

ize that the best education he may get is from practical experience, yet I am of the opinion that knowledge along theoretical lines is helpful.

Old and New Turf Problems As Viewed By a Green Committee Chairman

By R. F. Arnott

Exactly how much a green committee chairman should know about turf is perhaps a question. It might very well be that the less he knows, the better. When he first starts in as a green committee chairman, he is very deeply interested in everything he sees. He has had his game of golf, he has learned to play a little, and he feels he can perhaps do a little to help his club by spending his time with his greenkeeper. So he goes on the first year, the second year, and the third year, getting more and more interested all the time. He buys a number of books and spends his days and time on them, gets up at 4 o'clock in the morning to study fungi, and helps his greenkeeper as much as he can. He finds his game is gradually falling away as he is getting more and more interested in turf; and after a while he does not know so much about either.

The answer to it all seems to be that the position of the chairman is not to delve too far into the turf questions, but rather to be a help to his greenkeeper—to be a sort of go-between. Those of you who have done some chemistry will understand what I mean in classifying the chairman as a sort of catalyst. He is there for the purpose of carrying on a reaction between the greenkeeper and his surroundings, his turf and his club, while at the same time there is not much real action required on his part. He will take a real interest in the turf, for the reason that it makes the conditions better for his club and for the members of the club in playing that game which he believes is the best game ever invented. He will for this reason try as far as he can to help his greenkeeper work out his ideas; and in so doing the chairman comes in as the catalyst.

The greenkeeper will get his ideas about the turf and what he shall do for it. He finds himself a little uncertain, perhaps confused at times, as to just what he should do. He can have a talk with his men and he can talk with his green committee chairman. After a little while the green committee chairman in his ignorance asks stupid questions and very likely starts a thought in the greenkeeper's mind which he has no idea of starting. The greenkeeper can make the connection that the chairman was not looking for. It is also a fact that the green committee chairman is able to help his greenkeeper in handling his problems of machinery and in arranging his plans for work. His actual experience and acquaintance with the turf is something which he gets at odd times.

The man who is looking after the grass and the turf itself should be there all the time—should be out on the course early morning and all day and late at night to see just what the grass needs. The turf and the grass are in this respect comparable to a little baby. Its mother can see what it wants just when it wants it and is there to give whatever is needed at the right time. The doctor is the man whom she wants to see when there is something wrong. In the old days of humanity there were not many doctors, and mothers got along

as well as they could. After a while men began to take interest in the science of medicine and to study the causes of and the cures for disease. The same thing has developed in the study of turf. A great deal depends on the help we get from nature, the same as in the case of the doctor's curing of human ills. However, there is much that the doctor of medicine can do to help nature in maintaining the health of humans, and there is much that a doctor of science can do to help the greenkeeper. The scientist does not pretend to know how to grow turf as well as the greenkeeper does, and he does not pretend to be able to produce a golf course, but he can help the greenkeeper when he is in trouble.

Another responsibility of the green committee chairman is the consideration of the interests of his club members. Mr. Morley has spoken of the greenkeeper's getting blamed for everything the player does. It is true the golfer will complain; but he has a right to complain. He is a member of his club for the purpose of getting recreation and relaxation from business, and for that reason he deserves every consideration and should be provided with every means whereby he can get his relaxation. The requirements of turf have become more and more exacting from the player's standpoint. The modern golfer has become more critical of the greens and of the grass on the greens, and will perhaps often rightly blame the condition of a green for his failure to hole a putt. This is no doubt his right. The greenkeeper can do all he may and yet sometimes the turf is not in condition for the player. The answer to this is that the utmost effort should be made by the greenkeeper to develop turf to a degree of perfection which was not called for in the old days but which is now demanded by the expert player. Players are becoming more expert every day. These young men growing up now are playing golf practically every day from the time they start at the age of about 14, and they are becoming more and more expert at the game. Therefore it is the duty of the green committee chairmen and the greenkeepers to try to make the conditions of turf the best possible for those men to produce the best game that is in them.

The experiments which are being made by the United States Golf Association at Arlington have helped immensely in the important study of turf. The Green Section is, I understand, now preparing plots where one can see the different grasses and make his own selection from a fairly full-sized green. It is possible to putt on these grasses and try them out. This is a step in the right direction, for thus the members of clubs, green committee chairmen, greenkeepers, and others can look over the collection and make their own choices as to what they prefer as a turf texture and a grass for them to use on their own courses.

There is no doubt that there is room yet for much work to be done, and it is for that reason the Green Section is inviting the interest of all the clubs and the golfers in the country. The more the clubs have learned about this subject the more interested they have become. I believe it is continuing now to be a matter of interest for more greenkeepers than ever. They are able to see now, and will see more clearly as time goes on, that the work is being done to help them and that it will be a help to them. It is not intended to eliminate any greenkeeper or to reduce greenkeeping to a science. That can never be done any more than the doctors can take care of the babies in a hospital.