







mantling the tents and pavilions, and certain earnest golfers with championship aspirations practising on the lawns and putting greens with newly acquired Schenectady putters, Tom Vardon, who was professional then, having soon sold out the enormous stock that he had acquired when he saw how things were moving in that famous week.

There was at the same time something fitting and a little that was incongruous that such a big thing in golf should happen at Sandwich. If mere sentiment and historical association settled what localities should be regarded as the capitals of their countries, Sandwich would have a claim though it would not win. It is interesting to find that some of the finest courses on which we play are situated at the most historic spots, redolent of ancient remembrance and strangely enough, it was a ship of the Pope of Rome that, quite unintentionally, struck the fatal blow at Sandwich—and made it fit for golf and hardly anything but golf. One day, centuries back, there came sailing along a big vessel belonging to Pope Paulus IV, and it sank at the mouth of the harbour. Sand, as you will very well understand, was attracted to it as to a magnet. At the point where the ship of his Holiness sank and stuck, a veritable island came up, bigger and bigger it became, and in a very few years the harbour was quite hopeless for ships of any size. Thus Sandwich, after all its glory, died. Time went on, the centuries passed, and people at length could walk for a mile or two over where the sea had been, from the place where the ship of the Pope went down. The great dunes came up, all golden sand, but they seemed not to matter to Sandwich then, to be but a mockery. Sandwich, ruined, slept. . . .

It was not awakened until near the end of the nineteenth century when one day two Scots from London; prospecting round about in some semi-scientific way, went up to the tower of St. Clement's church, and, gazing out as far as they could, saw these golden hills of sand, the smooth stretches, the fine curves, the salient points. It seemed to them like the promised land of golf. They went down from the tower to look at it, and they were happy. A dream had come true. Forthwith a society was formed which duly became the club we know. Golf had begun at Sandwich. There is St. Andrews and there is Sandwich, and it may not be generally realised that Sandwich is no inferior to the "auld grey city" in Fifeshire, though she has no university, so little of a town, and is no centre of any sort of life activity. After a violent and exciting past, such as St. Andrews never had, Sandwich sleeps. But when we play over those fine hills of sand and walk home at the end of the day by the raised and winding path across the field, with the spire of the old church for our nearing landmark, some of us may think how in the far distant days the sea was high up over all that land, that the Roman galleys sailed over the places where there are putting greens now, and we may remember the great expeditions that went out from Sandwich to harry our great friends the French, and many things besides.

At the championship of 1904 there were more people there and more excitement than there had ever been since the days when the Pope's ship went down; and in 1914, on the eve of the great war, Sandwich for a week was the most discussed place in the whole of England. These topsyturvies of towns in history are strange

things. I have been led to a long digression upon this of Sandwich, which surely in its way has no superior, and it must be good for the citizens of a far country to know and understand a little of what manner of place it was at which the greatest of their foreign victories in golf was achieved—the only victory, indeed, of any consequence. The scene was worthy of the great event. In this game and its associations, in England, in America and all over the world, there is a brilliant romance, which is often too much neglected in the continual consideration of bunkers and of putting greens. The mere practice of golf is to me a most wonderful thing, so much abounding in emotion and delight; but the sport embraces riches beyond all this. Was not the expedition of Travis a marvellous thing? Few understand how remarkable it was. I shall state some facts I know.

### III

FIRST, HOWEVER, some lines about the starting of this man into this game of ours, the early preparations that led eventually to this expedition to England. It was different from most beginnings now, but there were some others like it at that time when golf clubs were not placed in the hands of babies when they were born. Mr. Travis was ascending in the thirties when he first gave attention to the game, and let me say, without detracting from the American value of the successes of this American citizen, it is something for others to remember that he was born at Maldon in Victoria, Australia, the Australia which has fought so magnificently in this war at Gallipoli and elsewhere—and he first saw the game played in England, and in England he bought his first set of clubs. He was thirty-

three to be precise, when he was spending most of the year 1895 and the one that followed it in London. Golf was only just awakening in the



MR. TRAVIS IN 1897. When he first took up golf, in the days of the red coat.

south at that time, and there was little of it. There was more at Wimbledon and Mitcham, both suburbs of London, than elsewhere, and he saw it played on the commons there by the enthusiasts, mostly Scottish, who were the pioneers then. Somebody wrote

to him to tell him that a golf course was about to be opened in connection with the Niantic Club of Flushing, a social organization to which he was attached, and that set him thinking. He felt he ought to be in this movement, although the game did not then make any sort of appeal to him. So he bought a set of clubs, and took them back with him to New York when he returned there in the fall of 1896. He had his first game on the Oakland links, a nine-hole course that had been established on Long Island in October of that year. It will be remarked that this was less than nine years before he won the championship at Sandwich.

That course at Oakland is not what golf courses are now, either in America or England. Yet it had its qualities, especially for the learning of the game. Many of the nine holes were of undulating character, and every shot needed to be well and successfully played, or trouble from difficulties was to be expected. The worries of this first experience, searching in its way as it was, proved very helpful to Travis afterwards. Following the usual way with golf beginners and sceptics, he soon became infatuated with the game. At that time there were some seventy-five clubs in the country devoted to it, and a writer of the period, one of the first who ever wrote anything about golf in the United States, said: "A new game has lately been added to the list of our outdoor sports. At first there were reasons why it did not appear to be a game to which the American temperament would seem to be permanently attracted, and grave doubts were expressed as to its ability to hold its own in this country. Such was the reception of golf. As time went on, however, and the game became

more widely known a change occurred. The extreme enthusiasm of those who took it up induced others to play, and every day added to the ranks of its adherents. The secret of the game was no longer a sealed book; its apparent simplicity and lack of interest were seen to be delusions, and its success was assured. Upon every side golf clubs sprang into existence, and the formation of a national association became a necessity." How young all the world of golf seemed then, in 1896! In Britain Freddy Tait and Harry Vardon had only just become champions for the first time, and in America the championships were only two years old, Mr. Whigham being the reigning prince of the amateurs while Foulis was the Open Champion.

Mr. Travis is largely a self-made golfer; he took no lessons from the professionals, a spirit of independence and the desire for research in a personal and direct way being largely responsible for this mode of procedure, while professionals, of course, were not so numerous in those days as they have become since. Again, he is a personal contradiction to the stupidity often expressed by those who should know better that no great good can come from attempting to learn golf from the books. They need to be read with intelligence and discrimination, and the reading has to be accompanied by the most thorough practice and deep personal investigation into the mysteries and difficulties of this pursuit, but, with so much assured, the books may be of much good to the man. So they were to Mr. Travis. He brought them home with him from England, the Badminton book, which is a collection of short treatises by various writers, the manual of Willie Park, and others. He says that it was

either his misfortune or his good luck to take up golf without the assistance of professional coaching or the aid of any good player, and that, too, at a somewhat advanced age, regarded from a golfing standpoint.

"I appreciated my comparative helplessness after a few attempts," he says, "and then I first provided myself with all the available literature on the subject, and after digesting, as well as circumstances would allow, the various instructions laid down by the eminent writers, I endeavored to discover by practice, which was as constant as I could make it, which particular method suited me best and which promised to yield the best results. This naturally involved an enormous amount of experimenting before any fairly well-defined style was finally evolved, but by no means was all this practice wasted. It brought me to a knowledge of many ways of making the different strokes and producing the desired results, and, more important even than this, it yielded me a clear perception of the true relation of cause and effect in golf. This is the most valuable information that a golfer can possess, especially when all goes not well with his game. When I, in my own struggling way was suffering from topping, slicing, pulling and all the rest, or did any of the other hundred things which a golfer may do and be sorry for doing, it did not take me much time to discover the actual trouble, and then the remedy could be at once applied.

"Naturally, then, it is a question with me as to whether I was not better off for all that deep searching among the fundamentals for the hidden truths of the game, being forced to work out my own salvation, than if I had started under more helpful conditions

as most would have regarded them, and had the benefit of the constant practical and personal teaching by a good professional. Much of this professional instruction in these days is excellent; in their teaching capacity the professionals have improved as they were bound to do, but even now—and much more so was it in those old days—the professional, fine player as he may be himself, often lacks the ability to impart the best and most useful information to beginners at the game. He does not see their faults entirely, nor know from what special difficulties they suffer, and often enough he does not know exactly how he does things himself. As often as you like he can give you a practical illustration of how a shot should be played. He will place the ball on the ground or on the tee, swing at it and send it beautifully to the appointed place, but that movement, all of a piece and so speedy, does not teach the watcher much when that watcher is so very young to the game and one movement is so very much like another. The professional most probably learned the game when he was very young, and came upon much of it by mere instinct, as professionals do. He has had little need to trouble himself about the why and wherefore and cause and effect, as I and so many others have had to do, and, when it comes to dissecting the stroke and explaining its parts, that is quite another matter with him from the business of making it so smoothly and easily before your very eyes.

"But I am very far from saying, in spite of all this, that in the case of the average beginner a professional coach is not essential for the cultivation of a proper style at the start if any satisfactory degree of efficiency is desired. The beginner, if he is left to himself,

is much inclined to sacrifice future possibilities of acquiring the capacity to make a stroke properly—which capacity can only be acquired by constant practice of what at first seems the hardest and most unnatural way—in favour of what appears the easiest. He wants to "get there," and so he may after a fashion. He quickly attains a certain degree of mediocrity, but he finds then that improvement beyond that point is extremely difficult, amounting almost to impossibility. He finds also that before any substantial or permanent improvement can really be effected he must proceed to unlearn very much, divest himself of his bad habits, and then start again on correct principles. This second learning is a hard and painful business, devoid of many of the pleasures of the first one, but it must be done."

Here, most of us will agree, are keen perception and good advice. To how many of us does this not appear as the record of our own early golfing errors! The wrong way seemed so easy, and the right so difficult, so full of awkward angles and harsh uncertainties. We could in those early days drive the ball a certain moderate distance every time, with a sloppy comfortable sort of stroke at which we were most adept. The ball left the club in a lazy kind of way, and it soared into the air; but still we did not miss the drive—such as it was—and it was a sort of driving. Becoming dissatisfied with it one day, we consulted the authorities, and acquired the services of a capable teacher for an hour. He told us that everything was wrong, feet, hands, body, swing, the whole human arrangement and method. They were all arranged differently, and we were enjoined to swing according to new directions. It appeared impossible! Every joint and

muscle seemed to rebel and creak, the whole movement felt utterly unnatural, and so difficult that there was the utmost uncertainty about even striking the ball. Yet somehow it was struck, and after one or two attempts there was a surprising result. The ball started off eagerly and swiftly from the club, it flew low, and it went far. Here then was encouragement, and after a time the new way seemed to become the natural one, and the old one did not feel so smooth and proper when it was tried. But strength and perseverance were required in these reforming days. This is the only way for the thousands who make a false start in golf.

Then Mr. Travis says: "You will find, on the other hand, that a young golfer who models his game on the system and methods of first-class players will improve only slowly, but when he has at last developed a correct method and adheres closely to it, he is sure to get on, and he will have the satisfaction of knowing that he has acquired a style which will inevitably lead to an improvement in his handicap. It is the fact that all good players work practically on the same basic principles, although certain individual mannerisms and peculiarities of method may be very prominent. Underneath them all the bed-rock of the system of the stroke is substantially the same. In whatever way the player may construct his method, whether he plays off the right or the left leg, or stands square to the ball, the principle of the stroke is fundamentally the same although there are modifications which may be more or less effective." The sense and discernment of these observations need no comment.

It is a strange reflection for us now that in his early experiences at the game Mr. Travis progressed less at

putting than anything else! Working away at his books, with his deductions and with his practice, he was encouraged by gradual improvement in all respects save in this matter of putting, which, according to the custom of beginners, he neglected. He was too much concerned, he says, with what he then conceived to be the more essential elements—driving and approaching—to devote any close study to "such a trivial and unimportant thing as putting." Not until three or four years had passed, did he manage to acquire any real grasp of what he then realized was a vitally important art. But he was a golfer of less than two years' standing when he first made his appearance in the United States Amateur Championship tournament, played that year at Morris County, and he lasted up to the semi-final, defeating such men as J. G. Thorp, the runner-up of two years before, and Foxhall Keene, but was overthrown at last by Findlay Douglas, who was the ultimate winner of the championship. And in the following year at Onwentsia it was Douglas who beat him again, but with less to spare than in the previous year, and the winner of the match again reached the final but was beaten there. For the third time Douglas and the improving Travis tried conclusions in 1900 at Garden City, and on this occasion it was the final in which they played and the encounter yielded to the man of whom we write his first championship. It was a hard game and not settled until the home hole had been played, when Travis became the winner by two holes—a little less than four years after he had first begun to play. The following season at Atlantic City he became champion again, beating Walter Egan in the final by five and four. He had only just returned

home from a trip to Europe, made not entirely for pleasure but because of a threatened breakdown in his health. In England and Scotland he played over the championship and other courses and had games with many of the best players of the time, but made only a poor show against them. He was convinced at this period, although his own game was clearly below its



AS HE APPEARED IN 1902

proper level, that there was a very great difference between the quality of American and British golf. This championship at Atlantic City was the

first one at which the rubber-cored ball was used, the gutty having been universal at the previous event. Mr. Travis tried the newcomer only the day before the championship began and won with it. It might be said that the winning of the national championship for the third time in 1903 brought to an end the first period of his career, during which in seven years he had risen from nothing as a golfer to triple champion, while no other player up to then had ever won the championship more than twice, and, also, he had won the Metropolitan amateur championship twice—in 1900 and 1902.

#### IV

THE SECOND PERIOD consists almost entirely of one affair, and I was a witness of it throughout. Clearly I refer to Mr. Travis's victory in the Amateur Championship at Sandwich in 1904, which, on a general reckoning of the points of interest and importance, would I think be almost universally regarded as the most significant and remarkable result in any event. I happen by my acquaintance with the game on both sides of the Atlantic to know much of the inside history of this affair, and having, by some sort of instinct which one cannot attempt to explain, believed from the outset that more was about to come from it than most British players seemed to think, I watched Mr. Travis play the whole way through, and was probably the only man besides himself and his caddy who saw his every stroke. By about the Wednesday I was satisfied in my own mind that he would go near to winning, and told a few of our people so, but they said that my judgment was probably suffering from some slight temporary defect, and would be better by the following day

or at latest on Friday, when the error of my thoughts would be clearly apparent to me. But I went back to watch the American and was more than ever convinced. I spoke to some of the professionals there about it, including Jack White, Ben Sayers, and Harry Vardon, and they agreed with me.

I might mention as a circumstance of some possible interest, as showing the rising state of golf in the public mind at that time, that this was the first championship at which a London daily newspaper was represented by its own special golfing correspondent, sent specially for the purpose. I had been talking about the game a little time previously to my friend, Mr. Robert Donald, the editor of the London "*Daily Chronicle*" and, when I suggested that it would be a good thing if I went to Sandwich and wrote long daily accounts of the proceedings for his paper, he agreed with me, and I might add that this resulted in my writing thenceforth for some years the first regular column about golf that ever appeared in a London morning newspaper. What a change since then! At the beginning of the war golf seemed to be one of the most important features of all the papers. However I remember writing to the "*Chronicle*" on the Wednesday night saying that I believed there was going to be something like a sensation in the result of this championship, and again I was justified to the extent that on the Friday morning the entire London press had come to realize the importance of the thing and sent representatives down to Sandwich as quickly as they could. Most of them, as was inevitable in the circumstances, knew nothing whatever of the game, and I have still a vivid remembrance of Mr. Travis walking back to the clubhouse

from the fifteenth green, at the close of his final match with Mr. Blackwell, surrounded by a small host of writers who were asking him all sorts of questions about the beginning of his game and the origin of the Schenectady putter. However this is anticipating.

Mr. Travis was encouraged in his visit to England for that championship by a letter he had received from Mr. Devereux Emmet. He would have gone if he had not received the letter, because he had begun to cast longing eyes on the honours of British golf, and was curious to see how he compared now with the best British players. The letter from Mr. Emmet, however, made a difference. Emmet was staying with some friends in Ireland during the winter, and early in the spring he wrote to Travis this letter, which, as its recipient says, is in view of its encouraging character and the successful daring of its prophecy one of the most cherished mementoes of the eventful visit that followed. It was dated March 23, and it ran as follows: "I hear you are coming over to Sandwich to have a try at the Amateur Championship. I hope this is true. I will be there to root for you. I will be at the South Eastern: Hotel, Deal, from 23rd May until after the Open Championship. There will be some great golf going on—May 27, St. George's Vase; 28, England v. Scotland, Amateur; 31-June 3rd, Amateur Championship; June 4, England v. Scotland, Professional; 8th and 9th, Open Championship; 6th and 7th, Professional Tournament at Deal. I have been riding hard all winter and have only played golf twice, but have gone out in a field and driven a ball quite often. At this time of the year in this pasture country you can go on driving a ball for miles without losing it. I am going to be a month at Port-

marnock in Ireland before I go over to Sandwich. Let me know where you will be staying at Sandwich, and when you go there. If the weather is calm I think you will win the thing, but if it is very windy the chances are in favour of some powerful slogger like Hunter or Maxwell. The carries are terrible against a stiff wind. I wish the links were Prestwick. They don't begin to know how good you are over here, which will be greatly in your favour. I suppose your poor old Garden City has been frozen solid all this cold winter. We have had nothing but rain here. Such storms I never saw! I never put up with such hardships out hunting as I have this winter." In a postscript he added "Get over as early as possible. That links wants a lot of knowing. As I remember it the greens are not large, and most of them must be approached from short distance with a mashie or iron, not a putter."

On arriving in England Mr. Travis went at once to St. Andrews, but played so badly there and also at North Berwick, that he postponed his departure south to Sandwich as long as possible, in the vain hope that he might get back on his game, for he did not wish to begin that way at Sandwich and thereby be more or less unnecessarily prejudiced against the course. He was so much afraid of this happening that, on reaching the championship course at last, he simply took a putter and a few balls out with him and walked over the links. It happened strangely that with almost the first ball he hit he realised that his game was coming back to him, for at last he could "feel" the ball as he had not been able to do before. Confidence returned; the outlook was happy again. He improved in almost every practice round he played. Taking

part in the stroke competition for the St. George's Vase, with which the amateur championship is always preceded when it is held at Sandwich, he played quite well, and might have been somewhere near the winner—it was the late Jack Graham—but for the fact that his putting was poor. It was perhaps as well that it was; brilliancy exhausts itself with even the best and steadiest of putters, and Mr. Travis had a most amazing run of brilliance in the week that followed at Sandwich in the amateur championship, reaching its climax almost on the last day. While in Scotland, searching for his lost form, he had added considerably to his stock of clubs, as happens to most golfers in such distressful circumstances. At the beginning at Sandwich he was using a putting cleek he had bought at North Berwick. At this critical juncture one of his compatriots suggested his trying a Schenectady putter he had with him, and he did so. The result was wonderful; from then onwards his putting was marvellous—as we know. In almost every match in the championship he ran down two or three long ones—very long ones—and his losses by missed little ones were reduced to an absolute minimum.

I shall not write a detailed account of the proceedings in that eventful week, even though it is so important to the subject of this story, and they were in themselves so thoroughly exciting. As Mr. Emmet had hoped, the weather was fine, and the course was fast, but the carries at Sandwich, never short, were exceptionally long. In such circumstances it was peculiarly interesting—and there were critical times when it was almost thrilling—to see Mr. Travis only just clearing the big hazards, taking nearly always

the dead straight line. But, as all who had been watching him closely came to understand very well, there was much more in these bare clearances than met the eye. He only just cleared them when they were of a certain length, but he cleared them just the same when they were much longer, and those who watched him all the time and closely, could see clearly that he was concentrating everything on accuracy and certainty and driving very well within himself as we say. He was also using the wind very well. He might have driven farther continually, but it would have been with much risk, and what was the use. It was a winning game, carefully thought out, and pursued with the utmost patience and undeviating care and thoroughness, that he played throughout that week. He never allowed himself to be tempted from his great scheme, even when such long drivers as Mr. Blackwell outdistanced him, and as an exhibition of coolness and perfect temperament I have never seen it equalled in my championship, though I have seen so many in Britain, America and other countries.

In the first round he easily beat Mr. Holden of the Royal Liverpool club by four and three; but in the second, against Jimmy Robb, it was a near thing, the American only winning by one hole. Robb had been in the final twice before, and had begun to think himself unlucky; but he won the championship at last two years after Mr. Travis won it. At the eleventh hole in this match there was an incident that has been often discussed, and I shall relate it in the words that Mr. Travis used when describing it to me once. He said: "On the eleventh green a thing occurred which called forth some subsequent comment, arising from a misapprehension of the

facts of the case. I had laid my approach putt dead. My caddie was holding the flag, and, being an Englishman—and one of the poorest caddies I have ever had, by the way—and Mr. Robb being a Scotchman, he did not understand the latter's request to take the flag-stick out, Mr. Robb being away at the edge of the green, but understood it as a request to pick my ball up, which, to my indignant astonishment, he was in the act of doing when I burst in with, 'What the devil are you doing?' whereupon the ball was instantly replaced and the incident was closed so far as Mr. Robb and I were concerned. I know I lost the next hole, however."

In the third round Mr. Travis beat Mr. A. D. Murray, of the Purley Downs club near London, by three and one, and in the next he overcame Mr. H. E. Reade by two up. This was, perhaps, the hardest match of the series, and there were many times in it when it seemed that the American effort would fail, for Mr. Reade was continually two up, and he was two up with only four to play. But Mr. Travis did the last four holes in fifteen strokes. He achieved his greatest victory in the next round when he beat Mr. Hilton by five and four, and that took him to the semi-final. He had to play Mr. Horace Hutchinson then, and the latter had had a hard match with Mr. Robert Maxwell in the morning. By this time the British golfing public had certainly become anxious, and in the interests of the championship there was some general regret that Mr. Maxwell has not beaten Mr. Hutchinson as he very nearly did in the semi-final. Mr. Travis says he admired Mr. Hutchinson's game, especially his iron play and putting, immensely; but few of us who watched thought that Mr.

Hutchinson would win, and he was beaten by four and two.

The last hope, Mr. Blackwell, surrendered the championship in the first half hour on the following morning, for he lost the first three holes, and could never get them back. That was one of the great half hours in golfing



Just after the British Championship.

history, and it was at this supreme crisis that the American's putting was at its best. It seemed magical. People stared at it and said nothing, and it was greatly to the credit of big-hearted Ted Blackwell that he struggled so well against what seemed such uncanniness and such great odds.

That morning's London "Times," in discussing the prospects, said simply, "Mr. Blackwell will require his very best game to win to-day," and as a matter of fact Ted did play something very near to his best game, but it was no use. In the course of the match a man came up to me and asked the stupid question, referring to Mr. Travis's putting, "I say, can you tell me how he does it? It is too extraordinary!" "Oh," said I, "it is really very simple. It is a new American dodge. He has a thin piece of elastic fastened to the bottom of every hole, and when he gets on to the putting green he hitches his ball on to the other end. Consequently it is sure to go in every time." That was the only way of explaining it—at least to one who knew nothing of the wonders and mysteries of golf.

Certainly the British golfers were not delighted with the result; I do not see how they could be expected to be. Despite the warning that began to come on the Wednesday and Thursday, they were dumfounded when the cold truth was exposed, that the Championship Cup had to make a trip across the Atlantic. I remember as well as if it were yesterday the scene when Mr. Travis had holed out for the last time on the fifteenth green and became the champion. It was a beautiful afternoon, the sun was shining warmly, there was the distant murmur of the sea, and overhead the larks were singing in a loud chorus. After the last putt had been holed there was a tense silence for a moment, and then a man near to me exclaimed fervently, "Well, I'm dam'd!" And that was just it. The procession wound its way to the clubhouse, and all was over. As many as possible bought Schenectady putters, and when these were exhausted there were in-

quiries as to whether the long black cigars that the hero had been smoking all the week had anything to do with it and where they might be obtained.

That reminds me about a point in training. Many people were saying at Sandwich that each that they could not understand how Travis kept his nerves in the magnificent state that he evidently did keep them, when he smoked such apparently strong cigars all the time. He was never seen at Sandwich without one between his lips, and there were theories that he smoked them all night. Many people have views on training. I remember that Harry Vardon once tried stopping smoking just before a championship, and thought it did him good, but the effort of the stoppage was a tremendous and painful thing, and he never tried it any more. I do not believe Mr. Hilton could play his game without his cigarette, Mr. Maxwell is another who cannot golf properly without smoking—in his case the pipe—and so it is with many others. The question of training was brought to Mr. Travis's attention in a curious way at Sandwich by Ben Sayers, and the former related it to me in this way. "After the first day or so Ben Sayers displayed a very strong interest in my play, and asked me if I ever went in for training. Now it happened that about a year after I had commenced golf I conceived the idea that my game would be improved if I stopped smoking and drinking—not that I consider I do either immoderately, drinking, at all events. So a couple of weeks or so prior to one of the Lakewood tournaments I cut out both. I found that, while it made no difference in my long game, my work on the green was simply childish; I couldn't putt at all. Well, that settled all training for me,

and I have never since allowed even golf to interfere with my smoking or drinking when I feel like it. So I told Benny of my experience, much to his horror and surprise. His system of training, it appeared, not only tabooed all indulgences of this sort, but also embraced massage treatment—rubbing in Elliman's embrocation all over. In return for his kindly interest I compromised on the rubbing, and to cement the bargain he loaned me his favourite spoon. I don't know that the perfunctorily performed massage treatment had any real virtues, but the spoon was of valuable assistance."

V

IF ONE WERE HERE to attempt even the most summarised statement of the many wonderful things that have happened in the career of this man in his more than twenty years of golf it would be like the beginning of another long story. And then the golfer's life is one of adventure, of strange experience, of odd occurrence continually, the wonders of this game never for a moment ceasing, so that this man, who plays when'er he may, plays in the east and west, in the shining south amid the happiness of Belleaire, Palm Beach and the rest of those seductive winter spots, and has tasted the utmost sweets of golf in its own homeland—would not the story of this player's adventures fill twenty volumes, and his comments upon them twenty more? I have here upon my writing table reminders that I have made myself of matters upon which I wished to make some comment. There are notes upon some of the queerest as well as the best shots that he has ever played, an item upon certain mutual encouragement when for the first time a President of the United States, one William Taft, was being led along the golfer's way, and the

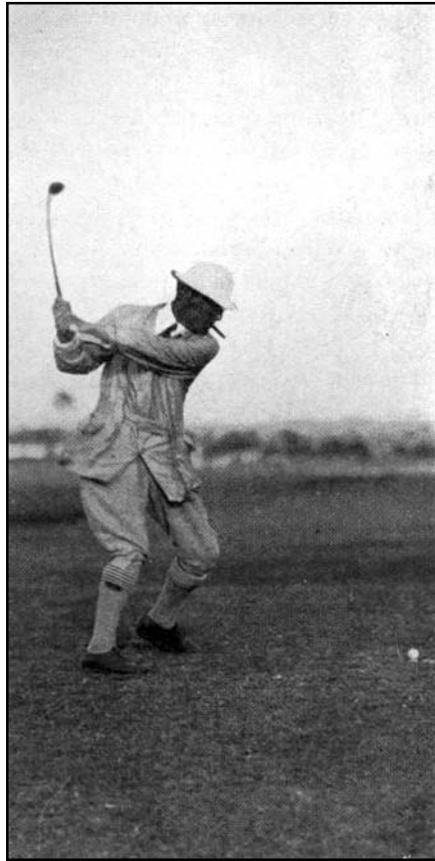
champion with him. They had happy games together. I have many reminders of his happy days—and some of my own—at that Garden City course which, far more than any other has been the golfing home of this wanderer and adventurer, the beloved patch of earth to which, after distant pilgrimages, he was always glad to return.

And at the end of what I think we must regard the third period of his career he had the courage to retire from championship golf. I do not use this phrase without consideration; it needs courage for the old fighter to leave the ring when he is still strong enough to win and earn the delights of victory. But it is the right thing to leave it at the prime, or only a little way after that, ere the powers begin to fade. What spectacle is there so pathetic as the old favourite struggling on and losing more and more each time under the remorselessly increasing handicap of years? We are apt in our contemplation of it to lose some appreciation of the glory that has gone. It were better to remember the victor in the full hot blood of life. It was when still winning that Travis went away. He felt that he could win again. He was fifty-three, and some of them were venturing to call him the "Grand Old Man" when he won the Metropolitan Amateur Championship at Apawamis. Percy Pyne, Oswald Kirkby, Percy Platt, Jerome Travers and John Anderson were those who fell by the way as Travis passed along to his victory. He beat them all, and in just the old sweet way he sank a thirty-foot putt on the home green in the final against John Anderson. I think you have heard the names of those people, and know for what they stand. The test in this case was of the most searching American standard; the winner of a national

championship is rarely asked to do more for his victory. He won at Apawamis not through skill with his putter alone, but by practically perfect work with all the clubs in his bag and fine steadiness and endurance. That was the marvel of it. The year before, amid the mountains of Vermont, he had played in his last national amateur championship, reaching the semi-final (where Travers overcame him), and so he finished as a conqueror now. He might have gone on in championships; he might have won again. But he had made up his mind in advance that Apawamis should be his farewell. He told me about it. "I am playing practically as well as ever," he said, "but I can scarcely stand the prolonged strain of a tournament lasting from three to five or six days. At the end of the third day I am pretty well 'all in'. Now it does not strike me as being quite sportsmanlike to go into a tournament in these circumstances. For the first day or two, while I am comparatively fresh, I might, if on my game, knock out one or two good men—men who might have a chance of winning ultimately. At the end of the third day almost anybody can come along and lick me. For these reasons I did not take part in the last amateur event at Detroit. Of course I hope and expect to play in ordinary two or three day tournaments for several years to come." By this time he had won the national amateur event three times and has been a semi-finalist on five other occasions, had won the Metropolitan four times, the North and South three times, and various other small championships of a miscellaneous character, chiefly under the southern winter sun.

Looking back on his career, I find among the curiosities that as he was a semi-finalist in his first amateur

championship at Morris County in 1898, so he was also in his last at Ekwanok in 1914. He was the last man to win the National amateur championship with the gutta ball in 1900 at Garden City, and the first to win with the rubber-core in 1901 at Atlantic City. And he was the first American amateur to win an open



Mr. TRAVIS. At the top of his swing on the drive.

championship, which was in 1906 at Palm Beach, when the professional opposition embraced such foreign lights as Andrew Kirkaldy, Alexander Herd, Rowland Jones and all the leading American professionals. We shall agree that he has done enough, even though he still goes golfing on. Through it all he has been the keen

advocate of freedom (within reasonable limits) and common sense in golf. He hates the stymie, and he is all for a wise democracy in the control of the game. But here I discuss no politics and take no sides. I write of the player, and now I remember only the brave array of shining trophies that I have looked upon in the dining room of his house at Garden City, but a shot or two from his mother course.

## VI

THE SIMPLY PRACTICAL side of this affair, as it has been dealt with towards the close of previous articles of a like character, cannot be avoided in this case, even though there may be reasons why I should like to avoid it. This is a difficult situation for the critic. If I were asked to state the outstanding features of his golfing method, as they might appear to a close student of the game after watching him for a day, I should say that they were chiefly the extreme deliberateness of his manner. He seemed to me the first time I saw him play, and has always seemed so since, to be surrounded by an atmosphere of coolness, calmness, and the most complete composure. There are deep concentration, unhurried thought, and obliviousness to all external circumstance. Many players of eminence, who concentrate deeply and exhibit indifference to their surroundings during the pressure of a crisis in an important match, nevertheless often betray evidence of violent internal commotion. Cold as may be his demeanour, I am sure I have seen this in Mr. Jerome Travers, and in Mr. Ouimet also, but I have never detected it in Mr. Travis and do not think it has ever existed. If it has, he is the only man who knows of it. Such absolute coolness is a rare quality in any golfer. In his

movements in general, in his preparation for the stroke, in his address to the ball and in the very swing itself, there is always that complete calmness. The swing is one of the most methodical swings you could see, a little stiff perhaps as is the inevitable consequence of not taking to the game until youth was on the wing and then building up the golfing system in the theoretical and mechanical way instead of allowing instinct and nature to have full scope. Mr. Travis's system, of course, is a thing of cultivation, and he has explained to us exactly how he made it. It is wonderfully good of its kind, and much of the success of its results is due to the perfect and most consistent timing which is an invariable feature of it. How few players do we see who vary so little in their long game with the wood as Mr. Travis! He never tries to drive farther than he has ever done before—that very human weakness!—or at all events he betrays no evidence of such endeavor. He knows that accuracy and reliability are in the long run sure to win.

One thing that struck me when first I saw him play was the extreme squareness of his stance on the tee, and, from what I remember, I do not think that this is a feature of his game that has been much modified with years. When he played at Sandwich I think his stance must have been the squarest of all the 104 players who competed, because it was even more than square and the right toe was clearly a shade behind the line of the left. Nobody countenances such a system now; a beginner who showed a disposition to drive in that way would at once be corrected by any professional to whom he went for lessons. Yet in the years gone by it was not merely a recognized system but a

fairly common one, and was adopted by many of the very best players, and, allowing that it encouraged the ball to soar, it is not easy to understand why it has been so universally discarded in modern times, for it had undoubtedly certain advantages.

In the old days the authorities recommended it. Sir Walter Simpson wrote—"Many place the left foot nearer the ball than the right, commonly called 'standing in front' and lean more weight on the former than on the latter. This is because the left leg of most men is the stronger. Some of the finest players stand to their ball in this way; but on the whole it is to be avoided because it tends to produce wildness and uncertainty in driving. Obviously the position offers facilities for a long swing back, and those who are lured on by the charms of an occasional raker will adopt it." Mr. Laidlay, as we all know, was one of the most famous of these left-leggers. And Mr. Travis himself years ago wrote: "I rather favour driving off the left leg, as it appears easier to get the arms and body around in the upward swing without the hitch which one seems to encounter about three-quarters of the way up when the right foot is in front. Apart from this, however, there is very little difference in actual results of length of drive. The ease and rapidity with which the weight of the body and arms is transferred from the left leg to the right and back again, joined to wrist action, are largely, if not wholly, responsible for long driving. If one man can accomplish this more easily and naturally by a certain stance, then by all means let him stick to it. It matters little whether he now and then slices or pulls with more or less frequency; these faults are not the outgrowth of any of the styles re-

ferred to, but proceed from other causes. . . . An inch or so either way matters little, but the more the right is advanced, the greater is the check towards getting the arms and body around, and the upward swing is curtailed accordingly, and the distance of the resultant stroke shortened. So clearly is this recognized that by far the large majority of good players instinctively control and regulate their approach shots in this manner. The shorter the distance to be traversed, the more the right foot is advanced as a general rule." Much of what we do in golf is due more to fashion and less to general principle than we realise. Modern theory can make a strong case against the stance in which the right foot is a trifle behind the left, but there is undoubtedly something to be said for the method, and it is worth the thought, perhaps, of that very large part of the community, which has never been really satisfied with its driving—and not without reason—since the period of commencing the game. We may yet see a revival in some measure of this left-legging, especially on the part of those who neither are born golfers nor began to play until many years of manhood were piled to their account. However that may be, Mr. Travis has done his best work with the right toe very slightly to the rear of the left. His backward swing has been comparatively short and restrained, but when watching him one generally witnesses a full finish. That is not infrequently the case with men who exercise restraint in their backswings. What is taken off in the upward movement of the club seems to be added to the driving part where it is of much better service. As I have said, his swing is not beautiful, it does not make you sigh, it hardly thrills, but

it is remarkably methodical and efficient, and there it is.

A bulky volume might be filled with points of his teaching, and, that being so, it is practically impossible to make even a summary of it here. There is an attractive thing he once said in regard to the short game, and I shall quote it. He said: "Adopt the simplest means to get the ball into the hole. It is easier and less risky to run the ball up than to pitch it. If pitching were the easier way, why should one not putt with a mashie? So I would advise that one should never use a mashie or any heavily lofted iron when the necessity for pitching does not really exist. A certain keen discrimination is necessary, however, to be sure, when you come up to your ball, as to just what kind of stroke it is best to play and the right club to make it with. You should not allow yourself to fall into the way of hesitation or doubt as to whether you should play with a mashie or an iron or a putter. Decide immediately and adhere to your determination. There is another point in connection with the short game that it is well to bear in mind, and that is that it is better not to meditate upon the strength that will be required for the next stroke when you are walking along the course and up to your ball, as so many players are inclined to do, and as indeed they are advised to do by some good authorities. Wait until the ball is before you ere you begin to make such calculations. And I would urge you more and more not to be in haste to look up after the stroke has been made. I have always felt that there are two big rocks upon which the great majority of players split, two faults that most of us commit to a greater or lesser extent, which cause many of our failures. One of

them is looking up too soon after the ball has been hit, and the other, is hitting too soon, particularly in the long game."

It would be a strange dissertation on the methods of Travis that gave no consideration to his principles and practice in putting, at which in his time he has established a greater reputation than any other man. Here then I shall present an epitome of his thoughts upon the subject, as he once



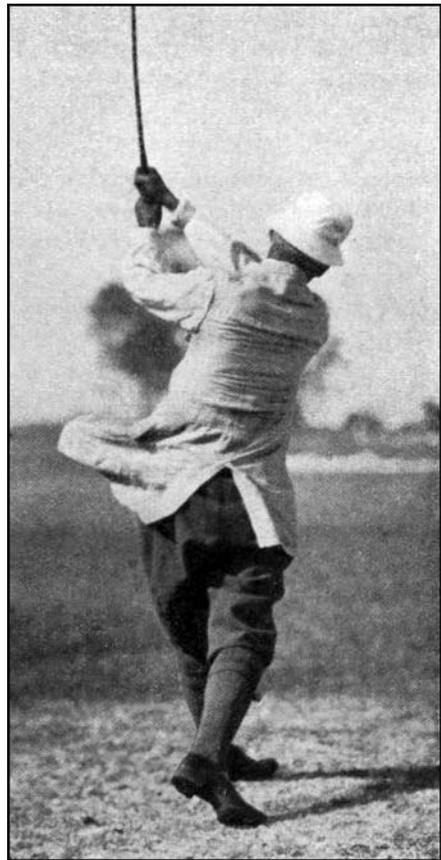
FINISH OF THE DRIVE.

communicated them to me, thus: 'Putting was one of the last matters I studied when I took up golf. When you come to analyse the game, and the means by which the ball is played to the hole, you must be impressed with the fact that, of the total number of strokes that are played in a perfect round, nearly half the number are absorbed in those little putts on the green. It took me some time to realise this great truth, but when I did realise it I gave my whole mind to a solution of the problem. If a hole has a bogey 5, it is meant that the player should

reach the green in three strokes, and should then have two left for his putting; if the bogey is 3 he should be on the green with his tee shot and then have two strokes left for putts. Such is the simple mathematical reckoning of the business, yet even in these days, when so much more attention is given to putting than was once the case, very few golfers seem to reflect seriously that it is literally half the game, and that they have twice as many putts—and alas! sometimes more—as drives in the course of the round, and that therefore bad putting at a hole costs twice as much as bad driving, and that excellent putting is far more remunerative than the very finest play with the wooden clubs. When at last you are on the green you may indeed gain a whole stroke at once, and it is the stroke that tells. Therefore, unless a man can absolutely depend upon himself, it is surely better to practise a little self-denial in driving with the resultant advantage of keeping straight, and after all very little is gained by even the longest driving over good average driving.

"When I began to study putting I realised that it embraced two chief essentials which, once mastered, made it comparatively easy. The first is that the ball should be made to travel in the proper line for the hole, and the second that just sufficient strength should be put into the stroke as to ensure the ball reaching the hole with so very little to spare that there should be no danger of its running much past. Anyone can be taught with practise how to putt the ball straight to the hole, but he cannot be given a hint of value as to how to putt with the proper strength. This is chiefly a matter of instinct. Nearly every man has his own style of putting, and I have great

hesitation in advising special methods; for if a man is a good putter, as putters go, it will very likely be best for him to keep to the style which he may have come upon by accident. One must not be dogmatic about putting, as one may be about the methods of driving, for there is far more liberty allowable in the case of the former. However, there appear to be some chief principles adherence to which is very helpful.



MR. TRAVIS in 1917.

"The question of stance is important, although in the same day you do not often see two players adopt exactly the same stance when they are putting. Some will putt off the right leg, and some off the left. My own

belief is that the right leg is the better. Now I consider that in putting nearly everything depends on the correct action of the wrists. The body does not enter into the consideration at all, for the simple reason that here there should be no body movement whatever. The body should be absolutely motionless while the putt is being made, and when it is not so the chances of the putt being a failure are far greater than they would otherwise be. Putting, I consider, should always be done with one hand—with one hand actively at work I mean. The left hand should be restricted to swinging the clubhead backwards preparatory to making the stroke. Its work is then really finished, and thenceforth the right hand should be the sole master of the situation, the left being merely kept in company with it for steadying purposes. The gain in accuracy is very great when only one hand is employed in this manner. When two hands are at work on either a short putt or a long one there is a tendency towards distraction. At the time the stroke is being

made the grip of the right hand should be firm, but not tight; and after impact the head of the club should be allowed to pass clean through with an easy following stroke. I think that the follow-through should be as long as it is possible to make it without straining it, and, with this object in view, I suggest that, at the moment of striking the ball, the grip of the fingers of the left hand should be considerably relaxed in order that the right hand may go on doing its work without the slightest interference from the other. Many players hit or jerk the ball, and this is bad. There is nothing that pays so well on the green as the easy follow-through stroke. And the best of putting maxims is the oldest of them all, namely: 'Never up, never in.' "

Here is the philosophy and the practise also, and their merits have been proved. For the future we shall watch with a special interest how Mr. Travis makes holes for himself and others to play at; he has played so well, and with so much success the holes that others made.

