

# Modern Maintenance Was Born in Trouble

By JOHN GRAY

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Mr. Gray is the only Canadian golf course authority who has become president of the golf course superintendents' national organization which has, with few exceptions, a membership of U.S. superintendents. — Editor.

On the completion of the 25th year of this worthy magazine I wish to declare my confidence in the future of golf course maintenance as bearing even more valuable benefits than the profession has been able to provide in the past when our fellow workers were establishing an important and honored profession.



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I wish GOLFDOM continually increasing influence in its great work. Joe and Herb Graffis have done a job that would have dismayed many. The success of their journal has been especially impressive in view of the limitations of the field and the handicaps they,

with the rest of us in golf course maintenance, have had to overcome.

In 1921 the National Open was scheduled to be played at the Columbia course in Washington. This course was groomed and in perfect condition as courses always are for such an auspicious occasion. In three days, due to the terrific heat and disease, only a few blades of grass remained on the greens. Drs. Piper and Oakley and several others of the Department of Agriculture and the USGA found and transplanted these few shoots which had withstood the terrific heat and disease. The USGA made grants to the Experimental Gardens to further prevent such a recurrence of disaster ruining a golf course. This tragedy marked the birth of our profession as we know it today.

## Fewer Men — More Work

With the labor shortage of the boom following the depression the superintendents had to maintain standards with fewer man-hours at higher wages. There was only one way to do it. He had to get better and more equipment and make full use of the findings of the state colleges and USGA research. The superintendents now took their problems more and more to their research men and enlisted the aid of the manufacturers in

developing machinery and materials meeting their needs. This development gave us a fuller recognition by club officials and golfers, and attracted graduates of agricultural colleges to our profession. It is largely due to the efforts of course maintenance men and magazines such as GOLFDOM that the general public has come to realize that a hose, a rake, and a lawnmower zealously applied will not produce an acceptable piece of turf. Let us also remember the various state departments of agriculture which have been so generous in donating the time of their researchers to help solve our problems.

It is an acknowledged fact that chemistry is leading the world today. Our profession is one of the many that has benefited by it, and we expect even greater benefits.

We have found from experience that year to year budgeting not only benefits the club's financial conditions but betters the general condition of the course as capital investments can be made in equipment which would otherwise be too expensive if the budget were to run from month to month. Any cost accounting that does not provide any appreciable investment in equipment will not prove successful.

The chemistry of water, sun and soil is a never-ending mystery but we have made some progress. The Divine Plan does not include a solution of this mystery but as we advance step by step and begin to grasp some of the enormity of the chain reaction of soil chemistry we find, what few other professions are blessed to do, a wholehearted happy life in the great outdoors witnessing every day the magnitude of God's rich blessings. No man can follow this profession and remain an atheist. And it follows as the night the day a group of such men must surely prosper.

Second annual turf conference, sponsored by Central Plains Turf Foundation and Kansas State college, at Manhattan, Ks., Oct. 24-26, has program that looks like educational course at big national meeting. Expect record attendance for Ks., Okla. and Texas.