

## The "Technocracy" of Golf Maintenance

By W. C. JACKSON

**TECHNOCRACY** as defined by Mr. Scott, that eminent engineer at Columbia University, is the development of the machine to the point of production where the social or labor order can live on fewer working hours.

Looking back over the last fifteen years of golf course maintenance, we see three very definite periods, classified generally as follows:

1. The Awakening to a Higher Order of Maintenance.
2. Experimental Stage of Better Turf Production.
3. Development of Equipment to the Highest Point of Efficiency.

Lately we have been confronted with a fourth stage which we might call the Economical Stage Due to Depression.

Personally, I think this last condition, in the end, will do more good to bring the care of golf courses to an intelligent basis, and afford a combining of the three previous stages to put this maintenance on a practical plane, than anything that has happened in the history of golf.

To prove this point we must go back to a time in about 1918 and offer a resume of these stages. It was about this time that certain prominent seed houses and golf course supply companies realized the coming demand for better courses and applied all of their resources to the propaganda necessary to stimulate this demand. Famous golf architects were employed and so-called "turf experts" were sent abroad to advise clubs on their problems.

Unfortunately some of these experts in reality knew very little about turf production and their sole aim in life was to induce a club to purchase twice as much seed or fertilizer or material as was necessary for the matter in hand. But they did this much good, in that they awakened greenchairmen to the point of thinking and finally bringing the issue to a point of readjustment.

Some of the wiser heads got together and with the help of Drs. Piper and Oakley, agrostologists in the Department of Agriculture, the Green Section had its inception. The first years of its infancy were employed mostly in criticizing commercial experts and condemning nearly everything promulgated by them. In much of it they



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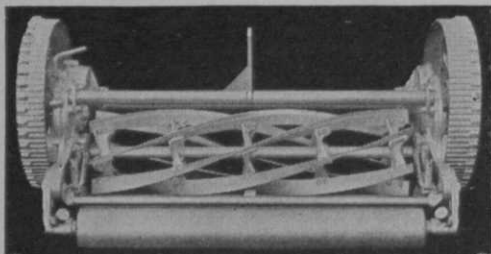
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were right and served as a check on over-commercialization.

Then entered a period of experimentation with putting green grasses and we saw the entrance of stolonized bent greens. Various strains were introduced, such as, Metropolitan, Washington, Virginia, Seaside, etc. and a craze for these greens swept the country.

Golf courses tore up their existing greens to reach this "Answer For It All." Too much reliance was put on anything that emanated from the Green Section and hundreds of courses went blindly through a period of inflation with enormous reconstruction and returning programs.

Frankly, looking back over a period of fourteen years there have been only two things instituted of real value as far as turf culture was concerned, and they were the use of mercuric and mercurous chlorides in the place of Bordeaux mixture for treatment of fungous diseases and the application of arsenate of lead, for the retardation of weed growth and the elimination of grub and earthworms.

Then what has been the one thing that has enabled golf courses to reach a higher standard, and expedite its grooming for immediate play? *Golf course equipment and machinery*, of course.

Personally, if I had to employ a green-keeper tomorrow I would far rather he would be a competent mechanic than a renowned turf expert. Manufacturers realized this a few years ago and to that end they really worked. So today we are able to mow 18 greens in from three to four hours, mow our fairways in from seven to eight hours, water 18 greens in from three to five hours, and water our fairways in from one to three days, mix our compost in one-fifth the time and keep our mowers sharpened and equipment in apple pie order.

The greatest expense in the maintenance of a golf course is the labor; material used

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and initial cost of equipment is small in comparison. If we had to maintain a modern golf course at its present standard with the equipment available fourteen years ago, the cost would be enormous or almost impracticable.

Today I am caring for an 18 hole course, one of the best in the Middle West, with perhaps the largest green area in the country, 1,000 acres of park area, 5½ miles of roadways, 3 polo fields, 2 tennis courts, stables with capacity for 100 horses, estates built on the club grounds, 3 trapshooting stands and one of the finest tree and shrub nurseries of any course in the United States for a total cost of \$25,000 annually and I only work my men 7½ hours per day!

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### Club's Green Damaged by Small Boys

**T**HE UNICORN Country Club, Woburn, Mass., suffered malicious damage amounting to approximately \$1,000 to its 13th green recently. Indications point to the vandalism being the work of young boys who for some reason had a grudge against the club and raided the course during the night. In addition to digging up the green, the vandals stole flags and cups from several greens and smashed a water fountain.

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