

Eminent Golfers.

VIII.—DOUGLAS ROLLAND.

The writer of the present paper, who may be appropriately described in legal language as a "domiciled Scotsman," is compelled to start with a confession, to admit that he harbours an almost personal grievance, and is prone to entertain somewhat rancorous feelings towards the secretary, the very capable secretary of Limpsfield Chart Golf Club, in Surrey. These regrettable sentiments are mainly inspired by the success this gentleman has met with in securing the services of J. E. Douglas Stewart Rolland as his green-keeper, and thus monopolising for a southern green a player equalled by few, and certainly excelled by none, one whose play it is at all times a perfect treat to witness. It is, however, in the nature of a melancholy satisfaction to learn that, although this player has deserted the greens of his native country, and his Scotch admirers know him no more, the value of his example, the advantages of his coaching are to the full appreciated by his present employers. Some eight or nine years or so have elapsed since he began to come into anything like general notice, although, as a matter of course, his merits were well known in the village of Elie, or Earlsferry, his native place. It so happened that about that time Jack Simpson, also a native of Elie, and a subsequent winner of the open championship, was at the height of his game, and Rolland and he were in the habit of playing together continually. Nothing much, however, was known of either of them away from their own green, and the first notice strangers had was the intimation that these two would be glad to play any two amateurs of the Royal and Ancient at St. Andrews.

Accordingly a foursome was arranged, and Messrs. Leslie Balfour and Horace Hutchinson were the selected champions of the latter club. The play exhibited by the challengers was a revelation. Jack Simpson was to the full as fine a player as Rolland himself, even if he was not, as the latter inclined to think, a trifle better, and the driving shown by these two simply pulverised their opponents, who never had a chance from start to finish. It happened to be blowing a heavy gale of wind, which exactly suited the play of the strangers, and, as an instance of their great power, an episode may be given which occurred at the very first hole. The gale was of such strength that Messrs. Balfour and his partner could not cross the burn at the third shot, although they had had three very good drives, and it fell to Jack Simpson to play the like. He called for his cleek, whereupon a spectator, himself a first-rate player, and excellent judge of the game remarked: "I should have thought a man who can drive like that would have risked the burn." With but a three-quarter shot with his cleek, he laid the ball within a few feet of the hole. This particular round was finished in 89, which, considering the day, was an extraordinarily fine performance, but it should be added that their putting was scandalously bad. Neither the one nor the other appeared to have the most rudimentary idea of how to hole a ball out, and time after time, after reaching the green by magnificent driving and approaching, an extra stroke was almost sure to be required, unless the ball was absolutely dead. But, as the late Mr. James Mansfield remarked in the course of the play, "with driving of that description you can afford a deal of slackness in the short game."

The star of Rolland had now risen somewhat above the horizon, and was further augmented in lustre by the result of a challenge thrown out by the many admirers of Mr. John Ball, the late champion. This was a fine sporting match, with nothing very much depending upon it but honour and glory, but notwithstanding this it evoked much interest in the golfing world. A home-and-home match was agreed upon, and on a stormy day in the autumn the first instalment of the match was played at Elie. Here again the noticeable characteristic

was the exceedingly fine driving, accompanied by worse than execrable putting upon both sides—putt after putt of a club length was missed, in fact it came rather as a surprise when either player managed to hole one; still, as in the foursome at St. Andrews, the magnificent long game and approaching by Rolland enabled him to make very good scores each round. He gained a great advantage on his own green, and was able to carry away with him nine holes to Hoylake, where it was thought that Mr. Ball, being considered as he was, all but invincible when at home, might be able to diminish somewhat the commanding lead of his antagonist. As it turned out, however, he was unable to do this, and in lieu thereof fell yet further astern; so Rolland carried off all the honours of war, and was generously complimented by the Hoylake golfers on his brilliant and successful performance. The next day a sort of supplementary match was arranged between the two, and this also Rolland pulled off. At this time he was still an amateur, and came very near winning the open championship in 1884, before he joined the professional ranks. His friend, Jack Simpson, however, proved too good for him; but he was in front of everybody else, excepting W. Fernie, with whom he tied at 164 over Prestwick, on a very windy day. Some of his drives astonished the *habitués* of that green, as well they might, but he threw away his chance by some rather poor iron shots, repeatedly taking four to hole off that club, which as Mr. Hutchinson once remarked, is a champion way of losing a match,

and the remark applies with added force to the losing of medals also. In 1884 he abandoned his amateur status, and three years later accepted the charge of the Malvern green. At the opening of the Sandwich green he appeared to great advantage, winning the prize for the best aggregate score at that meeting, and failing to win the tournament only by a single putt, after a halved match with Archie Simpson. In a professional tournament at Westward Ho! in 1889, he was quite the hero of the week, and won two important competitions, one a tournament by holes, and the other an aggregate scoring competition of two rounds. At this time his driving, always good, had become altogether too much for his co-professionals. All of the class are of course long drivers, otherwise they would be unable to rank as they do—but it was doubtless a new sensation to many of them to be so far passed from off the tee as to make a very material difference.



Yet it was obvious that there were holes, the first for instance, which Rolland could get to with a drive and a cleek, while others could not reach the green under two wooden club shots and an iron. Then again at the seventeenth hole, his tremendous power enabled him to get absolutely home in two drives, whereas for everybody else it was two and an iron. These are two good instances of the great advantage his extra long driving conferred; it meant of course a stroke, but whatever the length of hole, though the difference is not so marked, there remains by so much the less to be done, a putter in the hand instead of an iron, a short pitch instead of a full cleek-shot. Then the moral effect is by no means inconsiderable; few long drivers relish the sensation of being habitually passed by a long distance; anything up to 10 yards is not material, but the more that distance is increased the more serious do matters become—pressing is apt to ensue with its attendant evils, the play becomes incoherent, and disintegration anon complete. It is not so easy to account for this exceptional driving power possessed by one man; the writer has elsewhere remarked that Rolland's trade was that of a stonemason, and suggested the inference that the habitual use of the mason's mallet must develop to a large extent the muscles in the forearm which are called into play. But against this must be set the fact that other stonemasons play Golf; the writer knows lots of them, and first-rate players too, but they don't drive so far as Rolland. Physically, he is splendidly proportioned; none with observation but must notice it, and withal he belongs, to quote a recent writer, to the race of "gentle giants." His imperturbable good

temper and patience are invaluable to him at Golf; he is not one who is easily put off his game by "agencies outside the match," good luck and bad he takes as philosophically as a Stoic, being well matched in this respect with the imperturbable Willie Park, junr. Apart from his golfing powers, he has, owing to his sterling qualities, been extremely popular wherever he has settled down. A good instance of this is furnished by the writer quoted above, who informs us that one Monday morning golfers perceived that on one of the Malvern putting-greens there had been traced the legend, in letters of pitch, "D.R. is a man." He adds his opinion, with which most will agree, that the Sunday leisure of the caddies might have been spent in a worse way. His best round at Malvern was 71 for the eighteen holes, his best at the present green 74, while in a match against Hunter the professional at Forest Row, he established a record of 73, and this although he had only once before played over that course. In style, while not graceful with the grace, say, of the late Davie Strath, he is yet even more attractive to watch by reason of the intense power manifested; standing straight up to his ball he swings tolerably swiftly, but has developed a well marked pause at the end of it, which certainly goes far to ensure the application of force to the best advantage. Many men can drive well going down wind, and some few are better against it, but Rolland is particularly good either way. If he can be said to excel in the use of any one club where all are such trusty servants to him, that one is the cleek—in all probability he is quite the longest cleek driver now living. If he has a weakness, it is one which would make some difference to anybody else, one for which a famous ex-champion (on whose name be peace) would be loth to chide him, a weakness we all experience at times; so let us find no fault, but rather remember that,

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind."

H. S. C. EVERARD.

"Naughty little cuss words,
Such as "hang" and "blow,"
Quite as much as wuss words
Fill the place below!"

THE MAKING OF CLUB SHAFTS.

Messrs. Buchanan and Co. (late of Musselburgh), Golf club and ball and fishing rod manufacturers, Braid Road, Edinburgh, have just patented a turning and tapering machine for Golf club shafts, and we have received two for testing purposes, one finished ready to fix on the head, the other just as it leaves the machine. Mr. Buchanan entered the golfing trade in 1878, and lately he has taken premises in 5, Balcarres Street, Edinburgh, and fitted them up with all the latest improvements in machinery, at a cost of over £500. The firm employs over twelve hands in the making of every requisite for Golf. They also make their own cleek and iron heads, and also cut the wood from the tree, so that they always have a good stock of well-seasoned material at hand. At present they have 30,000 shafts of the best quality in stock. The hickory shafts are beautifully finished. The machinery appears to do its work most thoroughly and effectively. The so-called unfinished shaft taken from the machine is so smooth and complete that it only needs a rub with sand-paper and the leather grip fixed to make it complete. To the large club-makers, who are pressed with orders for early execution, these machine-made shafts ought to come as a welcome relief, because they simplify labour and enable stock to be sensibly increased without deterioration in quality.

Vol. II. of GOLF Now Ready.

PRICE 6s.

Index and Covers, 3s.

(Continued from page 123.)

FIRST LANARK R.V. (GLASGOW) GOLF CLUB.

The monthly competition for the medal presented by Col. Paul took place on the course at Yorkhill, on Saturday. The weather was very foggy, and the play took place under considerable difficulties. There was a small turn out, and the scoring was high. The results were:—

	Gross.	Hcp.	Net.		Gross.	Hcp.	Net.
Mr. F. W. Arthur	91	24	67	Mr. W. E. Griffin	77	8	69
Mr. J. A. Grant	...	72	4 68				

FORFARSHIRE.

The Montrose Ladies' Golf Club is at present in a highly flourishing condition, the membership roll being large, and including many able exponents of the Royal and Ancient game. The Ladies' course is laid out to the south of the Royal Albert Club-house, and although the holes are short, there is, between whins, hillocks, and other hazards, ample opportunity for a skilful player obtaining an advantage over the proverbial "duffer," while the turf at the greens is unequalled on any course. The last competition for the season was played on Thursday, the 29th ult., when the following started to play for the gold and silver medals and gold bracelet:—Miss Lizzie Lyell and Miss Lowson; Miss More Gordon; Miss Rosie Millar and Miss Louisa Millar; Mrs. Muir and Mrs. R. H. Millar; Miss Millar and Miss Paton; Mrs. Smyth and Miss Cruickshank; Miss Mabel Smith and Miss J. Smith; Mrs. Lyell and Miss Lyell; Miss Renny-Tailyour and Mrs. Dundas; Miss Watson and Miss A. Watson; Mrs. Stone and Miss J. Woodward; Miss Burness and Miss Collier.

On the cards being handed in, it was found that the gold and silver medals had been tied for by Mrs. R. H. Millar and Miss Watson at 114. In order to decide the tie the two ladies had to play a single round, when Mrs. Millar came in with the record score of 50, against Miss Watson's 55. Mrs. Millar thus won the gold medal, while Miss Watson secured the silver medal. Miss Watson also gained the gold bracelet for the best single score, she having in the competition for the medals, apart from the tie, done the round at 54. The next best scores were:—Miss Paton, 119; Miss F. Burness, 121; Miss A. Watson, 122; Miss J. Woodward and Mrs. Smyth, 124; Mrs. Stone and Mrs. Muir, 125; Mrs. Dundas, 126; and Mrs. Lyell, 127.

The members of the Monifieth Club held a competition on Saturday last for club prizes and sweepstakes. The weather was favourable for good play, and some excellent scores were recorded. Fifty players entered, and the prizes were gained as follows:—First class: Scratch, tie between Mr. David Robertson and Mr. David Dargie, both 82; average, first, second, third, and fourth sweepstakes, tied for by Mr. David Dargie, 82; Mr. James C. Burns, 87; Mr. Alexander Simpson, 89; and Mr. David D. Smith, 90, all being 1 above. Second class: Scratch, tie between Mr. David Smyton and Mr. George Pearson, both 89; average and first sweepstake, Mr. John Johnston, 90, 5 below; second and third, tie between Mr. David Smyton, 89, and Mr. R. B. Cowan, 91, both 3 below; fourth, Mr. George Pearson, 89, 2 below. Third class: Scratch, Mr. James M'Intosh; average and first sweepstakes, Mr. George Smart, 108, 7 below; second, Mr. James M'Intosh, 106, 5 below; third, Mr. Thomas Douglas, 107, 1 below. The following were below 90, but failed to find a place in the prize list:—Mr. William Young, 84; Messrs. George Wright and Alex. Hutcheson, 85; Messrs. David Dempster and David L. Low, 86; Mr. Thomas Brimer, 87; and Mr. John R. Fairweather, 89.

At Monifieth Links, on Saturday, the medal competition of the Dundee Advertiser Club took place, when there was a large turn-out of players. The scratch prize in the first class was won by Mr. James Melville with a score of 88. The next best scores were:—Mr. W. St. I, 89; Mr. John Inglis, 94; Mr. John Macrae, 96; Mr. Robert Dunn, 97; Mr. Thomas Knox, 97; Mr. Arthur Forsyth, 97; and Mr. John Brown, 99. Mr. James Duirs was the winner of the medal in the second class, and the third-class medal was won by Mr. A. Garland.

The members of the Montrose Mechanics' Golf Club held a competition on Saturday last for their silver cross and money prizes. The trophy was won by Mr. J. Smith at 98, 1 above, while the other prize-winners were:—Mr. G. Jarvis, 96, 3 above; Mr. D. Black, 98, 7 above; Mr. J. Leggat, 94, 9 above; Mr. D. Rogers, 111, 11 above; and A. M'Lean, 107, 11 above.

The Dalhousie Club have announced a series of six handicap matches to be played monthly at Carnoustie on the second Saturday of each month, commencing on Saturday next, the 14th inst. These matches should be of great assistance to the management in handicapping, and they will, no doubt, be well supported. Simultaneously, the usual optional competitions take place.

NORTH BRITISH AND MERCANTILE GOLF CLUB.—The monthly medal competitions held by the members of this club during the past season resulted in a tie between Messrs. R. Y. Martin and C. M. Henderson, both having secured the honour twice. The tie was played off over the Braids course, when Mr. C. M. Henderson proved the winner, which entitles him to the gold charm presented by the club.