

(contd. from p. 14)

further education of both a general and a technical character.

Fuller information about the scheme is given in the employers' guide which is available from the Hon. Secretary, The Joint Council for Golf Greenkeeper Apprenticeship, who is now Mr P. C. French, of 3 Skeet Hill Cottages, Dalton's Road, Chelsfield, Orpington, Kent.

Apprenticeship figures show that in 1966, three years after the inception of the scheme, only 74 deeds of apprenticeship had been issued. At the same time, the demand for replacements for greenkeepers had further outstripped the supply. There had been many retirements, especially among head greenkeepers. In England alone there are over 900 courses, and they go on increasing, and so the demand for greenkeepers is bound to be heavy. A number too take greenkeeping jobs in Europe.

By September 1968 the 74 deeds of apprenticeship issued had risen to 164. Forty-two apprenticeships had been completed. I am told that the biggest difficulty for clubs is the procuring of theoretical training in many areas. The Council considers, so its hon. secretary informs me, that further education in fairly simple background science is an important part of the training.

The number of apprentices is certainly on the increase, particularly in Scotland. The aim of the Joint Council is to have at least one apprentice in each golf club. It is important that clubs should not treat the apprentice as a form of cheap labour, but should ensure his proper training for the benefit of golf at large, and not just for the employing club itself.

### Prospects

At least two head greenkeepers of long service have told me that there is a wonderful opportunity for apprentice greenkeepers ahead of them. In about 10 to 15 years' time, first-class head greenkeepers will be at a premium, and will be able to command a salary in keeping with their status. The fortunes of any good club revolves round a first-class head greenkeeper. Another head

  
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greenkeeper on the point of retirement also told me that "if any lad is looking for a life where he can work happily all his days, if he is willing to study and learn as much as possible, then it's the best life one could look for".

And so, you club committees, please support this apprenticeship scheme for all you're worth. It really is the start of a brave new world in greenkeeping. DON'T let your courses slip back to nature's courses, such as were the only ones in the early days of golf, when the only greenkeepers were the rabbits. Much as our forebears evidently enjoyed their golf under those conditions, somehow I don't think the present-day club members would be much amused!

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### MISCELLANEOUS

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