

In the case of creeping bent and Bermuda greens, top-dressing buries the rooting stems or stolons and gives a much better putting surface than is obtained without it.

#### DANGERS FROM TOP-DRESSING

It is difficult to think of any serious trouble which may arise from the use of good top-dressing if ordinary care is exercised. Of course, any practice, no matter how good it is, can be overdone, and it is possible to cover the grass sufficiently to smother it out. Green leaves must have sunlight in order to manufacture the material that goes to make up the roots, stems and leaves of the plant. Very frequent or heavy applications may cut off too much light.

It has been suggested that there might be danger from a too liberal use of compost producing a coarse-textured turf. The experience of the writer indicates that fineness of turf comes from crowding of the plants in the sod. Some of our selections of creeping bent are very coarse in the nursery rows but produce turf of fine texture. Any thing that increases the number of plants and thus increases the crowding appears to make the grass finer instead of coarser. The most heavily fertilized plats in our fertilizer experiment have the finest texture of all. While we have now no data bearing directly on this point we feel that the undernourished greens greatly outnumber those that are too highly fed.

The most serious injury which the writer has ever observed from top-dressing has come from the use of materials that do not decay and mix with the soil but remain in layers. Take for instance much of the commercial "humus." It decays very slowly and does not penetrate the soil as will sharp sand, nor is it washed down into the soil as is clay on sandy soils. Fortunately a great deal of the humus which has been used on putting greens has been blown away or was washed off the green by rains. Occasionally we find turf in which a layer of humus or coarse, smooth sand has been buried a half inch or more below the surface by subsequent top-dressings. Any one can test the effect for himself where such a condition exists. That layer will be found to be the weak place in the sod.

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### Low-Priced Golf at Pittsfield, Mass.

FREEMAN M. MILLER

One of the newest members of the Green Section is the Pittsfield Golf Club, Pontoosuc Lake, Pittsfield, Mass. The story of the organization and plans of the club furnishes a striking example of what a little money and large faith and cooperation can do for wholesome outdoor sport.

In the spring of 1920 the Pittsfield Boat Club acquired an 85-acre farm largely to control a 15-acre pine grove and pavilion on Pontoosuc Lake. Having no particular use for the remaining 70 acres and aware of the fact that they were remarkably well adapted for a natural golf course, 80 members of the boat club entered into an agreement to form a low-priced golf club, and the officers of the boat club were authorized to make a low rental of the tract to any organization which might be formed to carry out the project. The boat club further manifested its interest by

advancing money in the fall of 1920 for preliminary work on the golf course.

On March 18 of the following year, the Pittsfield Golf Club was organized with a capital stock of \$10,000, divided into 1,000 shares of \$10 each. Twenty free memberships were offered to the twenty people who would render the most efficient assistance in promoting the new organization, and the membership was doubled. The belief that a low-priced golf club was a real asset to a community, and especially to a thrifty city of 45,000 population, located right in the center of the Berkshire Hills, induced a score of individuals to subscribe \$100 each for 10 shares of stock, which subscription entitled them to a free membership in the club for four years. An 18-hole course was laid out and played for one month, after which all effort was concentrated on nine holes. In 1921 the club showed a deficit of \$2,000. The following year all available money was expended in improving the first nine holes, and in 1922, with 163 members, the club paid all expenses and reduced its debt \$700. This year it is hoped to again double the club's membership and to put into playing condition part or all of the second nine holes. The dues for the first year were \$10 flat, except that if any person bought a \$10 share of stock he received a 20 per cent reduction in yearly dues. Under the contract, boat-club members were admitted at half rates. Now the dues are \$10 per year, but every male member is required to buy one share of stock at \$10. Transients are charged \$1.25 per day or \$5 per week, with no fee to exceed \$10. Hundreds of transients have played the course, and all were surprised to learn that it had been developed at an expenditure of less than \$10,000. The club house, where meals are served, is equipped with showerbaths and with steel lockers, and the club has a sizeable caddy-house. Bathing and tennis will probably be added this season. At the club's annual meeting, one Scotchman who belongs to three other clubs and who played golf three times a week from the age of 10 to 30 years, playing practically every course in Scotland, said, "I had been led to believe that the Pittsfield course was decidedly crude and unplayable, and was most pleasantly surprised when I played it. The land is far more likely for a golf course than anything I have seen in this section, and is more like a Scotch golf course than anything I have seen in all New England. It gives the average player consideration, the one thing needed to stimulate golf and the thing which has made the game what it is today."

### "Rules of Golf" Booklet

The "Rules of Golf," printed in accordance with the rulings and interpretations as adopted by the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews, can now be obtained at the following prices. Inquiries should be addressed to U. S. Golf Association, 55 John St., New York, N. Y.:

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