



MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSES

NOTICE that you have been giving a good deal of attention of late—and very properly so—to the ancient and royal game of Golf. You have been telling us especially how much they play Golf in the breezy and spacious West, where the holes should all be long and wide and deep. But, in any article on Golf in Canada, we are bound to find pictures of the luxurious club-house, and all the evidences that, with us, Golf is usually an expensive and exclusive sport. What I take my pen in hand for to-day is to ask why it should not be in Canada—as it is in many American and British cities—a poor man's sport as well. There is no reason in the world why a man, whose finances will not permit him to join a club, should not be allowed to get the health and enjoyment which Golf brings—especially to the middle-aged.

IN many American and British cities, they have what are called municipal Golf Courses. That is, they have fine eighteen-hole courses kept in order by the municipalities, and which are absolutely free to any man who chooses to present himself to the "caddy-master" with a bag of clubs and ask permission to play. So popular are they that often the man desiring a game must put up his name in advance, when he is given an hour at which he must drive off the first "tee"; and, if he is not there he loses his game. The official in charge starts off the pairs of players in quick succession behind each other, two minutes between each pair; and, on holidays, there is not a spare place on the course. Now this all means that there must be thousands of men who would like to play Golf, but do not belong to any club. Under our exclusive system, they could not play at all. Under the better system prevailing in the United Kingdom and the United States, they may play frequently on a capitably-kept course, with no expense to themselves save for any balls they may lose.

SURELY this is an excellent thing. I do not so much demand free golf for the young—though it is a fine game for them, and one which they will be glad in after-life that they took up while still susceptible to instruction. But the young will usually get exercise in some form. There are plenty of things they can do, at little expense, which keep them in form. But when middle age comes on, then all the more violent forms of play are removed from the list of possibilities. Only the most imaginative can keep up with any regularity the practice of walking for walking's sake. The dull-witted find walking a very dull "sport." At such a point in a man's career, Golf comes as God-send. It gives him an interest in walking; and keeps him at it long after he would have jumped on the street-car were he consciously taking a "constitutional." Men who could not walk half an hour along a street without feeling very tired, and who never dream of walking to their offices or from them, will trudge for three or four hours up hill and down dale after an illusive, exasperating, contrary-minded and wickedly perverse golf-ball.

ALL this is splendid for the middle-aged. They pump fresh air into their lungs—open their skins to a copious perspiration—send the blood racing through their veins—and wind up with all the joys of a shower-bath; and all without the smallest feeling of doing something for their health. The state of their health never crosses their minds. They are gloriously absorbed in playing an engrossing game, and their spirits are at the pitch they knew when as boys they "ran bases" or plumped a ball on goal. The years have fallen from their rounded shoulders; and they are in their 'teens again. They have forgotten stocks and markets and judicial rulings and microbes and "scoups" and all the stupid things which concern the middle-aged when they are most conscious of their infirmity; and are thinking only of how inspiring a thrill came up the shaft of their club when they got that clean shot off the "tee"—or, perhaps, marveling with in-

dignant astonishment at the perversity with which their "brassie" will "top" to-day.

I WOULD not dare write this way about Golf being a game for the middle-aged if my "nom-de-plume" were not impervious. Some husky Golfer from whose jubilant mind a good "drive" had just driven—with the ball—the date of his birth, might remonstrate with me with his "niblick." But it is true all the same that it is to the middle-aged that Golf brings its most valuable gift. And that is why I should like to see all middle-aged people—women as well as men—enjoying the magnificent franchise of the "links." It is not that Golf really costs so very much. It is only that people who have not played it imagine that it must. It involves belonging to a Club—something with which many worthy people have no experience, and so imagine to be a

New Books and Their Authors

ARNOLD BENNETT is not the only Britisher who dared to tackle the task of writing about America. "America as I Saw It" is a new offering of the Macmillan Company of New York. It is by Mrs. E. Alec-Tweedie, and if it is to be judged by the standard of this author's other works, it will justify the publishers' claim that it is "a witty book by a witty woman." Mrs. Alec-Tweedie has done much in the world of letters. "America as I Saw It" is really a collection of articles which she wrote for the New York "Times." She has some appreciative and some critical things to say about America, and she says them well.

The Musson Book Company's list of fall fiction is as attractive as it is varied. Mr. Hall Caine's new book, "The Woman Thou Gavest Me"; David Grayson's "Friendly Road" (which, when published in the "American Magazine," created such a furore); a love story, "The Coryston Family," by that distinguished Englishwoman, Mrs. Humphrey Ward; Rex Beach's latest work, "The Iron Trail," and "Passionate Friends," by H. G. Wells, are a few of the notable items, so far as fiction is concerned. The complete poetical works of Pauline Johnson, two of Arthur Christopher Benson's collections of essays, and Mr. Bennett's "Plain Man and His Wife" are among their list of miscellaneous works. Musson's list looks mighty attractive.

Perhaps the two books of most interest to Canadians are "The Shanty Man," by W. W. McCuaig, and "A Century of Sail and Steam on the Niagara River." The former of these is described by the publishers as "the new a la Drummond book." Mr. McCuaig, a retired clergyman, was a close companion of the late Mr. Drummond, and on many occasions accompanied him and gave recitations of selections from Drummond's poems, and frequently intermingled with Drummond's selections poems of his own.

Everybody who knew the "Daily News" (which is now merged in the "Daily News and Leader") will be familiar with the brilliant writings of its editor, Mr. A. C. Gardiner. As the editor of the largest English Liberal daily, Gardiner has become a household word with the thinking public in England. His latest work, "Pillars of Society," is published by Nisbet & Company. It is a collection of studies. Among the men and women who figure in the book may be mentioned Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Kitchener, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. H. G. Wells, Madame Sarah Bernhardt, Lord Fisher, Dr. Woodrow Wilson, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, and many others of equal note.

Another notable work from the same house is "Phiz and Dickens," by Edgar Browne, the son of "Phiz," who so brilliantly illustrated Dickens's work. This book contains many hitherto unpublished drawings and letters relating to Hablot Browne and Dickens, and many sidelights on early Victorian times by Edgar Browne, the son of "Phiz." The names of Tennyson, Thackeray, Leigh Hunt, Ainsworth, and others flit across the pages, and the whole volume is full of the most interesting and absorbing literary reminiscences.

"The Double Life of Mr. Alfred Burton," by E. Phillips Oppenheim. The latest product of Mr. Oppenheim's fertile brain is a sort of Jack-and-the-Beanstalk yarn brought up to date. An auctioneer's clerk happens upon an ancient Egyptian shrub, the fruit of which is in the form of a small bean. If

great extravagance—and the purchase of a small outfit. Then Golf-balls run to something. So the unknown keeps many a careful-living man and woman away from the game.

OF course, they make a mistake. Golf need cost but little—a mere trifle when its benefits are weighed against it. But this is all the more reason why the municipality should undertake the small expense of keeping up a municipal Golf course for the benefit of every citizen who desires to play. The land can be got well out of the city limits; and so need not cost much. A convenient club-house would not be very expensive, and ought to be pretty nearly self-supporting by the rent of lockers, the buying of refreshments and possibly even meals. The upkeep of the course would be the only steady outlay; and we should save that in the lessened civic expenditure on hospitals. That is not a joke. A gentleman was telling me the other day that the statistical tables, on which the British army and navy offices have for centuries based their grants for pensions to retired officers of both services, have become useless and obsolete since the recent popularity of Golf. Before Golf came in, these officers died off quickly after retirement through sheer inaction. Now they all play Golf and "live forever"—at the expense of their grateful country.

THE MONOCLE MAN.

anyone eats a bean, he immediately "sees the things of Life and Death as they are" and is able to see and say and think and do things only in strict accord with the truth. An auctioneer's clerk is the last person to want to be in this position. But Alfred Burton eats a bean and is changed from a roystering, swaggering, vulgar "nut" to a man whose tastes are only for the good, the beautiful and the true.

The book is a series of incidents, some gay, some more or less grave. It is well written in every sense, and while it is by no means the author's best work, it is still Oppenheim, and that is good enough recommendation. (Toronto: McClelland & Goodchild. \$1.25 net.)

"General John Regan," by George A. Birmingham. I thought Doctor Whitty, in the book of that name by the same author, was the limit in fun-making, but he has nothing on Doctor O'Grady, the principal character in this new book. A rich American astonishes a sleepy Irish village one day by asking them why they haven't a statue to General John Regan, who, the American says, was born in that village. Doctor O'Grady, instead of professing ignorance of any such hero as General John Regan, makes up information about him and bluffs the whole village into erecting a statue. Then he bluffs the Lord-Lieutenant at Dublin and nearly succeeds in getting him to come and unveil the statue. The situations are ludicrous, and the book scintillates with the fresh bubbling wit of an Irishman.

The surprising feature of the story is its simplicity. It is merely a collection of happenings which are quite natural and—shall we say it?—quite usual. But told as George A. Birmingham can tell a story, they become a classic. When you feel blue, invest a dollar and a quarter in "General John Regan" and laugh with and at a humorist who is not only funny but clever and captivating, which is more than can be said for many humorists. (Toronto: Hodder & Stoughton. \$1.25 net.)

"Fatima," by Rowland Thomas. Every boy—and a good many girls—love the old stories which are grouped together in a book called "Arabian Nights." Mr. Thomas has written a new Arabian Night, a new tale of the East. It is delightful in its quaintness. Fatima, who combines all the graces and charms of every kind of modern heroine, marries a fool. But she isn't satisfied with a fool for a husband, so she goes to the big city and there fools many wise men. But there is one that she cannot fool, and the tale of her vain efforts is the story Mr. Thomas has to tell. For Fatima, clever as she is, finds a match in the Beloved One, and after giving her pride and her honour, so that she may be able to boast of her cunning and her cleverness, finds herself tasting of dead sea fruit. Poor Fatima! But just when you pity her most you find out that she has only dreamed all this about her visit to the big city and its dire consequences, and that she has never left her husband, the fool. So you put your handkerchief back into your pocket and puff out your chest and say you knew all the time it was a dream. But you didn't... really. The author tells his story too cleverly.

This book is a change from the ordinary novel, and a welcome change. It is clever and, in the main, well written, though I think Fatima might have wondered to have heard herself described as "gazelly." But perhaps that is the more literal translation! (Toronto: McClelland & Goodchild. \$1.25 net.)

A. PAPERKNIFE.