

# SAD, SWEET SONG of the OLD GREEN-CHAIRMAN

By HENRY C. MACKALL

(Mr. Mackall, a pioneer official of a famed club, tells his fellow members his historic tale. Henry's been playing so long he can remember Hiawatha as a young caddy and the forest primeval flanked the fairways.)

*Towering over Calhoun's waters  
Stands the club called Minikahda  
With its self-selected Governors  
And its President changing yearly.  
Yet its Grounds Committee Chairman  
Changes never—runs the golf course  
As if he only were the owner.  
Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin  
Are as children in comparison.  
Though the course is green and rolling  
From the first tee to the last one—  
Creek and lakes and trees upon it,  
Famous for its greens and fairways  
And the many tournaments played there—  
Amateurs—State and National—  
Open also, and the Western—  
Women's State, Trans-Mississippi—  
Invitation and Calcuttas—  
All have praised the course as perfect,  
Hard to score on—Yet this Chairman  
Started in right at the outset  
To rebuild it—change and alter  
Greens and bunkers and the fairways.  
No attention paid he  
To objections of the members.  
Claimed he even knew the answer  
Long before he heard the question.  
Built he first a brand-new toolhouse  
Moved it from the fourteenth fairway  
Then he fenced most all the golf course  
From the third tee round to Casey's  
Then in spite of all the members  
Not except the Board of Governors  
To whom he paid not much attention  
He rebuilt the greens in order  
First the ninth, the twelfth, the fourteenth,  
Tenth and 'leven, fifteenth, sixteenth,  
First and thirteenth, sixth and eighteenth,  
Finally did the fourth green over;  
Did it badly, then rebuilt it.  
Filled the bunkers for the ladies  
So their scores would reach their ages.  
Added to the tees in places—  
Upper, lower, front and back ones—  
Till the members, in confusion,  
Played the course in wrongful sequence,  
Hooked and sliced and dubbed and puttered,*

*Cursed the day he was made Chairman.  
Built he also parking places,  
Filled the swamp and grassed it over,  
Planted trees, not one but many,  
Killed the weeds, the dandelions,  
Curse of every golf course keeper.  
Bridges, monuments and white ducks  
Added he, to keep the golfer  
From thinking of his awful playing.  
Hoped to keep his mind on bogie  
For the par was too hard for him.  
Fringes left he on the edges,  
Rough was long and hard to play from,  
Greens were fast and hard to putt on,  
Bunkers deep and full of furrows—  
Made the golfers very angry  
Till they rose in wrath and cursed him.  
Smote the earth and dug up divots.  
So he finally yielded to them—  
Filled up bunkers, widened fairways,  
Watered greens to hold a pitch shot,  
Else the golfers couldn't make one.  
Cut the rough and made it fairway—  
Brassies only use they from it;  
Shortened tees and faced them squarely—  
Made the course just like the golfers—  
Soft and easy, slow and pleasant,  
Nice to look at, free from trouble.  
Anyone could score upon it.  
Now the moral of this saga,  
Of this tee and fairway story,  
Is the fact that we Americans  
Think that life is like a golf course  
And we want it nice and easy,  
Rough all cut and fairways widened,  
Bunkers filled and lies all grassy  
Winter rules to make shots easy  
Handicaps more like our ages,  
Everyone can win the sweepstakes,  
Tees all shaded, benches on them,  
Lest we tire from our labors.  
Telephones to keep from walking,  
Cola stands and water coolers—  
All for comfort, naught to toughen.  
'Tis the American way of living  
'Tis the way we've raised our children,  
Now they and we are paying for it.*