has as keen an eye as man. The third element in her favor is that she is more apt, than man, to stand fairly upright in her putting, if for no other reason than to stoop far over and assume some of the putting postures found in the male ranks is contrary to her innate sense against appearing awkward. Many experts have written that the golfer who stands fairly straight in putting gets a better line on the hole and that may be the explanation of women's proficiency.

Of course styles differ in women's putting, but not nearly to the same extent as in the men's ranks. There are women who try to

put with merely a wrist motion; women who put with the arms close to the body and others with arms extended; some who use the pendulum putting stroke and many who put with no definite idea of any particular method. Two of the finest putters ever known in the women's ranks this side of the water putted with the croquet stroke, so called, with both feet pointed toward the hole and the club out to the right of the body. These two were Mrs. Bruce D. Smith and the late Mrs. E. C. Wheeler, Jr. It is a style which looks as if it might be effective on comparatively short puts, but most uncertain on long ones, yet Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Wheeler won a large share of their links honors through their proficiency on the putting greens. As an exponent of the more natural style, Mrs. H. A. Jackson, twice the national champion, is one of the leading examples. She stands quite upright, except for the bend at the head and shoulders which puts her eyes directly over the ball and on a line with the hole. Her putting stroke is mostly with the wrists and

the most pleasing thing about it is the firmness with which she hit the ball. The consequence is that the ball generally is up to the hole, even if it does not go down, but on puts up to eight or ten feet she is notably accurate. Just as "cleanliness is next to godliness," so is firmness essential to successful putting.

Whether courage is as important a factor in women's golf as it is in men's is one of the debatable questions. Both men and women golfers miss ridiculously easy puts at important stages of their matches, yet the writer doubts if this is quite as true of the women as of the men. Taking the two sexes by and large, they go at competitive golf in a rather different spirit. The man, in an important match, is apt to be wrapped up in the result of that match to the exclusion of everything else on earth, so that when he faces the short put at a critical stage the sole thought in his mind is that everything depends upon the success or failure of that put. The thing looms so large that he perhaps begins to fear that even so short a put is missable. Then

it is entirely a question of whether he can so control himself that his muscles will not tighten and involuntarily apply too much pressure from one hand or the other or, in his eagerness to see the ball enter the cup, look at the hole instead of the ball and stub the put. The woman, on the other hand, is not quite so likely to look upon either the put or the outcome of the match as so momentous, hence the more natural play of the muscles and the greater percentage of chance that the ball will go to the spot intended.

We must not forget the example as set by one of the most brilliant of all America's lady golfers, Miss Alexa Stirling, of Atlanta, Georgia. Still in her teens, possessed of no such strength as has aided many of the women golfers of past prominence, this youthful golfer acts as a model to all others of tender golfing years. The Southern champion and national semi-finalist combines the graceful rhythm which we would attribute to a feminine Harry Vardon, if there were such a personage, and the snap and dash and lusty



MISS MARION HOLLINS
Halfway down in approach shot.

vigor in shot making which come only to those who are golfers born and not made.

It was in the fall of 1914 at the Woman's championship held at the Nassau Country Club, Glen Cove, L. I., that lovers of golfing style—there are many such—noticed a mere slip of a girl swinging a golf club with all that freedom and joy and zest which comes to those whose plastic muscles are attuned by nature to obey satisfactorily the mind's behest. The critics followed round with the young player, delighted with her swing and uncramped style and prophesying conquered golfing worlds in the years to come. Miss Stirling's lithe body, her auburn locks falling in profusion down her back and her healthy attitude towards the game made her seem the embodiment of the real golfing spirit of the links. Such players are rare.

How, one may ask, does Miss Stirling get her results? Is it all innate ability or does her style command respect from the par of the links? Perhaps if we say that there is an even distribution we shall not be far

wrong. Miss Stirling, as do most women, holds to the orthodox or V-shaped grip, she has wooden clubs which weigh $12\frac{1}{4}$ ounces, a splendid weight for most lady players, and she stands much after the fashion of the best male golfers with the right foot advanced slightly. It would seem natural to one filled with the exuberance of youth to take the club-head back quickly. Miss Stirling owes much of her success in driving, iron play and putting to her "slowback" method of stroke making, a feature of every champion's play, and an absolute essential for the prevention of that fatal mistake "overswinging." In the shots from the tee Miss Stirling averages 175 yards; in her drives, like Ray and Braid, she drives for carry plus a run. Her back swing is a full three-quarters at the least, but her power is gained by the absolute timing control and by the shoulder and back force communicated to the clubhead, plus a full carry through which has always seemed the property of a blithesome college golfer.

It is, however, in the making of the iron

shots that Miss Stirling outclasses her American rivals. As we have noted women golfers have not extra-strong fingers and too many of them believe that they cannot force the clubhead to strike the ball and turf and still get distance. The majority try to take the ball as cleanly snipped from the grass carpet as is possible; and when the lie is favorable the results may be just as good. But when the golf ball is in a cuppy lie, or the push shot against the wind must be played it is the player with the knowledge how and the ability to take turf crisply who wins. This Miss Stirling can do and do well. Her back swing is slow, her left knee is bent slightly, the left arm is only slightly flexed at the elbow, the right elbow is extended and the hands are held fairly high. When the ball is hit the back muscles get into action and the follow through is clean cut with a sane preservation of the circularity of the stroke. The whole swing comes under the upright category. Although there is an abundance of healthy action the stroke is at all times under

control. There is no better stylist for feminine youth to copy than Miss Stirling, who some day will be the champion of the land.

Long driving, when straight down the course, as a rule lays the foundation for wonderful golfing possibilities. To force one's rival to play the odd, from a distance back of forty or fifty yards, hole after hole, usually brings discouragement and ultimate defeat. It seems strange, therefore, when we speak of Mrs. Quentin Feitner (Miss Lillian Hyde) as averaging over two hundred yards on her drives, not to announce her as the former or present champion of the land. But, although many sectional titles have come her way, her habit of taking an extra put at inopportune times has kept her in the list of keen contenders. Mrs. Feitner hits the longest tee shot of any woman in America and perhaps is surpassed by no lady golfer in the world. She has played eighteen holes in 75 and has averaged on all but the short holes two hundred and twenty-five yards, while some of her



MISS GLADYS RAVENSCROFT
A firm, straight brassie shot.

drives have measured well over two hundred and fifty. Now this inordinate length is yards more than ninety per cent. of the country's golfers, men and women, average. It is interesting to note how such splendid results are obtained.

One of the necessities to gain extra yardage is extra strength, and this Mrs. Feitner has in abundance. Her shoulders are broad, her arm muscles pliant, supple and strong, while her wrists are eminently powerful. Yet these attributes would be as nought if it were not for the perfect cohesion of parts, the rhythmic timing and that delicious snappy "hit" which assures a drive of lengthy proportions. With that essential adherence to golfing success Mrs. Feitner takes the club-head back with deliberation, but as the club-head nears the horizontal there is detected a gathering of the forces which make for a true "hit" at the ball and with that blow there goes a body follow through which must add to the distance many yards. Lady golfers, as a rule, are content to let the arm and a quarter

body swing account for driving success; to the player who will pivot more, as does Mrs. Feitner, will come added yardage. This is seen in the roll of the rubber core after it lights. In her iron shots Mrs. Feitner does not hesitate to take turf and she often gets 200 yards from an unfavorable lie. Here is where her wrist and forearm strength mean so much. And, as happens so many times, there are deficiencies in her game to make up for the excellences. The pretty touch when chip shots are needed is absent, and so, also, is a sure putting stroke. Mrs. Feitner has the unhappy fault of turning over the right wrist just at the moment of impact when putting the ball and this fault has cost her dearly in many a contest. It has always been remarked that when she has won her big events she has been putting well and has not been overlong on her drives, which is still one more of the many proofs which we have that a player rarely receives from the goddess of golfing fortune at one time or in any one round all the attributes of muscle freedom and delicate

touch which are essential for the playing of a near perfect round. Still, the 1916 Metropolitan champion has a great advantage over thousands of her sex golfers in that one may by assiduous practice become a good player at the approach and the put while all the practice in the world may not suffice to add ten yards to the drive. That is why there is so much praise and credit given to those ladies who are the longest hitters in the world.

If we were to take a hasty composite picture of the best lady golfers in the land it is quite likely that we would select the drive of Mrs. Feitner, the brassie shot which Mrs. Clarence Vanderbeck can get, the iron shots up to the chip shot, of Miss Stirling, the chip shots of Mrs. Dorothy Campbell Hurd and Mrs. H. A. Jackson and the putting stroke of Miss Rosenthal. And if we wished to see a player who gained the results which the best strokes of these mentioned golfers attained our journey would bring us to Great Britain and to the home course of Miss Cecilia Leitch, the winner of the last ladies' championship of

the British Isles. Miss Leitch drives about as far as Mrs. Feitner, her iron shots are a bit better than those of Miss Stirling, her chip shots are wonderful and her putting is well above the average. Possessed of a perfect constitution and great strength, the "Amazon" golfer, as she has been termed, bangs away with all the freedom imaginable. Her stance is open and a bit exaggerated, her full swing brings the clubhead to the horizontal, while her finish brings the clubhead down almost to the level of her waist. Miss Leitch uses a modified flat swing wherein the club is swung more around the shoulder which gives her a long run to the ball; she is a bit different in her manner of swinging, it might be noted, for nine-tenths of women golfers use the upright style of driving. In her iron play Miss Leitch finishes as does James H. Taylor, five times champion of the British Isles, and when that is said we know why she excels through the green. Perhaps no other lady golfer in the world other than Miss Leitch can play a push shot brassie into the

wind and this ability alone is worth more than one hole a round on British courses where the wind is so often strong. When the war is over the champion will visit the States and show to the golfers in this land how she accomplishes her rounds of seventy-four and seventy-five over good links. But, meanwhile there are more and more golfers of the female persuasion taking to the game. All the golf widows are not women.

THE END

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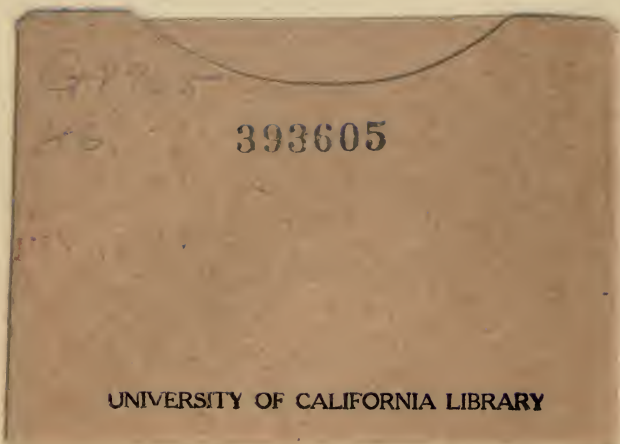
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