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HUMOROUS SIDE OF GOLF



TO HAVE a ready wit is an excellent trait, but a still better possession is a keen sense of humor. There are far fewer people in the world who prefer to laugh than groan over untoward incidents, and it is greatly to be regretted, for in this case the minority have distinctly right upon their side. Life is short, and those who possess the faculty of seeing the comic in the struggle for existence are never at a loss for amusement. They invariably grasp the funny side of every situation and this quality stands them in good stead in important crises, as from constantly taking a light view of affairs they see them in their true proportion and are not always on the alert to detect and resent imaginary slights and rebuffs. To preserve a calm equanimity is to suffer far less from the minor worries of life.

In games it is very necessary to be able to view matters from a humorous standpoint. Golf especially is so serious in itself and brings so many difficulties and cares in its train that the only resource left is to treat it as lightly as possible. Missed shots bring such heavy penalties on the head of the unfortunate player and missed putts have such a demoralizing effect that were he not able to treat them as an ever-recurring jest he would be completely weighed down with sadness. Every one can see at a glance how wretched and miserable a golfer becomes when off his game, and there is no more lamentable spectacle than those who are dependent on golf for their sole interest in life. The chief difficulty appears to be that one can very readily see the laughable side of an opponent's mistakes, grasp at once the amusing weaknesses of his disposition and catch the humorous points in his game, yet when it comes to our own turn the case appears totally different. Similar results somehow wear a different aspect and it is hard to realize that one may present an equally funny appearance.

THE RIVAL OF THE FISH TALE.

Golf lends itself to laughable incidents and the vagaries of some players are most amusing. Fortunately for their own peace of mind they become so absorbed in the game that they are quite unconscious of the spectacle they present. It has lately been the fashion, and the humorous artists have revelled in it, to decry and satirize the "Golf Girl." Amusing sketches are given of her various attitudes and costumes and altogether she is held up to ridicule, but surely it is better that she should fall unconsciously into these natural positions than that she should adopt a stiff self-conscious style, playing constantly, as it were, to the gallery. Golfers are not more enthusiastic than "devotees" of other sports. Every game has its own faithful band of followers who talk and think principally about that game and take a superlative interest in everything connected with it.

Golf stories are occasionally most amusing and rival fishing tales in the way

of veracity. They are usually about wonderful deeds done in past rounds on the links, but sometimes they are of a more general character. The following is rather a good story illustrating the ignorance of the general public with regard to golfing terms. The incident occurred in a large hotel at a well known resort. One of the players wished to know if she could get nails put in her shoes at the clubmaker's shop close by, or if she would have to take them into town. She asked at the office and was referred to the hall porter, who in the most solemn way replied, "Oh yes, miss, certainly miss, you can get them put in down there at the shop where they repairs caddies and them things." Golf certainly must have a difficult phraseology for outsiders to understand, but all "shop" talk is very much the same, crucially interesting to the initiated and dull in the extreme for those who do not understand the subject in question. The humorous side of golf is seen at its best during a large open meeting where players from all directions are collected together, and spectators assemble to watch the matches. Few people realize how dangerous it is to discuss the appearance, personal history, dress, character and other matters of interest connected with the players while following the match. Some one near at hand is sure to be a relation or any rate a friend, and it depends upon the listener's sense of humor whether he or she is deeply aggrieved and ready to demand satisfaction, or whether he or she is only amused.

WILD CONFUSION.

The final round of the open ladies' championship meeting played at Troon was most productive of amusing incidents. At the time it was terrible, too terrible for words, but looking back at it from a distance makes it appear in a different light and some of the incidents were very funny. The rabble was perfectly dreadful and every one seemed to have gone demented for the time being. Directly the players hit their balls there was a wild stampede and they were swept away and overwhelmed in the mad rush. Round the greens a solid block of people about 20 or 30 deep took up their positions, and through this phalanx the players and their caddies had to be forced, the council of the club and Union officials acting as a sort of battering ram and bodyguard. Every now and again a pause would ensue as one of the caddies had disappeared, until after the lapse of a few minutes a breathless struggling figure would be shot out on to the green and the game would be renewed again. Neither of the finalists could see the other play, and neither could have the least idea as to how they stood with regard to strokes.

At each hole they had to wait in patience until the green was reached and then find out whether one was playing the odd or the like or the other perchance two more. The onlookers were also put to unusual straits. Some plied their fists and umbrellas with great vigor to secure a standpoint from which to see the game,