

MEET LABOR'S NEEDS

House employees often have cause for complaint, says veteran house manager

I WALK through our locker-room and hear members complain about labor trouble. They ought to try managing a metropolitan district club these days and they'd learn what labor trouble really means. In September, when this is written, I am still losing and hiring help for reasons embarrassing to me, with a disturbance in service that has given me nervous indigestion, all because my board of directors won't take a clear perspective on the situation.

There is an unorganized but serious labor discontent and disloyalty at many country clubs. It's part of the general situation but some of it is our own fault. Seldom do we provide year around employment. We have to contend with the problem of getting help, training them, and then losing them. That's something that would destroy a lot of businesses—but still the manager is expected to solve that difficulty by some magic means.

Tempers Are Touchy Now-a-Days

As an example of what is happening regularly: perhaps I cautiously suggest that fly-spray be used in the kitchen every day. A heretofore loyal worker will tempestuously sling out his jaw, bark "I quit," and stalk off with body all fists! Mass irritability, kept at high pitch by labor's nation-wide attempt to cope with rising costs, gripped him and immediately he left.

Is it my fault? After being in club work for nearly 20 years and having developed a pleasant and effective way of handling workers I drop shoulders with a resigned, "What can I do? Labor is walking out all over the country. I can't cope with it!"

But where does this leave me? I have pride, a reputation; I am ambitious and shame creeps through. I am annoyed at what I have just said. Taking stock, the above incident repeated again and again has wrecked the homey quality of service with which our club had catered to its members. Labor turnover has stiffened the payroll because of the regular "extra help" I must find. Labor turnover has swept away employee pride, morale, and concerted good conduct.

Now we have petty thievery from migrant workers, recurring whinings from

employees who hear of "greener grass over the fence," heavy breakage of dishes and club equipment through carelessness, and numerous other demoralizing factors. A "here to day; gone tomorrow" policy is most ruinous in a private club in which employees should remain not only throughout the season but should return season after season in order to maintain tip-top service for an unchanging membership.

This, then, is the situation, and I am now ready to claim that it is within the power of this small club to lift itself out.

Consider the Waitresses

Last year in the nation 43.2 cents was the average hourly entrance rate of pay for common laborers, according to U. S. Bureau of Labor statistics. Common laborers are taken to be the lowest type of wage-earner, the totally unskilled, those workers capable of tasks demanding meagerest training, fair brawn, and little judgment. Waitresses are not common laborers, yet here in our clubs, this year, with living expenses to these girls higher than last year, we are granting them an average hourly pay of 40 cents, no pay for overtime which occurs regularly, and deprive them of the opportunity of receiving tips. In addition they are given a short season of employment, (cursory mention does not give to this item its real importance to the waitress) their general poor, crowded housing facilities, unhome-like, create a feeling of transiency. Plainly, through this one department, the restaurant, we could inspire an improved morale in the entire club if we stepped right up to a higher level of consideration.

We can do it. Our club exists because of the wealth of members who cultivate expensive pleasures after having met their own living requirements. The club exists because we maintain a place in which these members can expect to enjoy the most solicitous and expert service. Therefore, are we not losing the core of service when

we refuse to develop it by lack of consideration for those who serve?

The best waitresses, generally, are those girls making this field of service their sole means of livelihood. Taverns and popular resorts are attracting them simply because they offer more money. And all our little baits of pleasant atmosphere, healthy country location, and good food might better not be expressed. In importance to the waitress they amount to nothing. She wants good pay in exchange for the long hours and short season she sees behind the points of our offer.

For club welfare, we should make a concession here. In addition to the present salary of about \$50 per month, a charge of 10 cents added to each restaurant check would provide a further \$20 to \$30 per month, at least. As an incentive to waitresses to welcome patrons and to be quick in service this would be a workable solution, least to affect the club budget, and of slightest notice to individual members. Or 10% of the check, one-half of which could be withheld until the close of the season to insure full-season service, would be an excellent means. A Christmas bonus, also, is a gesture very likely to keep the club in a good waitress' mind as a cooperative place when the following season comes around.

The point is that right now we must consider a new plan, through which our individual clubs can rescue themselves from this still unorganized but threatening service problem. It is to our advantage to take the first step before we lose friendly relations with our helpers.

British Golfers Playing Later; Equipment to Cost More

ALLEX M. PIRIE, a leading figure in the British golf club manufacturing business, brings hope to the US golf business by commenting in the "Sports Trader," London, Eng., for July:

"Everything points to this being a record season for golf. The word 'season' does not, of course, apply to golf in these days as it did 20 or 30 years ago. I recall the times when about 75% of golfers put their clubs away about the end of September and forgot about the game until the spring. Happily, this hibernation does not prevail now and an equally large percentage of golfers keep their clubs in action from January to December."

Pirie's remarks confirm GOLFDOM's persistent declaration that the American golf business can be extended greatly by ef-

forts of pros and club officials, with a consequent increase in golf income.

The British manufacturer makes another statement in his "Sports Trader" story that may click on this side of the Atlantic. He says:

"At the present time, when the cost of practically every commodity is advancing, golf clubs seem to be getting cheaper. Why, I am not sure. There are too many people in the business who do not understand it. The Golf Section of the Federation (of British Manufacturers) has been reconstructed, but price maintenance does not form a part of their policy and at the present time the position seems to me to be in a hopeless state of chaos.

"Serious floods in the Mississippi valley have upset all calculations with regard to persimmon (and) have sent prices up to an alarming degree. In view of this and other advances, the price of golf clubs will require adjustment at a very early date."

Don Boyd Makes It Two in Row at Ohio Supts. Annual Tourney

OHIO Golf Course Supts. Assn. held its annual golf tournament Sept. 20 at Wyandot CC (Columbus district), with 80 superintendents, equipment men, pros and club officials in attendance. Don Boyd, Portage CC, again won the championship trophy. Boyd is president of the active organization. Mack Burke defeated Nelson Monigle for the runner-up trophy. There was approximately \$500 in prizes donated by equipment and supply dealers and the association.

Wyandot's supt., Lawrence Huber, shot one of those rounds that show the concern of greenkeepers with tournaments. Huber went out in 53 and came back in 37 after he'd heard the guests compliment conditions of the course. Francis Marzolf, pro-manager of the club, and Wm. Margraff, treas., officiated at the presentation of prizes.

The 1938 OGCSA tournament was awarded to Congress Lake, home club of Arthur Waterbury, sec.-treas. of the organization.

The association passed a resolution of thanks to the Canterbury GC and Western GA for courtesies extended during the 1937 Western Open. Ohio superintendents' association membership cards were honored at the tournament gate. Mel McLaren, supt., and Jack Way, pro, of Canterbury, were lauded at the association meeting for the condition of their course during the Western Open.