



Golfing Reminiscences
by
An Old Hand

REMINISCENCES
OF
GOLF AND GOLFERS

BY

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IT would be idle at this time of day,—and in view of what Mr Lang and other recent writers have unearthed with regard to the history of golf—to linger upon that subject here; but it may, perhaps, be permitted to a veteran to draw attention to the marvellous rapidity with which the game itself is spreading far and wide. Not only has it crossed the Border and flourished there—it has done the same by oceans. Wherever, in short, Briton can set his foot, there he shortly swings his club. For it is a game for both youth and age, and in my opinion, for both

sexes. A golfer can, so to speak, make his own pace: and many a one far down the vale of years has had his latter days solaced by a round. Why, within my own memory, the late General Low of Clatto (of the St Andrews Club) used to ride his pony between strokes—a privilege, of course, willingly granted to age; and I have known very effective players minus leg or arm. I take it, however, that a player is at his best between twenty and thirty-five, both for power and nerve.

My first acquaintance with the game began in 1837, when a boy at the Madras School, St Andrews: and it was one of my favourite pastimes till I left home for the States some ten years ago. But though St Andrews was my *alma mater*, Innerleven was what I may term my home-green. I have, of course, played over

many others; Balcomie near Crail, Elie, Wemyss, Dunbarnie—all in Fife; Musselburgh, Leith, Brimtsfield, Gullane, Perth, Monifieth—all Scotch links of note in their day.

As to Hoylake—now one of the leading English links—I may mention that many years ago, and long before golf was even thought of there, I strolled with a friend over what was then the Race Course. So suitable for another purpose did the ground appear to me, that I ventured to predict that it would not be long before golf would be played over that very course. That I was correct the “Royal Liverpool” witnesseth.

But though golf has become so ubiquitous, I hope I am safe in assuming that St Andrews is still, so to speak, the headquarters of the game. The two meetings of the Royal and Ancient used to be the pre-eminent attractions of the

year, and drew men from all quarters of the kingdom : and I trust this may still be so.

There are many still living who must have longer recollections of the venerable city than I can pretend to ; but in the fifty years during which I have known it, many changes for the better have taken place. It might be out of place here to note the various municipal improvements, railway extensions, and such material evidences of the increasing prosperity of the town itself : but one change may, perhaps, not be without interest to some readers. At one time the Royal and Ancient were entirely separate from the Union Parlour. The two became incorporated early in the "fifties," on the motion of the late Mr Grant of Kilgraston, as "The Union Club." Before this took place, some were members of the Golf Club, and not

of the Parlour, and *vice versa*, whilst some were members of both—which, of course, caused confusion. The change has, without doubt, aided in advancing the prosperity of the Club. (I may mention that in old days, the meetings used to be held in a small room in a house, which formerly stood at the corner of Golf Place and the Scores.) Mr Stuart Grace was for long the Hon. Secretary, and performed the duties of the office, which were no sinecure, in a way most agreeable to every one, though many a trial his temper must have had. I am glad to think he now enjoys his *otium cum dignitate*.

In my early days, fifteen or twenty couples were considered a large number of starters for the principal medals at the October Meeting. At the same meeting of this year (1890) seventy-five couples started—a noteworthy increase.

There were few club and ball makers in St Andrews when I first went there (1837). The only club maker was Hugh Philp. It is questionable if any other—whether before or since his time—has shaped and set a club better than he did. Hugh was a dry-haired man; rather gruff to strangers, but quite the reverse to those who knew him; with a fund of dry, caustic humour, but withal a kind heart. If a man after a match went to him complaining of a club, Hugh would merely say, "You'll ha'e lost your maatch:" and conversely with the jubilant.

The ball maker was Allan Robertson: the present venerable Tom Morris, his man. Often have I seen them pounding away at the stuffing of the feather balls, which were the only ones we at that time had. The price of a new "Allan" was half-a-crown, I think.

Very fine balls were also made at Musselburgh by Old Gourlay and Tom Alexander, who charged four and five shillings for their very best—a large sum as compared with the “guttas” of more recent times. These prices made it a good trade for lads to look for lost balls. “The Burn” and holes where whin and bent abounded, were favourite hunting-grounds. A found ball in good condition could be bought from these urchins for a shilling or eighteenpence.

Golf was rendered expensive in those days, not by the clubs, which were cheaper then than now, but by the balls. Their prime cost was high, and their durability not great. On a wet day, for example, a ball soon became soaked, soft and flabby; so that a new one had to be used at every hole in a match of any importance.

Or, on the other hand, a "top" by an iron in a bunker might cut it through. This I have frequently seen occur.

The making of first-class feather balls was almost a science. For the benefit of the uninitiated, I shall endeavour to explain the operation. The leather was of untanned bull's hide. Two round pieces for the ends, and a stripe for the middle were cut to suit the weight wanted. These were properly shaped, after being sufficiently softened, and firmly sewed together—a small hole being of course left, through which the feathers might be afterwards inserted. But, before stuffing, it was through this little hole that the leather itself had to be turned outside in, so that the seams should be inside—an operation not without difficulty. The skin was then placed in a cup-shaped stand (the worker

having the feathers in an apron in front of him), and the actual stuffing done with a crutch-handled steel rod, which the maker placed under his arm. And very hard work, I may add, it was. Thereafter the aperture was closed, and firmly sewed up: and this outside seam was the only one visible. When I say this, I of course refer to balls when now. Veterans showed the effects of service in open seams, with feathers outlooking; and on a wet day the water could be seen driven off in showers from a circle of protruding feathers, as from a spray-producer. A ball perhaps started a "twenty-eight," and ended a forty pounder.

The introduction of gutta-percha balls effected a complete revolution. Their cost was small, their durability great. I believe I may with justice claim the credit of having first brought them to

the notice of the golfing world, and this at the Spring Meeting of the Innerleven Club in 1848. The previous month, when on my way home from a two years' stay in France (where, by the way, golf was then unknown), I chanced to see in the window of a shop down a stair in St David Street, Edinburgh, a placard bearing the words—"New golf balls for sale."

I found them different from anything I had seen before; and was told by the shopman they were "guttie-perkies."

"Guttie-perkie! What's that?" I asked: for I had never heard of it.

"It's a kin' o' gum like indiarubber."

"What kind of balls does it make?"

"I ken naething about that—best try yin yoursel'!"

I bought one for a shilling. It was not

painted, but covered with a sort of "size," which, after some practice with my brother James, who was a good golfer, I saw reason to scrape off.

I then determined to try it upon the Innerleven Links, against Mr David Wallace, a golfer with whom I often played, and who always beat me. I noticed that after I had "teed," he looked at my ball with great curiosity: so I told him its history and the result of my experiments: and away we went. The upshot of our day's play was, that I beat him by thirteen holes—a thrashing, he said, such as he had never had in his life. However, he, too, soon took to the "guttas;" and many a beating he gave me afterwards. Still, I was much more on an equality with him than before.

I won the silver medal against him in April, 1848: and it was at that meeting I showed the

new ball to Allan Robertson and Tom Morris. It was the first time either had ever seen a "gutta." I told them of its great superiority to "feathers," and that the days of the latter were numbered; but Allan would not believe it. At my request, he tried the new ball; but instead of hitting it fairly, struck it hard on the top in a way to make it duck (which, by the way, no one could do more deftly than Allan).

"Bah!" he said; "that thing 'll never flee!"

I, however, struck it fairly: and, to Allan's disgust, away it flew beautifully!

For a long time Allan persisted in his opposition to "guttas." He has often told me, when I wanted him as partner in a foursome, that he would not play unless I used feather balls—a condition to which I, of course, acceded. At last, however, even Allan had to yield. He

not only began to make them (as many others had by that time done): but played with them.

Tom Morris, on the other hand, took the whole thing in a different way. His customers informed him that "feathers" were doomed: he at once made "guttas," and very successfully. Nay, if I remember rightly, his difference with Allan on this subject led to their separation.

For long I made my own balls, and at small cost. The only point in which "guttas" were at disadvantage, as compared with "feathers," was that they did not hold their course well in high wind, specially a side one. After some scheming and experiment, my brother and I succeeded in inserting and fixing lead securely in the centre of the ball, so that it putted accurately. Nearly all the medals I gained were won with loaded balls; and I used them

regularly until my stock was exhausted. (The making of them ceased at my brother's death.) They were well known at the time: and when I played at St Andrews with Hugh Philp (a good player and deadly at the short game) he used to ask me for one of my leaded balls.

They were, however, severe upon clubs—the fairest struck ball often breaking the head through the centre. Many of Philp's fine clubs have I broken in this way: and when I complained of rotten wood, he would answer: "Hoo the deevil can a man make clubs to stand against lead?"

Other players, again, used to lead their balls by rolling them when warm in lead filings; but as these were on the surface, they fell out when the ball was struck, and gave it a very unsightly appearance. That plan was inferior to ours.

I may mention that for a considerable time I played with unpainted balls under the impression that they flew better: but there was, of course, the drawback that they were difficult to find.

In contrasting the play of the present day with that of the past, the conditions of the links themselves are, of course, of prime importance. Old Innerleven and St Andrews Links were those with which I was best acquainted. The former were some years ago obliterated by the growth of commercial enterprise, which necessitated the migration of the Innerleven Club across the river to the present well-known Leven Links. No links that I have known required straighter driving than the old Innerleven. You had the sea on one side, and on the other, gardens, fields, and the village itself. Some of these gardens were in possession of wives with great

gifts of invective—one of whom I, in particular, remember as the terror of all players and a virago of priceless value. The late Sheriff Glassford Bell on one occasion ventured into her knaiyard in search of an errant ball and was received with genuine warmth. Her explanation to the neighbours seems not unworthy of record—"A muckle lauddie reiving at my rizzers!"

St Andrews green has been greatly changed within my knowledge; and has for many years been much easier than when I first knew it. There was then no "jinking" the bunkers. At most of the holes one or more stretched right across the green, while others were so placed as to be sure to catch a badly played ball. There were dense whins and bent on both sides of the links from the second hole onwards—particularly

from the "Hole o' Cross" to the "Heathery Hole." At that time the only double-holed putting green was the "Hole o' Cross:" and hence its name. When players became so numerous, double holes had, of course, to be made to avoid delay and inconvenience. In fact, the course has for a long time been quite changed; and there is quite a new one on the east side of the old. Whins and bent have been burnt and trampled down, and the bunkers which gave such interest in old times now scarcely form hazards at all. Especially is this the case with the third, fourth, and fifth holes. In former days, going from the "Ginger Beer" hole to the "Hole o' Cross," the tee shot was played close to the right of the "Hell" bunker and lighted in the hollow close to the "Elysian Fields"—guarding which was a long shelving bunker. Sometimes a powerful

driver would carry over "Hell" on to the "Elysians;" but, whichever course was taken, the second stroke was over that magnificent sheet of turf: keeping to the left (the Shepherd's house was given as the direction, if the tee shot was played to the right of "Hell," as was usual) to avoid the bunkers on the right, which were difficult to get out of. Then with short spoon or cleek the third was played over the wide bunker on to the putting green and holed out—often in five, nay with a "sneaker," perhaps, in four. There were few, however, who could steer so straight as always to avoid one or other of the bunkers placed for the erratic and the "tappit br'" even on that splendid ground. Nowadays the "Elysian Fields" are never frequented, and the play is over the new ground to the east, by which are avoided all these hazards, as well as

the large one between the "Elysians" and the putting green. So with the "Heathery Hole." The course has been greatly widened in both directions and the whin and bent cleared away, so that play is now easier, and in favour of low scoring.

With most of Dr Macpherson's views in the *Scots Observer* for August and September 1889, I entirely agree. He refers incidentally to the alteration of the course, but does not state the case so strongly as it admits of. It forms an element of much importance in comparing the players of olden and modern times. So far, at all events, as St Andrews is concerned, the green was much more difficult for low scoring in old times.

As to clubs, I do not think much advantage to either side can be ascribed to them. New kinds, it is true, such as "Brassies," "Niblicks,"

&c., have come into use; but the implements in use before their day were quite fit for the work.

The balls, however, have much to do with the lower scoring, the "guttas" being greatly superior in flying power and for accurate putting and insusceptibility to injury by wet weather. As I have stated, they were first introduced in 1848, and were in a few years adopted by every golfer. Now, for comparison of play, let us consider the Royal and Ancient medal scores from 1806 down to 1880 (which are published elsewhere), and assume that the easier state of the green and general use of "guttas" began in 1855. We find that the score for the club gold medal for thirty-one years from 1806 to 1836, when it was the first prize, averaged 107·61 strokes; whilst the score for the King William the Fourth medal for eighteen years from 1837,

when it became the first prize, to 1854, averaged 102·22 strokes—an improvement of 5·39 strokes on the round. This would shew a superiority in the players, although, perhaps, some allowance should be made for the more difficult green from the early period of 1806 to 1836, and for worse clubs and balls for a portion of the time at any rate. Next, comparing the score for the King William medal for the eighteen years from 1837 to 1854, when the average was 102·22 strokes, with the score for the same medal for the twenty-six years from 1855 to 1880, when the average was 93·50 strokes, we find an improvement of 8·72 strokes—a very great one, no doubt. I am of opinion, however, that the better scoring during this period is greatly to be attributed to the less difficult green and the “gutta” balls.

But we must not, of course, omit consideration of the weather. I remember well the competition of 1851. The wind blew a hurricane from the west, making it nigh impossible even to stand. One driver from tee had the mortification of seeing his ball alight behind him. *The winner played with his putter the whole round,* and gained the King William with 105, which was considered very good in the circumstances.

Referring to some of the individual scores, it may surely be urged that Mr Walter Cook's 100 in 1806 compares very favourably with Mr George Glennie's 88 in 1855—say, fifty years later. Who can tell what the links were like in 1806? Or again, compare Mr Oliphant, junior's, 97 in 1834 with Captain Dougall's 92 in 1865! Nay, Allan Robertson's wonderful 79 is surely as good as anything even the great

Tommy Morris (Morris junior) ever achieved; if, indeed, it were not superior. My impression is that young Tom's lowest was 77.

Without straining things unduly, I may, perhaps, be allowed to put it, that there is every reason to believe that the players of the olden time compare very favourably with those of the recent—always taking into consideration, of course, relative conditions as above stated.

St Andrews can lay claim to many a citizen golfer of renown. Who that ever saw him golf can forget Sir Hugh Playfair—(in my early days Major Playfair)—so often a medal winner? His firm set figure, compressed lips, keen eye—a sturdy golfer, with indomitable pluck and nerve—he was a player to be relied on. A good portrait of him hangs in the large room of the Union Club.

Another man of metal was M. Samuel Messieux (medallist in 1825 and 1827), who, though Swiss by birth, was so long resident in St Andrews, that he may be classed as a citizen player. I first came under his influence when as a boy I attended the French Class in the Madras School; and many a pair of "Swiss gloves" have I got from him. Instead of punishing with the "tawse," his humorous method was to seize the culprit's wrist between his first and second fingers and thereafter to squeeze and rub till the victim roared. He was very powerful, and played a good game, though with a stiff style.

Both he and Mr Cathcart Dempster were confirmed practical jokers; and he on one occasion asked the latter if he would like a pair of "Swiss gloves." The latter replied in the affirmative.

"Show me your hand for the size," said M. Messieux, and, when the hand was in good faith extended, he put on the "grippers" and made Mr Dempster roar. There was a merry laugh.

After a lapse of time sufficient to let Messieux forget the affair, Dempster invited him to dinner along with a number of friends, and seated him on his own right hand. Mr Dempster seemed much out of sorts, unable to eat, and showed great difficulty in swallowing.

M. Messieux, touched by his seeming discomfort, asked the cause.

"O! I am troubled with a tuft of hair growing under my tongue."

"How very extraordinary! I never heard of such a thing!"

"Why, sir, you can feel it by putting your finger in my mouth."

Mr Dempster acted his part so well, that Messieux, never suspecting the trap, did so: when down came the "crunchers" and made him roar quite as loudly as on the previous occasion Mr Dempster had done.

"I have been owing you for a pair of 'Swiss gloves' for a good while, and that is payment!" remarked Mr Cathcart Dempster, and every one thought the *quid pro quo* admirable.

Some who did not often figure in the medal list were most formidable in matches--nay, in some cases, really more to be dreaded than the medal winners. As examples of these I would mention William Calvert, George Condie, George Glennie, Patrick Alexander, and J. O. Fairlie. As Dr Macpherson truly says, playing by strokes is very different from playing by holes. In the former a single unfortunate shot may ruin an otherwise winning score.

I remember some very fine amateur matches, one of which always gave great interest and had many followers. It was that between Sir David Baird and William Goddard against George Condie and Robert (now Sir Robert) Hay, and was known as the old men against the young, and was often played. I rather think the young men had the advantage, for both Condie and Hay were very powerful drivers, besides being excellent at the other points of the game. The veterans were powerful antagonists, and although not such long drivers, had splendid nerve and were deadly at the short game. The foursome made a capital match. Condie was, I think, the longest driver of his day, had a splendid swing, and put more force into his stroke than any one I ever saw. He was very strong and athletic, and turned his power to good account.

Hay had more style, a longer swing, and drove a very long ball without the appearance of so much force.

Some very interesting professional matches also recur to my memory. Keen rivalry used to exist between St Andrews and Musselburgh. The former used to be represented by Allan Robertson and Tom Morris; the latter by Tom Alexander, the famous ball-maker, and Willie and Jamie Dunn. I remember one match between Allan and Alexander that took place at St Andrews, which was won by Allan. Tom Alexander was not a great driver, but capital at the short game. He had great confidence, and, though considerably behind, backed himself freely, and, indeed, with bluster. But Allan beat him.

Allan against Willie Dunn was a match often

got up—on the home greens and then on neutral ground. On St Andrews, Allan was always successful, whilst Dunn was equally so on Musselburgh; and Allan, again, most frequently on neutral links.

But the finest foursome of all that I remember was that between Allan and Tom against the two Duns in the final at North Berwick. It created intense interest in the golfing world of that day, and crowds flocked to North Berwick to see it. I crossed over from Leven (Fife) with my brother James, and remember it well. When I awoke at five o'clock the rain was pouring, and I got up and told my brother so, and that it would be useless to go. However, in a short time afterwards he came to my bedroom and said, "Man, Tom, I see a wee glint of blue sky! I think we should gang."

“All right!” I said, “I’m up.” And in due time we arrived at North Berwick.

On meeting Allan, I said I had come to see him win. He replied that he hoped so; but he had a dejected look about him, and I got the impression that he was doubtful of the result. The match was one of thirty-six holes, which required five or seven rounds (I forget which) of the North Berwick Links at that time, and one hole more.

The match started amidst the greatest enthusiasm. The weather had cleared up, but the wind blew pretty strong from the south-west. Each party had its own tail of supporters, those for the Musselburgh men predominating—for which, of course, the proximity of that place to North Berwick might account. They were led by Gourlay, the ball-maker. I never saw a

match where such vehement party spirit was displayed. So great was the keenness and the anxiety to see whose ball had the best lie, that no sooner were the shots played than off the whole crowd ran, helter-skelter; and as one or the other lay best, so demonstrations were made by each party.

Sir David Baird was umpire, and a splendid one he made. He was very tall, and so commanded a good view of the field; but it took all his firmness to keep even tolerable order.

The early part of the match went greatly in favour of the Dumps, whose play was magnificent. Their driving, in fact, completely overpowered their opponents. They went sweeping over hazards which the St Andrews men had to play short of. At lunch time the Dumps were four up, and long odds were offered on them.

On resuming the match, the advantage went still further to the credit of the Musselburgh men, and every one thought that victory was theirs; but one never knows when the tide at golf will turn—and turn it did. Allan warmed up and got more into his game: and then one hole was taken and another and yet another; and I remember Captain Campbell of Schiehallion, with whom I was walking, saying in great glee—"Gad, sir, if they take another hole they'll win the match!" And, to be sure, another was won, and so on until the match stood all equal and two to play.

How different the attitude of the Dunns' supporters now from their jubilant and vaunting manner at lunch time! Silence reigned, concern was on every brow, the elasticity had completely gone from Gourlay's step, and the

profoundest anxiety marked every line of his countenance. The very Dunns themselves were demoralised!

On the other hand, Allan and Tom were serene, and their supporters as lively as they had been depressed before. We felt victory was ours!

When the tee shots were played for the second last hole, off we flew as usual to see whose ball lay best! To our intense dismay Allan's lay very badly, whilst the Dunns' lay further on beautifully. Should the Dunns win this hole they would be *dormy*—they might win the match! Our revulsion of feeling was great, and as play proceeded was intensified, for Allan and Tom had played three more with their ball lying in a bunker close to and in front of the putting green!

But, on the other hand, the Dunns' ball was lying close at the back of a curb-stone on a cart track off the green to the right! First of all they wished the stone removed, and called to some one to go for a spade; but Sir David Baird would not sanction its removal, because it was off the course and a fixture. The ball had therefore to be played as it lay. One of the Dunns (I forget which) struck at the ball with his iron but hit the top of the stone. The other did the same; and again the same operation was performed and "the like" played. All this time the barometer of our expectation had been steadily rising and had now almost reached "Set Fair!"

The odd had now to be played, and this was done by striking the ball with the back of the iron on to grass beyond the track. Had that

been done at first, the hole might have been won and the match also; but both men had by this time lost all judgment and nerve, and played most recklessly. The consequence was the loss of the hole, and Allan and Tom *dormy*.

We felt the victory was now secure: and so, in fact, it turned out, and Allan and Tom remained the victors by two holes.

I think it only just to say that, in my opinion, the winning of the above match was due to Tom Morris. Allan was decidedly off his game at the start, and played weakly and badly for a long time—almost justifying the jeers thrown at him, such as "That wee body in the red jacket canna play goulf," and such like. Tom, on the other hand, played with pluck and determination throughout.

The quartette was one of magnificent players.

Of the lot I would place Allan, as a man, as the least powerful, but the most scientific. He could not play well on a rough green, for he used light clubs and balls, and a rough grassy green was too much for him: but on St Andrews with its unapproachable turf he was unrivalled. He was, we then considered, alike perfect in driving off tee, in his play along the green, and in his approach to, his putting towards and into the hole. Let me note that in putting he always took both putter and cleek in his hand—to be used according to judgment. He could take more liberties with the game than any one I ever knew, and his plan of just "*snodding*" his opponents at the Burn when he had an easy-going match became proverbial. On the other hand, when hard pressed and great prowess was required to save a hole, Allan was

the man who possessed it. As an instance, I remember in one of the foursomes at St Andrews between Allan and Tom Morris against the Dunns, when all was equal at the hole before the Eden coming in, Allan off the tee put Tom in the bunker just facing the putting green. The Dunns' tee shot was to the left; and the odd was played by Jamie, with his putter, quite dead within a few inches of the hole. Tom, playing the like, took the ball out of the bunker, but just on to the edge, leaving a long putt over sandy ground of about five yards. Allan had to hole out for a half: he did it with his putter. I had been standing at his back, and, after play was finished, said to him—"My man, Allan, you never had a nearer squeak for a hole all your life."

"Man," he said, "*I bid to do it.* You see I put Tom in the bunker."

This match was won by the St Andrews men.

Allan was least in stature of the four, but lithe and muscular, and had a swing of his club which was quite musical, and described a perfect circle. I have played a great deal with him, both singly (getting odds, of course) and with him as a partner in foursomes; and can testify to his uniform geniality, thorough earnestness to win matches, and uncomplaining temper under trials. He died of jaundice when a comparatively young man, highly esteemed and respected by all who knew him, and the champion of his own game.

Tom Morris and Willie Dunn I would class as on a par. Willie had a particularly graceful style. He was taller than the other three, very supple, and swung his club with great agility

and power. Jamie Dunn I consider was the least formidable of the four in a single, but alongside his brother was a most dangerous opponent.

Tom Morris I need hardly describe. Who has ever handled a club and does not know him—his genial countenance, dark penetrating eye, which never failed to detect a cunning road to the hole, imperturbable temper, unflinching courage and indomitable self-control under circumstances the most exasperating? He must now be a septuagenarian, but is still, I am delighted to see, able to wield his clubs. Long may he continue to do so—an honour to himself and the game which he has so much adorned!

Mr Hutchinson and others have probably said as much as need be on the subject of professionalism. Personally, I consider they have benefited the game.

Of the St Andrews men, besides those above mentioned, I remember young Tom, who was, I suppose, the finest player of his day. He died young, regretted by all friends and golfers. Jamie Anderson, with whom I have had many a match, was another beautiful player. He was short and burly, but drove a long ball, and was deadly with iron and putter. He was calm in temper and of firm nerve. I remember many another able professional, but in view of Mr Everard's interesting article in the "Badminton" volume, will not linger over this topic. But one instance of extraordinary professional skill in getting out of a difficulty may not be without interest to some young players.

When playing out one day I met Andrew Strath coming in at the "Ginger Beer" hole. He was playing in a match, but came up to me

and said—throwing a ball into the deep bunker which faces the putting green, coming in—“How many would you give me to hole out o’ that?” (the hole was about four yards from the edge). “I was in a big match,” he continued, “the other day, and my partner put me there.”

I said that I thought if done in two it would be good play.

“I did it in one,” he said, “and I’ll show you how.”

He went down on his knees, took his iron and holed his ball.

Another very remarkable shot that recurs to my memory was made by George Brown, a noted professional in his day. He and I were playing against my friend Mr Hugh M. Alexander and Tom Morris, and, I may add, succeeded in halving our match. At the “Hole o’ Cross” going

out Tom had to hole a putt of about six feet to win, and failed. His partner seemed annoyed, but Tom said—"It's good as in: they can't get in." And any one would have thought so: for his ball lay at the very edge of the hole, a dead "stymie" to ours, which was fully three feet off. Brown, in answer to Tom's remark, said, "I don't know that;" and taking his iron and laying it flat back, holed in the prettiest manner conceivable.

Brown said he made holes in the floor of his shop and used to practise stymies in all positions.

The diversity of style among professionals is not so great as that among amateurs. Although they may fall short of the full symmetrical sweep of Allan's club, yet they have all a fine swing—some, of course, exerting greater force than others (as witness young Tom). Young Tom's

driving a ball out of a bad place was noteworthy. Bob Anderson, too, a brother of Jamie (the caddie) was another long driver. He was a mason by trade, but played occasionally in professional and other matches.

Next in importance to players are the caddies; and every golfer knows the advantage of a caddy who knows your game and takes an interest in it. Many of the old St Andrews caddies whom I remember were a superior set of men. Such for instance were Sandy Pirie, Wullie Robinson, Jamie Anderson (not the player), Bob Kirk, senior (father of the player), Sandy Herd, Bob Anderson, and the father of Jamie Anderson (the player), who, I think, went by the name of "Daw." You could not be wrong with any one of these to guide you through the perils and pitfalls of St Andrews Links—the difficulty was to follow their directions.

Wullie Robinson I frequently employed. Well do I remember the tall gaunt figure and dry cynical manner. He was never complimentary of one's play—at least I know he never was so of mine. Coming in once from the "Heathery Hole" to the "Hole o' Cross" I played a good shot on to the green. The ball rolled near the hole; and I thought I was justified in saying, "Wullie, surely that aye will please ye!"

"Ou ay! it's an angel's veesit—few and far between."

Wullie, although generally a sober man, sometimes forgot himself, and would spend all his earnings and remain off the Links for a week at a time, if he had the wherewithal to buy whisky. Everybody knew his failing. He had remained sober for a considerable time, when, one day while carrying Mr Brown Douglas'

clubs, that gentleman, who was a strict tee-totaler, asked him what he drank now.

“Naething but sweet mulk, sir; naething but sweet mulk!”

“Ah! There’s half-a-crown to buy milk, my man.”

The latter was not seen on the Links for the following week—the half-crown and all he had saved went on something more potent than “sweet mulk.”

Musselburgh possessed many fine players, but I seldom went there. Mr Goddard was, perhaps, among the best. My friend Mr Henry Wylie was also a fine player: tall and muscular, he drove a long ball, though with a short swing. For many years he was a frequent visitor on Innerleven Links and a regular competitor for the medals. Unfortunately, he fell into bad health, and died in Australia a young man.

Among other Edinburgh players on the Innerleven Links, whose acquaintance I look back upon with pleasure, I may mention Mr Rhind and Mr Martin of the National Bank, Mr John Dun, Banker, now in Warrington, Mr John Sibbald and his brother James, Mr Greenhill of the Clydesdale Bank, Mr Robert Clark, Dr William Graham, Mr Charles Lees the Artist, and Dr Argyll Robertson.

Two of the most prominent players of about sixty years ago belonging to the Innerleven Club, were the late Captain Christie of Durie, who was also a famous rider to hounds, and Mr Alexander Wallace of Leven. The latter, I believe, gained every medal he ever competed for at golf; but I don't think he ever played on other links but his own. Once Captain Christie tied with him for the gold medal, but lost in the

final encounter. Mr Wallace was a remarkable player. He was a powerful man, tall and stout, made his own clubs, and drove a very long ball. His style was peculiar. He balanced himself on his left foot, which from its size formed a good pedestal, and had his right leg out behind him with the toes only on the ground. He played with a heavy but supple club, and in taking it back, gave it a turn over his head; but brought it to the ball with great force and precision. He was very good at the short game; had a great aversion to clocks and irons for playing up to the hole; and in place of them used a short spoon even at very short distances. He was also skilful in putting into the hole. He played with heavy balls, not under thirty, and used those of Tom Alexander or Old Gourlay for particular matches and medal play. He had given up the game

before my day, but I have seen him playing by himself for his own amusement: and, though well up in years, he would have proved a tough customer.

When he retired from the lists he handed over his mantle to his nephew, Mr David Wallace, who did not disgrace it; for he continued the reign of the Wallaces by winning both gold and silver medals of the Innerleven Club for many years in succession. I suppose this unbroken record of uncle and nephew must have extended over a period of about twenty years.

The spell was first broken in 1839 by my brother John, who won the gold medal from Mr David Wallace at the Autumn Competition of that year. The elder Wallace was much annoyed, and said to his nephew—"Hoo did ye let that laudie Peter beat ye?"

Mr David Wallace did not after that maintain an unbroken record, several younger players having come up and wrested the "bauble" from him—Admiral Dougal, Mr David Marshall and others, among whom I am proud to have had a place.

The Innerleven Club had for Poet Laureate the late William Graham of Edinburgh, LL.D., who by marriage was related to a Fife family. He was a regular summer visitor and attender of our meetings. He wrote a number of fine golfing songs, and sang at each meeting the one specially composed for it. The one on gutta-percha was particularly good. He had a fine baritone voice, and it was a great treat to hear him and Mr Wylie sing the songs of Scotland together. (His songs were published by Messrs Clark of Edinburgh.)

I claim to have played with three others in a foursome, a greater number of rounds over St Andrews than had ever been done before (though whether since, I, of course, do not know). The players were my brother O'Brien (King William the Fourth medal holder in the Royal and Ancient, 1851) and Tom Morris against Allan Robertson and myself. We played for two days consecutively *five rounds each day*; and the match ended in a draw. When we finished, Allan said he had never had "sic a belly fu' o' gouf a' his days." Neither, I take it, had the rest of us. We were young and agile then—and what can be compared to a game of golf in the heyday of youth over the magnificent turf of St Andrews with such partners as Allan and Tom? It was only after dusk we could strike our colours. At the short holes I have seen play going on,

with lanterns set at the holes to guide the putt.

The only game that ever excited my enthusiasm akin to golf, and seems to me suitable for people of all ages, and both sexes, is Curling, at which I have often played with a lantern for "tee." A fine "draw" to the tee at curling gives similar satisfaction to that after holing a long putt.

As to Dr Macpherson's suggestions regarding stroke and hole play, I would only remark that the games are different, and that the former tends to more cautious play. But I hold that the true spirit of golf is not to *smool* up to the edge of bunkers which it is within one's power to drive over, and that the attempt should be made to clear them, whether in playing for strokes or holes. However, fix the basis of a tournament

on any plan you like, the result may not always determine the best player.

I remember a tournament (I think early in "the sixties") played on St Andrews green in which the most renowned players of the day took part. The three last left in were Mr Robert Chambers, Mr David Wallace of the Innerleven Club, and Mr Patrick Alexander. Mr Wallace was a slow, methodical player, and his deliberate play soon unhinged the other, who was quick, impulsive, and full of fire and energy. In the final between Mr Chambers and Mr Wallace, the latter was four up and five to play at the "Hole o' Cross." On playing off the tee Mr Chambers, who thought his chance over, went in the coolest way to it, whistling unconcernedly, and topped his ball, but with sufficient force to carry it through the big bunker into which it rolled.

With the impetus it had, the ball bounded over the high bank opposite, and lay on the green, not admitting of standing room. Then Fortune smiled on him. He drove magnificently, getting on to the putting green in other two shots and won the hole. He also took the next three in succession—all square and one to play. On arriving at the last hole, Mr Chambers, playing the odd, laid a long putt dead. Wallace was on the down side of the hole on a very keen green, and had to play sideways to it. He was weak, and his ball rolled round and down as far as before. He then failed to hole, and Chambers won.

Now that golf has become so ubiquitous, and the numbers of clubs so great, it occurs to me that they might be classified after Curling fashion and all affiliated to one parent club; with medals and matches in similar accord.

In my young days it was a custom for golfers to wear red coats: and a very good custom, it seems to me, it was. The scarlet distinguished the players, gave animation to a meeting, and embellished the scene; but for many years the custom has ceased, which, I think, is to be regretted.

It used to be the practice at the St Andrews Club dinners and balls for the captain and ex-captains to wear scarlet dress-coats; and they may still do so. They added greatly to the vivacity of the scene. I am decidedly in favour of the resumption of scarlet by all Golf Clubs.

Since writing the foregoing, I have heard with great regret of the death of Admiral Maitland Dougall, which will be felt, I am sure, as a great loss to Fifeshire, in the direction of whose affairs he took such a prominent place. On the golfing

course his genial presence will be much missed. I look back with pleasure to the many happy matches I have had with him; for whether playing as partner or antagonist, he was always kindly and agreeable.

Before concluding, it may be permitted to a veteran to give a few hints to young players, viz., to keep cool, avoid strong language, and never to forget Allan's golden rule—"Tak' it easy." Finally, the more you abstain from liquor or tobacco, the more likely you are to become a successful golfer. Long may golf flourish!