

CONCERNING THE CADDIES OF ST. ANDREWS

BY R. WHYTE GIBSON

IT is a truism to remark that every gentleman has a peculiar function to perform in the social community, and the Caddie has his. The Caddies are a privileged class, and they make the most of their privileges. This is shown by free criticism and gratuitous advice on all occasions. They are ever ready to impart the fruits of their experience. The Caddies have stood at Forgan's shop and the Golf Hotel (the former has been revolutionized in our time; the latter has been lately embellished by a work of art—*tempora mutantur*, etc.); they have placed themselves there, till these corners are now their own property, consecrated by the

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expectoration of tobacco-juice and the fumes of three-penny cut, discussing the affairs of the empire, or the local politics of the microcosm. There they stand, blue with the "cauld wund" of the bleak midwinter, or bronzed like Arabs with the "gey strang het" of the summer-time. Their occupation would be pleasant were it not perchance precarious. Their fortune varies. But they are optimistic, and if business is dull and the hours go slowly by, a "bit nippie" over the way refreshes the inner man. They are pertinacious in offering their services. When a man arrives at the Club for his first round, he is at once encompassed by these Bulls of Bashan, and bamboozled with their unintelligible jargon of "Chances, sir, chances." Peace at any price is the order of the day. We have hinted that are not reserved. We have heard an enthusiast, recently raised to the

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bench, addressed as follows on missing a shot—"Sur, you're no playin' the day ava. Haud up your shouthers; dinna sclaff!" and the recipient of this was not a novice or tyro by any means. We have heard an Oxonian informed in no mild language that "gouf isna crocket: ye needna swing your cloob that wey!" When your ball falls into the burn, the embryo Caddie is good enough to try to find it for you by stamping it into the mud; the old Caddie stoically howks for stray "baas" among the whins. We believe the employment in both cases is lucrative. Some of the youths of the unique city recruit their strength by caddying for a few years; they then devote their latent talents to "the trades." The Caddie is no respecter of persons; once roused, his volubility is prodigious, his independence striking. We know several who have been Caddies all their

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lives, and who know every inch of the course, among whom, old "Skipper," art thou one! The Caddie considers he is at all times entitled to "auld baas" ("See an auld baa fae ye"), while a pair of boots, or other articles of apparel, are never refused. If not altogether respectful, he tries to look respectable, and on the whole is a self-important but worthy individual.