

of my thoughts while I bathed in Jock's flattery. However, this conversation did serve to make me notice thereafter the ways of Mr. Moore. Jock was perfectly right. The next day I lost a ball on our third hole and signaled Moore to go through.

Edgerley Moore was playing around alone. He had at least the deliberation which marks the perfect golfer. It seemed to me that he fiddled for 15 minutes building and rebuilding tees and taking practice swings before he gave a long address to the ball—and sent it low, straight into the bunker. As he plodded past me he did not look up, but his back registered utter discouragement.

He descended into the bunker, spent two minutes deciding on a niblick, and finally whacked at the ball. He sliced it terribly. It was bouncing across the strip of fairway when it struck some obstacle, gave another bound almost at right angles and dribbled on to the edge of the putting green. He ran up the slope like a boy; made, after a great deal of fiddling, a fair approach putt, and holed out in four. Then he became aware—for the first time it seemed—of my presence, and emitted a senile crowing.

"One above par!" he cackled, waving his putter, "and from the bunker at that!" His ruddy face above his white mustache was glowing like the sun on winter snows. It occurred to me then that a belated ambition is a terrible thing. Through all his calm, well fed life he had entirely escaped the exciting but perturbing desire to excel. It had struck him at last, and all the harder because so long delayed.

One afternoon early in October he toddled into the clubhouse bowed with deep melancholy—a score of 70 or so for the nine holes written on his countenance. The dining room had closed, though the steward remained to sell tobacco and soft drinks, and most of our summer crowd had scattered. Only a few permanent residents and two or three loafers like me were still playing.

We had assembled in the grill room, getting from soft drinks what conviviality one may in these days when the 18th amendment has killed the 19th hole—Billy Means, John B. Gillespie, Dr. Carrington and I. The approach of Mr. Moore, the certainty that if we gave him an opening we should have to listen to the detailed story of his solitary round, set us all to chattering. Dr. Carrington, apparently grabbing at the first idea which came into his head, remarked—as he had often remarked before:

"Golf's at least three-quarters mental, and less than a quarter physical."

"Don't believe it. That's theory," said Billy Means, grudgingly. "I've heard that stuff and tried it out. It doesn't work. I say to myself, 'Now I will hit that ball—' and I top it and roll it about three feet or slice it into the next lot."

"Jock would tell you that it's because you were gritting your teeth and pressing," said Dr. Carrington. "I prefer to put it in another way. It's as though you were trying to drive with your putter. You've taken the wrong club out of your intellectual bag—that's all. It isn't the mere conscious mind—the kind we're overworking just now in this little argument. It's the old subconscious mind—the master and the mystery."

"Is that the mind one uses in golf?" asked John B. Gillespie, suddenly.

"Certainly—" began the doctor. And at this moment he was interrupted by the entrance of Jock Ransome, the pro, who had come in to get some tobacco.

"Jock," said Dr. Carrington, "isn't golf more mental than physical?"

"Su-sure!" said Jock. "That's what I've been telling you all summer, but you wouldn't listen." Jock was leaving us; he had been engaged for the next season with a far richer and more fashionable club, so that he could afford to be frank. "Most anybody has the physique to play good golf. That ain't the point. Col. Riordan up at Hollymount—he's in the artillery—did some figuring on trajectory—well, whatever you call it—"

"You mean trajectory and muzzle velocity," said the doctor.

"That's it. It's the same thing a shell does. He told me he'd prove that a ball hit right on the button started eight times as fast as one hit a hair's breadth to one side. That's distance. A child or an old man who got that trick wouldn't have to take a whole lot from Abe Mitchell. How could you get it? Mind. Same thing with accuracy. There's days when you're going good. Say you've got a 75-yard approach. Well, some way your mind tells you just where to hit and how hard to hit and you run her up to the pin. And then," Jock added morosely, "there's other days."

"I suppose, then, that if you had a long thinking session with yourself just before you hit the ball

you'd make a par stroke every time?" inquired the doctor.

"Nope," answered Jock, stepping right into the trap, "ain't that kind of mind."

At these words—such a perfect, unconscious repetition of the doctor's—we laughed.

"If you would try to learn something instead of making golf a joke," snapped Jock as he pocketed his tobacco and withdrew.

Mr. Moore had not laughed. He still stood, as he had at the beginning of the conversation, leaning morosely against a denatured bar, every line of his face drooping to match the droop of his white sea lion moustache.

"Well, I'd come pretty near selling my soul to the devil to get that kind of mind," he said. "Why today—when I started to drive I said to myself—'and promptly Billy Means' chair scraped on the floor. The doctor remembered that he was late to dinner; I followed without any excuse whatever, leaving Mr. Moore still standing at the bar drooping. Mr. Gillespie still sitting in the corner twirling his glass and seeming to make polite pretense of listening."

It was evening of a wind swept October day when, for the last time that season, I observed Edgerley Moore golfing. As I plodded over to begin the weary search for a lost ball on the third hole, I glanced up. Two players were putting on the tee, silhouetted against the pink and ashen sky. An effect of light and atmosphere made them seem for the moment like visions, born of the land, and I thought of them, in this sudden moment of observation, as children of the air stirring some devil broth on the summit of a lonely hill. Then I caught fair sight of them. The witch semblance vanished, and I realized that Mr. Moore was playing a round with John B. Gillespie.

By the time we opened the summer greens next season that pair had become a fixture on our links. I remembered afterward that I never saw Moore playing with anyone except Gillespie, who was apparently taking the game as seriously as his senile partner.

John B. Gillespie attracted attention that spring in another way. Suddenly his addition to Case Harbor began to boom. A great signboard advertising the addition went up across the station; one morning there was a half page advertisement in all the city papers. In this, as in the sign which now blotted the clean greenery of the forest patch across the railroad track, "sporty, picturesque and convenient golf links" blazed out in large letters. I didn't like it at all; it seemed to me—to name the most definite objection—scarcely clubby. I talked it over freely round the clubhouse when Gillespie was not present, and found opinion divided and mixed. The proceeding was rather loud and presumptuous—agreed. But—and although no one went further, I could supplement that "but." Most of us owned our houses. While none had any idea selling, it was still pleasant to realize that your bit of land had doubled in value. Which was probably what would happen if Gillespie's addition became a success.

But Midge Bavin, whom I found just mounting the seat of her roadster, rendered a short and emphatic minority report.

"It's horrid," she said, "perfectly horrid! We couldn't be really fashionable here even if we wanted to. But to be semi-fashionable—a lot of profiters and their stalled wives and their silly, expensive, flapper daughters—" Mrs. Bavin had been adjusting levers and keys preparatory to starting. Her blue eyes—determined without hardness, firm without coldness—looked directly into my eyes.

"How do you like him?" she asked.

"O, so-so!" I replied.

"Jimmy Langford, you know you don't like him! He gives me the crawls somehow, and he always has," said Mrs. Bavin. She dropped her foot on to the self-starter, and, as the roadster slid away into the distance, I reflected that here, eventually, was the finish of John B. Gillespie. Mrs. Bavin had a way of getting things done. Also I wondered just how much of her motive was jealousy for her own leadership among us.

On my way back to the clubhouse I met Billy Means, carrying the notice of handicaps for the club tournament to post on the bulletin board. I was down for 5-10. But just below my name came Moore, Edgerley—and I whistled. He was down for 12-3, which means cards running about 90.

"What's this?" said I. "You don't mean to say that venerable goof is doing the 18 holes lower than I?"

"The handicap committee operates in dark secrecy," replied Billy. "But I'm telling you that we gave ourselves the benefit of

the doubt. If we'd believed his cards, he'd have gone lower."

"Who scored for him?" I asked.

"Gillespie, of course. They always play together."

"That's the answer," I said. "I suppose Mr. Gillespie is somewhere near scratch."

"No," replied Billy, ignoring my sarcasm, "he isn't entered. He says he's going to caddy for the old sea lion. And he's dropping hints that his boy champion is a wonder."

The next day we got the first thrill. I was only fair that day, even for me, and from the last hole I rushed over to the bulletin board to see whether I had qualified. I found a crowd. In its center stood Mr. Moore and John B. Gillespie. They were gesticulating and chattering. And through it I caught the one sentence—"Moore in 72—whadda you think of that!"

"Seventy-two net?" I asked.

"Net nothing—" snapped back the answer of John B. Gillespie. "72 gross—just par for the course!" If you don't believe it, look at that!" He waved the card under my nose. I inspected it. There it was, signed by Gillespie and Dr. Carrington. It wasn't one of Gillespie's heavy handed jokes, then. The precise, definite-minded Carrington was not that kind of man.

"There ain't no such score," said I. "The man's a golf machine."

I turned to the ancient hero; I congratulated him, expecting to start a flood of conversation—either the detailed account of the match or a dissertation on some thrilling bit of knowledge like the history of the Byzantine emperors. He merely gave me a flaccid hand and continued to smile foolishly. Then John B. Gillespie spoke up:

"The champion must have his rub down," said he; and both started for the clubhouse, leaving us gaping after them. Only then did I recover my egotism and discover that I had qualified.

That was Saturday. The Sunday newspapers reach Case Harbor at about 8 o'clock; if you want them for breakfast you drive over to the drug store and get them yourself. As I entered that Sunday morning I met Mrs. Bavin coming out. Her face, between her smart sailor hat and her trim summer cape, was serious, but her eyes were snapping. And before I could speak she shoved a section of the Sunday Bulletin into my face. My eyes centered on a photograph of Edgerley Moore, two columns front page, sporting section, before I took in the head:

ELDERLY GOLFER SHOOT'S IN PAR

Edgerley Moore, Aged 60, Who Took Up Game a Year Ago, Performs Amazing Feat on Seagull Links.

"Do you see?" exclaimed Mrs. Bavin. "Did you ever read more than a four-inch item about any of our tournaments before? The city papers usually just telephone to the steward for the score. But now—and I passed John B. Gillespie when I was driving down from the city last night. I'll just bet—" and here Mrs. Bavin resumed her tumbling of the newspapers. "Here it is—the real estate section—he hasn't been advertising lately and—yes! Look at that!"

Across a half page splashed an advertisement for Gillespie's Addition to Case Harbor, with special mention of the prettiest, sportiest golf links on the Atlantic coast.

"We're done!" exclaimed Mrs. Bavin morosely. "We might as well move away. O, why did I ever start that club?"

"Well, it's apparently hatched a champion anyway," I said.

"Yes, I suppose so," replied Mrs. Bavin. I had a sense that she was leaving volumes unsaid. Then, as though only the backfin of her thought was coming to the surface, she added:

"Did you know that Mr. Gillespie has closed his house for the summer and gone to live with Mr. Moore?"

"Well, I must say that this Damon and Pythias act is the best thing I know about Gillespie," I replied. "Any one who has the patience to endure that ghastly old bore—"

"Yes," said Mrs. Bavin, drawing out the word in a manner which registered again a world of thoughts in reserve.

When, at the end of that week, we played off the matches, Edgerley Moore proved that he was no accident. He ran through all opposition like water through a filter. I was struck by my one and only spasm of real golf, and stayed to the semifinals, when I blew up. So I didn't see him at work until the finals, where I helped police the course—for we had drawn a crowd. Not only had our links been for the first time invaded by the press but enthusiasts motored from links 25 miles away to see if it could be true—and found that it was. Mr. Moore was up against Harry Babson, our best golfer, who is handicapped at six in match play. Babson was in form that day and played his head off—a birdie on the second hole, mostly

par on all the first round—but what could he do against a handicap of 12 and mechanically perfect golf? Mr. Moore won, two up, one to play.

The general result was a foregone conclusion to me before they had finished the first nine holes. Moore simply couldn't be beaten—I felt that in my bones. I had said it. The man was a golf machine. His driving was astonishing—fully as long as that of Harry Babson who is a stalwart ex-football player in his early '30s. An old phrase kept glancing in and out of my mind—he was playing like one possessed. The gallery grew toward the last a little disorderly, so that twice Harry Babson straightened up as he was addressing a ball and glared until he got silence. But the crowd never bothered Mr. Moore. His blue eyes seemed to pop from his head with concentration; as he walked forward to the next shot they fairly transfixed the ball. Once I spoke to him, a pleasant word of congratulation.

"I never talk while I am playing," he said shortly. Ten minutes later I heard some stranger in the crowd address him and get the same answer. He did not even throw a word to J. B. Gillespie, his caddy. Gillespie himself spoke little—just now and then a brief, quiet word of advice as he handed out the proper club, like "Drop her over that bunker," or "Now run her down."

"He's the greatest thing ever uncovered in golf," said John B. Gillespie when the match was over. "The amateur champion at 60—standing right here in these shoes."

"Going to enter in the county tournament?" asked some one. That event was coming off a fortnight hence at Goreham; it always brings out a large entry of high quality, for there are two or three famous courses to our north. "I've already entered him," said John B. Gillespie, "and in the state tournament, too. Maybe the national can wait this year." Half of the gallery laughed at that, and half, like me, didn't.

When I emerged from the clubhouse, after talking over the nine day wonder from 40 different angles, I met Mrs. Bavin standing by the corner of the parking place.

"Look!" she said, and gave a wide, impatient gesture of one of her long arms toward the door of the pro's quarters. There, entirely surrounded by golf writers and news photographers, stood John B. Gillespie, talking genially and with theatrical gestures.

"You can see the papers tomorrow, can't you?" said Mrs. Bavin. "The quaint Seagull links and the beauty of the harbor at the head of every item!"

I opened the newspapers next morning to realize that Mrs. Bavin had called the turn. Somehow, the beauty of the coast view from the Seagull links and the story of how the course had been made from a rough farm in a year, figured in every account. So in two of them, did the amazing friendship between Mr. Moore and his caddy, coach, and manager, John B. Gillespie.

I must hurry through the next stage of this extraordinary career. Mr. Moore went up to Goreham, and won quite handily the county championship. By tradition that is a handicap affair. The Goreham committee, like ours, couldn't really believe it, and handicapped him at 9 and 6. At these figures he raced through the tournament, defeating on the way Maurice Naylor, who has twice been runnerup in the national amateur championship.

He is a picturesque figure in golf, this Naylor. His defeat in the semi-finals by the 60-year-old unknown brought Mr. Moore to the attention of the New York newspapers. It was, I understood, the dull and silly season of this year when journalism is looking for a sensation. Newspapers, magazines, syndicates—all turned toward Case Harbor. Every train seemed to bring spruce young men with roving eyes who carried canes slung over their forearms, and less spruce young men with big black cameras. Daily Mr. Moore was interviewed, photographed, filmed.

One thing about this interviewing process struck me as curious. Evidently he refused to talk about golf. True, he was quoted extensively by one yellow syndicate on the method by which a middle-aged man could improve his game, but this bore the earmarks of fake; and Dr. Carrington recognized it as a rewriting of some articles by a famous Scotch professional which had been printed 10 years before. But apparently he chattered genially, diffusely and quite in his old manner of things in general. When the second wave of interviewers came over the top Mr. Moore had been reading a book on the cave dwellings of the Dordogne. This newly acquired knowledge he drolled out while the reporters employed every dodge to make him

talk golf. On the way back to the station some genius among them conceived a brilliant idea to dress up his interview, which he indiscreetly imparted to the rest. And next Sunday's papers had a new tag for Edgerley Moore—"The Distinguished Anthropologist Who Became a Champion Golfer."

Next Saturday Tommie Crowder, twice national amateur champion, came over for a special 18-hole match. John B. Gillespie arranged it—he seemed by now to be arranging everything for our club. With the ex-champion arrived not only the gentlemen of the press, but certain other strangers in loud, tight-fitting clothes and with hard jowls. All during the match this element squirmed through the enormous gallery. I did not classify them until I saw the flash of a greenback—heard a whispered phrase about odds. Then I saw that we were drawing the professional gamblers. How they laid their money I had no idea; if they were backing Tommie Crowder they lost. He played perfect golf that day—with one slip. On both rounds at the dog's leg fourth, he tried to drive over the rough instead of going round—a dangerous thing, for the carry is too long for anything but a freak drive. He succeeded the first time; but the second time he got into difficulties and had to pick up. That was the turning point; he was against a golf machine, running perfectly. On that hole Mr. Moore went one up and stayed there to the end. His card was 70, breaking the record for the course, held by him, self.

When the shouting and the tumult were over there arose scandalized whispers about those gamblers. But public opinion had not quite crystallized as yet. Most felt, I suppose, as I did—that the state championship was only a fortnight away and that we didn't want to mar our chances. However, on top of that came an announcement which nearly brought action. Willie Carr, the famous British professional, then touring the country, was matched with our man on the following Saturday—a kind of final tuning up for the state championship. The public would be admitted—profits, over and above Willie Carr's fee, to go to the town hospital fund.

On the morning before that match I was practicing approach shots on the ninth green—for, like all the rest of us, I had been filled with inordinate ambition by the rise of Mr. Moore and felt in my heart that if the old dodo could do it I could. I had already reduced my card to 90. I looked up across the fairway and saw that Mrs. Bavin was approaching with her jimmie, striding walk.

"Jimmie," she said, "don't you really think this thing has gone far enough?" Her wave of the hand seemed to indicate the Seagull links, but I knew what she meant. Mrs. Bavin is so splendidly candid that she often pulls the truth straight out of you. What had been a mere distaste in me became a definite aversion, and I answered:

"I suppose it has. I suppose we must have a cleanup after he has played in the state championship," I said, temporizing.

"Jimmie Langford," announced Midge Bavin, definitely, "we're going to have a cleanup today!"

I looked her square in the eyes. They showed that she meant it. Now, her tone changed. It became serious, almost awed.

"Jimmie," she said, "I've got to have some one stand by me this afternoon. And Bob can't come on—he's held in Cleveland by a really important matter—it would be throwing down the firm if he did. And Jimmie, I'm coming to you—that sounds like asking a great deal, but it's really a compliment. I know I can depend on you—if you'll help."

"Of course I'll help!" I said rather impulsively. Mrs. Bavin gave me no chance to take that back.

"I knew you would," she said. "Begin by believing me—I've got something strange to tell you. Don't make objections until I've finished. Well, I've had John B. Gillespie looked up—he'd already been looked up by the information department of Bob's firm. He applied for a loan when he started Gillespie's Addition. And they turned him down. He got his loan later from the Speche outfit—you know about them—regular banking bucket shop—a pawnbroker's interest and long chances. But Bob's people refused him mainly because he wasn't a good moral risk."

"What was the matter with him?" I asked.

"Well, Gillespie isn't his name to begin with. That's almost enough. Before that he was known as Prof. Hansen—and that probably wasn't his real name, either. It's simply irritating the way those bank reports leave out the most interesting and important things. All they had to say about his past was that he'd left vaudeville be-

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