

**THE GOLFING
PILGRIM ON
MANY LINKS**

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The Golfing Pilgrim on Many Links by Horace G. Hutchinson

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HORACE G. HUTCHINSON

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ON MANY LINKS

BY
HORACE G. HUTCHINSON

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THE PROLOGUE

FELLOW-PILGRIMS

IF any golfer ever reads the "Pilgrim's Progress," it is scarcely possible for him to help regretting that John Bunyan was not a golfer. There, at hand, or beneath his feet, would have been found such a wealth of allegory. Even the poor ordinary golfer, who has given names to the features of links, has seemed inspired with some small measure of his genius. At the "long hole going out," do we not struggle on to the blessed "Elysian Fields" after cruel peril of "that parlously named bunker Hell," in which lurk monsters of many shapes, from Giant Despair to Apollyon the Destroyer? But the imagery has not been half exhausted. That very company to which John Bunyan introduces us, do we not meet them all, and recognise them as old friends upon the links? Who does not know, only too well, Mr Talkative—talkative in season and out of season, on the stroke, and in the club? Who has not laughed in cruel triumph, with Mr Faint-heart as his opponent? And who

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has not cursed him, by all the gods of Golf, when mated with him as a partner. And Feeble-mind, and Presumption and Simple, do we not know them all? We only wish we could catch the last-named a little more often. And there is Mr Obstinate and Mr Pliable, and the "man with the muck-rake" or putter, who goes crawling round all the bunkers when he might win a splendid crown—or at least half-a-crown—by boldly flying over them. And Mr Despondency is always with us, and all his family, namely, Mr Never-up, Mr Bad-lie, Mr Hard-luck, and Mr "I can't hole it." And besides all these there is Mr Heel and Mr Toe, Mr Pull and Mr Slice, Mr Top and Mr Sclaff, and Mr Baff, to say nothing of Mr Miss-the-Globe, whom we all know. They are a noble company to go golfing with, and all our friends. And amongst them we may now and then find a Mr Great-heart, a Mr Far-and-sure, and Mr Lay-them-dead, with whom we may struggle on through all the valleys of humiliation, and win the match at last. There are also Mr Filthy-lucre, Mr Match-maker, and Mr Cannot-count, but these we need not reckon in the rank of friends. We may pass them by, if we cannot redeem them, and leave them to some giant or monster or Slough-of-Despond. Mr Facing-both-ways we meet on every putting green. "Oh, I'm so sorry," he says, as he lays you a stimy.

"Serve him jolly well right" you know is what his true face is expressing. "He's had all the luck so far; time I had some." This Mr Facing-both-ways has a less courteous brother (his is a very large family), who says in like circumstances, "Oh, it isn't a stimy,—there's lots of room—you can't miss it." You believe him just as much as you believe the dentist, who tells you that "it won't hurt." As soon as you have played and missed it, you will very likely hear him say to his partner, "Oh, I knew he couldn't hole it; I don't think it was on." Then he comes up to you with all the sympathy of the crocodile and says, "It's great rubbish, you know; stimies ought to be abolished; don't you think so?" After that it is a thousand to one you miss your tee-shot. There is a great deal to be done in little ways of this sort, and it is thus that Mr Golfer Wiseman lays up his inheritance.

John Bunyan was a tinker, so he ought to have been able to strike the ball a good blow. At all events he would have made the sparks fly out of a good many golfers we know of. Mr Facing-both-ways is an interesting study when he gets a very vain golfer into his toils, and what golfer is not very vain? He beats you, and then he says, "Well, you know, you ought to have won that match. You did win it really, you know; you'd be certain to win it another time. Morally speak-

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ing you did win it, but, yes, you owe me half-a-crown." So you go out and play him a second round, with the result that you soon owe him another. See him again with a very long driver opposed to him. He comes up to the long driver as they approach the tee, and says to him, indifferently, "By Jove, I saw young Jehu"—our long-driving friend's especial rival in length of carry—"drive a tremendous ball here yesterday. It went right on and on over that far hill yonder"—he points to one about a quarter of a mile off. As a matter of fact, young Jehu was not playing Golf yesterday, so of course Mr Facing-both-ways never saw him, nor could any human Jehu drive as far as the said hill, but our long driver does not realise this, and grunts and puffs and presses to show Mr Facing-both-ways how much further he can drive than young Jehu's "boasted force," and of course misses the ball almost altogether, and Mr Facing-both-ways is happy.

There is also another dreadful bad character at Golf, whom John Bunyan does not mention, Mr For-ever Scribbling-about-it. We wish to goodness we could hear rather less of him, but he goes all the journey with us.