Tomorrow's Turf Culture Calls on Science

This interesting forecast of golf course turf culture is taken from the "Pacific Greenkeeper." Although sweeping changes are contemplated by the meditative author, it is noteworthy that several of his prospects already have been given endorsement by practical performance.

HAVING NO other means of prognostication, a hazy knowledge of the past will have to be brought into the fray for utilitarian purposes. The prevailing movement on golf courses within the last 20 years has been mechanistic. Horsepower has replaced horse power which in turn had taken the old time groundsman off his feet. To follow out this sequence of ideas the man in charge of cutting the grass in the future will sit in his office and operate the cutting units by radio control. However, there is the strong possibility present that a fairway grass will be developed which will give the ball a good lie and yet will not need cutting. It is easy to understand how a modification of some of the current bent grasses could easily accomplish this end.

The method of fostering the growth of the grass will have changed considerably It would not be surprising to see the hypothetical golf course we are conjuring equipped with an underground heating system, probably electric, to lengthen the playing season in frosty territory, by boosting the grass over cold spells. That this idea is not too fragmentary is indicated by the fact that at one of the colleges on the Pacific coast at the present time highly successful experiments are being carried on in heating soil. There seems to be no reason why the principle should not be adopted for golf course use.

It requires no effort of the imagination to picture the irrigation crew of the future to be a purely mechanical one. There is being manufactured even now a mechanical pop-up system which turns itself on and off automatically, meanwhile recording all its actions at a central plant to be located in the greenkeeper's office When this system is once installed the only human attention required will be when it gets out of order, or to adjust it for the changing of the seasons. And there are such things being made as sun valves and photoelectric cells which will make even this latter duty unnecessary.

In conjunction with the irrigation system will be the system of applying fertilizer. The fertilizer will be pulverized and mixed in a central plant and then put into a container or reservoir with the irrigation system which will run it through corrosion-proof pipes to that section of the course where the fertilizer is required. The mixture and other necessary adjustments could be made without leaving the central regulating plant. Nor is this idea beyond the remotest bounds of possibility, for on a course in Arizona when the greenkeeper wishes to give his course a little stimulation he throws a few sacks of chemical fertilizer into his reservoir lake and the sprinklers do the rest.

Future shops will be equipped with a complete chemical laboratory for soil testing and analysis as well as a small experiment station. This because greenkeepers will have realized that what is stimulation for one course's grass is brown patch for another's. Furthermore the greenkeeper during his course in college will have taken enough chemistry and geology to enable him to conduct his own research.

Government Tells of Golf's Grass Seed Buying

GOLF CLUBS buy more ryegrass seed than any other kind of seed. This is indicated in an extensive survey recently completed by the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Other grass as well as turf seed purchased in largest quantities for golf courses are: Kentucky bluegrass, redtop, fescues, bents, and Bermuda grass, mentioned in the order of the quantities purchased.

The inquiry used in the survey was sent to more than 3,800 golf clubs and municipal courses and replies were received from 1,733. Of this number officials of 1,189 clubs or courses gave figures indicating the quantity of seed they had purchased, intended to purchase, or their average annual purchases, 495 gave no figures but indicated that they usually bought little or no seed because they had sand greens, native grass that did not require reseeding, etc., and 49 failed to indicate whether or not they ever purchased seed.

In this report, except when otherwise stated, the figures given cover those clubs and municipal courses for which reports were received. No attempt has been made to estimate what percentage these purchases represent of the total purchases