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## Some Thoughts on Greenkeeping

By M. E. FARNUM

**A**CTIVITIES of the greenkeepers' association, the Green Section and various other national and sectional bodies, said Mr. Farnum, have eliminated "trade secrets" from the profession of greenkeeping. This is a constructive development, because the "best" method of course maintenance will never be discovered and greenkeepers need all possible assistance and hints in their quest at their home courses for ways and means of improving playing conditions.

But all the work of scientists and golf associations to date has not eliminated certain problems with which the greenkeeper must cope. One of these is the question of relations with the green-committee. How far should the committee dip into the activities rightfully under the control of the greenkeeper? On this point, Farnum said:

Many unsatisfactory conditions persist under committee management which would not exist long under a more business-like

form of management. However, I can not look for a correction of conditions from this angle. The greenkeeper must add another to his multitude of activities. He must sell his abilities as well as be constantly enlarging them.

The percentage of green-chairmen who, from choice, wish to dictate greenkeeping practices is relatively small. The percentage of chairmen who do, to a greater or less degree, dictate greenkeeping policies is larger than it should be. Undoubtedly this condition is due to lack of knowledge of conditions and a lack of confidence in the greenkeeper. It is this condition which I view as one of the major problems of the greenkeeper.

Very probably, the speaker said, greenkeepers are seen too often in work clothes. This costume implies a job where physical ability is paramount; as a matter of fact, the greenkeeper's job is far more mental than physical—but club members do not realize this. If greenkeepers would dress

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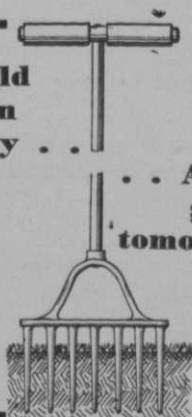
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up to their jobs, the importance of the profession would receive more general acceptance from golfers.

The greenkeeper's position should be such that his recommendations be sought. A recommendation should not be made unless it is essential and worth fighting for. Once made it should be actively supported. If, for due and sufficient reasons, it must fail it should be made a matter of record in writing for future reference. The man whose recommendations are shown by time to have been correct and essential has redress if he has presented those recommendations in writing.

### Can Enough G. M.'s Be Found?

Farnum spoke at some length on the possibilities of the general managership idea at clubs. In the main, he favored the plan, believing the running of a golf organization to be very little different from operating any other business. If the plan works elsewhere, why not with clubs? Weaknesses in the idea from the club standpoint are two-fold: many clubs cannot afford a properly qualified man for such a position; and, secondly, there is probably a dearth of qualified men to meet the needs of the clubs. An inefficient general manager would be worse than the present committee form of club organization.

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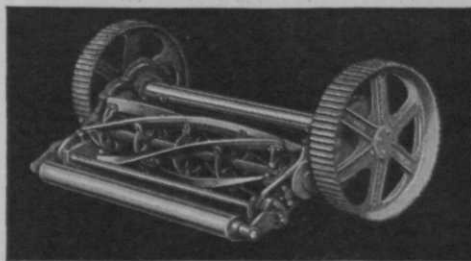
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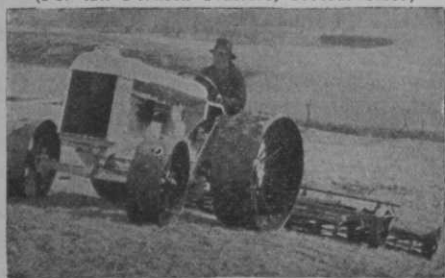
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### Ethics Can Be Improved

The next problem taken up was that of greenkeeping ethics, Farnum pointing out that much improvement can be made along this line. A greenkeeper who has been particularly successful should not sell his advisory services to another club without the consent of the local greenkeeper. Nor should a greenkeeper solicit employment indiscriminately in the absence of known vacancies. The speaker recommended "some collective action in setting up professional standards."

### Bettering Working Conditions

While considerable progress has been made in knowledge of turf culture and maintenance methods, the problem of bettering working conditions has been too generally overlooked, Farnum declared. But this is a problem that must be solved not by collective action, but rather by individual initiative. Each time a greenkeeper improves his own position, he boosts the standards of his profession. So it behooves every greenkeeper to sell himself and his profession to his club and to see that the reputation of the profession does not suffer in his hands.

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