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steeple." Fortunately the unequal combat did not come off, as the man realized he had interrupted a "competition," instead of breaking up a band of young ragamuffins larking on his best green, and made a gruff apology, ever afterwards treating Jimmy as one of the privileged. Indeed, Sandy Grant, the keeper, freely said he would back wee Jimmie Maclean with his dirty brown gutta against any player on the links old or young.

This opinion of Sandy's had become so rooted a conviction by the time our story opens, that he, along with some of Jimmie's old gentleman friends, persuaded the lad to allow himself to be entered for the great annual competition for the cup which (with badge) is presented by one of the city magnates to the champion of the short-hole courses.

Jimmie was not a romantic figure; in fact, the very reverse—a shabby little man of a boy with a queer old-looking face, which would have been plain but for the unmistakable character stamped upon it; the mouth rather large but firm, the jaw square and just escaping coarseness, the nose a quaint little stub of a thing, set over a deep upper lip, and with an upward tendency toward the tip. The eyes, however, were his redeeming feature; small and somewhat far apart, they were bright and sharp as a bird's, and withal had a good-natured twinkle lurking in their corners. Short and square, he looked as if he had at some time been taller and for some reason had had a portion sawed off him. His clothes had seen better days when in the keeping of their original owner, who very evidently had not been of the same pattern as their present wearer. Longish legs finished off with the boots a size or two too big for the feet they enclosed, the trousers turned up, and a Balmoral bonnet on his close-cropped head made up the exterior of Jimmie. He was, however, full of golfing experience and crammed full of golfing proverbs, cool and deliberate in word and action; his nerves from the toning they had had in the fresh air, being under proper control, the only quick thing about him being those sharp, observant grey eyes. Most of the competitors knew Jimmie and respected him as a caddie, but, along with the stewards, looked somewhat askance at him as an entrant in the great tournament.

The ties were played in the evenings, or at such times as suited the various competitors; for here, if anywhere, the democratic character of golf is demonstrated to the full. The competitors are drawn not only from the "cleek clubs" of Brunsfield Links—whose members are mostly artisans, etc.—but also from the young "bloods" of many well-known Edinburgh golf clubs. The young man who was drawn against Jimmie in the first round belonged to one of the latter, so he knew not the prowess of the caddie, and from the height of his faultless rig-out looked rather contemptuously down on the uncouth lad with whom he was drawn to play. Rather ostentatiously and somewhat patronizingly did he toss a shilling in the air to decide which should have the "honor"; but when that first piece of luck fell to Jimmie and he produced the polished brown gutta ball, it was with the utmost difficulty that he retained his well-bred sang-froid.

The first hole, however, set at rest all qualms he might have had at playing such an antagonist, as Jimmie did not even give him a chance to halve it. So with the next, and the next, but at the fourth some would-be wag in the crowd called out in derision to Jimmie to lift his "Haskell" as it "wasna" fair; just as he was about to play his third, upsetting him so much that he overran the disc, thereby losing the hole. The grey eyes looked like steel for a moment or two, and the only other visible sign was a tightening of the lips and a squaring of the shoulders; but Jimmie's partner, flushing up both red and hot, addressed the offender in language both forcible and graphic. This incident seemed, curiously enough, to bridge over the social gap between the competitors, who on the instant became friends, paying all the respect and consideration which one player can so subtly show for another in this most sensitive of games. The contest finished on the fourteenth green, when Jimmie stood five up and four to play.

The brown gutta and its quaint master fought their way through to the semi-final, from which they emerged victoriously very comfortably by three up and two to play, to the great delight of the large crowd which followed the game, and who had unanimously elected Jimmie as first favorite.

Three days intervened between this tie and the final struggle. Jimmie passed his time pretty much as usual, carrying clubs here or on the Braids as opportunity offered, with practice games in between. The day before the great event, however, he spent almost entirely in the club shop of old McEwen, talking over the game in all its possible bearings, or listening to the old man's stories of how Young Tom, or some other great "gouffer," had won his title on the last green. The old man's advice was summed up very tersely thus: "Keep a cool head, ma laddie, gang canny, dinna press, and tak tent tae yer puttin'."

So the great day dawned at last, and it was with eager, anxious gaze that Jimmie examined the heavens to see if by any means he might drag the secret of the weather from them. Edina, Scotia's darling city, being a beauty, has all a beauty's capricious whims, and has especially a trick of veiling her charms in a curtain of cold wet mist, even after a glorious summer morning. On this beautiful June day, however, no traces of mist or rain showed themselves, the sky was serene and the links were in perfect condition for play. So it wore on till late afternoon, when the crowds began to make their way to the links, to witness the play in the final Short Holes Championship.

Although Jimmie had long been familiar with the sight of the crowd, the policemen regulating and controlling the great human tide, the stewards with their ropes to prevent the people from pressing too closely upon the players, the markers, the city magnates and other officials connected with the tournament, he could not help feeling nervous as, from his mother's window, he watched them all gathering. He felt very much inclined to run and hide instead of facing all that throng of critical and curious people, but his mother encouraged him with cheering words and laughingly pushed him from the house, saying he was not to return without the Cup.

When the contestants met at the first tee they presented a striking contrast in years as well as in appearance. The other finalist was a tall, robust young man—an artisan evidently, well-dressed, well fed and wholesome-looking. His golfing gear was as well appointed as himself, clean, bright and fairly new. Jimmie was in his only suit of well-worn clothes, the trousers baggy and turned up at the foot, the long jacket discolored by constant exposure, but withal he had such an unconscious air and spoke so frankly and respectfully to the officials and his opponent, that the hearts of all those hundreds went out to the lad and wished him well. Jimmie's student friend, who had opposed him in the first round, acted caddie to him in this, carrying his old-fashioned-looking "golfing tackle."

Fortunate in the "toss," Jimmie had to lead off, and the crowd could scarce repress a laugh as he turned up his sleeves at the wrists, dived into his trousers' pocket and produced the brown gutta. It is one thing to play with the links to yourself and the greens quite clear, but an entirely different matter to play with a wall of human beings stretching from tee to green. True, the ropes held them in check, and they were accustomed from long use to remain perfectly still and quiet, but the faces all turned towards the players and the eager craning of necks, the countless pairs of eyes, all combine to have an effect upon the inexperienced player, disconcerting and unnerving him. Such seemed to be Jimmie's feeling as "his first" was short of the green, and his more experienced antagonist making no mistake, he had to play "the odd." The hole went to the tall young man, to the evident disappointment of the crowd. However, the youngster braced himself for the next, driving away the fear he had of playing into the crowd and, maybe, hurting some one. Albeit he could only claim a half, and the same again at the third, but at the fourth he drew level. The crowd felt relieved, and Jimmie's caddie spoke encouragingly to him for the first time.

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