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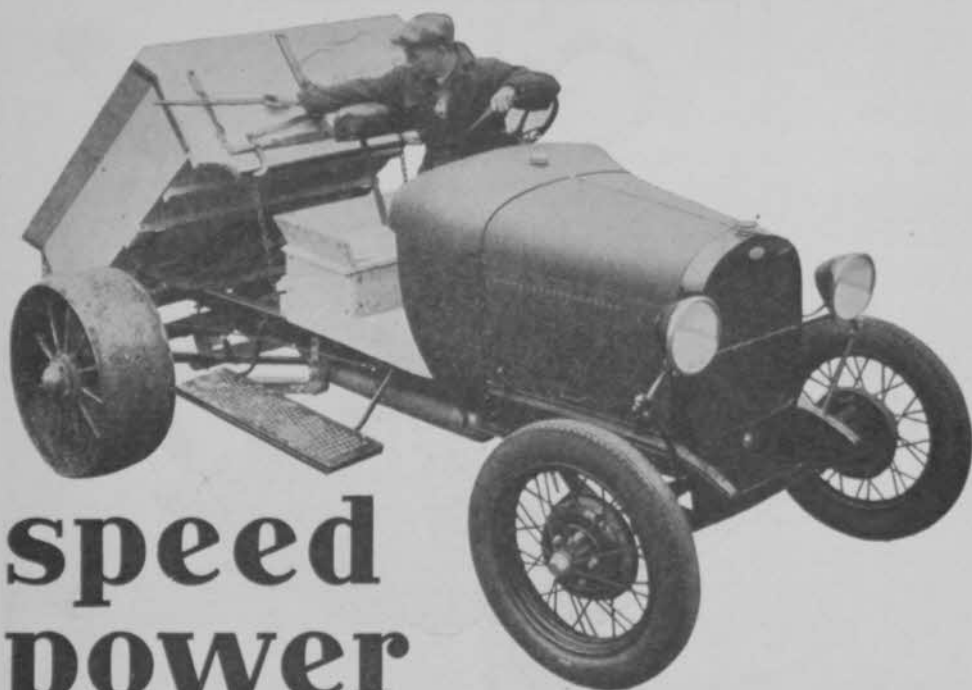
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# Golfdom

THE BUSINESS JOURNAL OF GOLF

SEPTEMBER, 1929



Medinah Country Club has one of the costly clubhouses of the Chicago district. It's a comparatively new club with landscaping requirements that constitute a real problem.

## LANDSCAPING PRINCIPLES THAT Dress Up Dame Nature IN HER COUNTRY CLUB FINERY

By RALPH W. CURTIS

Professor, Ornamental Horticulture, New York State College of Agriculture, Ithaca, N. Y.

LANDSCAPE plantings on golf courses should make these courses more useful and more beautiful. Use and beauty are the two objectives of all good landscape work. The closer these two coincide and work together in harmony the more perfect and satisfactory is the landscape result. In other words, it is entirely possible to plan and plant our golf courses just as our home grounds so that they serve well the practical requirements of daily use and convenience and at the same

time are beautiful and satisfying and a joy to live with

At the end of my front walk right where one pauses and turns to step to the door landing is a little clump of English lavender set against a dense, bushy hemlock brought in from the wild. Every day in the year the gray-green of the lavender seen against the dark green of the hemlock is a joy and inspiration. Such permanent bits of beauty are worth their weight in gold. There should be more of these scattered

throughout the daily routine of our lives. Mankind needs beauty and we are going to have more and more as time goes on.

There is abundant opportunity for both greater convenience and greater beauty in American golf courses today. The field is immense and the objectives well worth while. I am very glad that a program of landscape improvement is being stressed by GOLFDOM and similar magazines. Such a program will bring these matters forcibly to the attention of greenkeepers and members of green-committees who are, or should be, alive to the situation. From these men results may be expected. The thought is very encouraging to me and I am glad to do what I can to help the cause along.

### Beauty and Use Allied

In this brief article I shall start the discussion by mentioning a few of the ways in which good landscape plantings may increase both the efficiency and the beauty of golf courses. The simplest and most important of these are boundary plantings, background plantings, and special tree groups and specimens.

Boundary plantings may serve to hide unsightly objects such as sheds or railroad sidings or to screen buildings which are too near. In this case privacy may be secured and the impression created that one is removed from the objectionable nearness of other activities. The necessity of boundary masses like these is thoroughly recognized in all well designed large city parks where the problem becomes one of developing a country landscape in the midst of the city.

While boundary plantings may be very serviceable in some parts of the golf course, they may be unnecessary or even quite objectionable in other parts where beautiful views open up to the outside. In such places a vine covered fence or a low planting of shrubs with quite neutral appearance may be all that is needed. Any objects near a view line, i. e., objects over which you look, like a fence or a shrub border or objects between which you look, like trees which frame in a view, should be quiet and neutral in appearance so that they will not distract the attention from the view itself. In this case the distant view is the point of interest and not the nearby boundary planting.

Again, a boundary planting of tall trees which are dense and preferably evergreen and are serving well as a permanent screen against outside objects may become also

an effective background for attractive shrubs and smaller trees planted on the inside where they may be seen and enjoyed from the course and often from the clubhouse itself.

This brings us very conveniently to a discussion of background planting. We can all recall the beauty of some old house with its background and framework of trees. Such trees normal in form and color like elm, oak, maple, beech, pine, or hemlock make the best kind of background because they are neutral and therefore do not distract the attention from the building or other object which is the center of interest.

### Careful With Emphasis

At this point let me remind you that the great majority of our trees and shrubs have this quiet, neutral appearance. Only a few trees are very definite or positive in form. The lombardy poplar is the best example of a large tree with positive upright form. It is the exclamation point of the landscape and exclamation points should be used carefully and with moderation. They should not be sprinkled all over the golf course. Neither should blue spruces nor any of the other spruces or firs be used to excess. Their form is very pyramidal and therefore unusual and positive and not quiet and restful. Of course, we want variety and interest on the golf course, in fact variety is the very essence of good golf course construction. But there is no reason why we should go to excess in landscape planting any more than in dress or language or anything else. If we stand on any natural golf course which has not been artificially planted and look at the normal landscape masses around us, including woodland growth, tree groups, and individual specimens standing out alone, we will see that at least three-fourths and usually as much as four-fifths of the landscape environment is neutral and quiet in appearance. Of course, all golf courses are not alike and some are more rugged and picturesque with more variety and accent than others but it is a very safe rule to be conservative and not go to excess in the use of landscape plants which are peculiar either in form, color, or other condition.

The landscaping on golf courses just as that of any other good landscaping job should fit into the local environment. When the job is done, it should look as though it just grew out of the situation and is a part of it. Therefore, landscape



Nature is a safe, sane and conservative landscape artist as this scene at the Lake Tippecanoe Country Club shows.

plantings should be mostly of native materials or of materials which, while cultivated or foreign, yet are similar in appearance to the natural materials of the locality. Of course, there are exceptions to this general rule especially in the case of plantings about the clubhouse. In these situations near buildings where things are architectural and artificial any way, we may use any foreign plants we wish provided they have good form and foliage and sufficient denseness, if denseness is needed, or any other requirement such as height or color which is appropriate. Landscape plantings should be appropriate and fitting no matter where they are. In the more formal situations about the clubhouse, they should be regular and formal; in the more natural situations about the fairways and in the rough, they should be irregular and naturalistic.

#### Shot Guides

There is one more common need for backgrounds on golf courses and that is about putting greens to increase visibility. A group of pine trees at the back or sides of a putting green will not only make a beautiful setting and background for the green but will also give direction to the line of play and a definite measure for the distance to be played. Deciduous trees, i. e. those which drop their leaves in the fall, are less desirable unless placed on the leeward side of the green so that the leaves will naturally blow away and not become a nuisance and extra care on the green. Here again you will notice that I have suggested pines as a background planting for the green rather than the stiffer and more pointed spruce and fir

type. It is entirely possible to use these more positive forms occasionally. Even a group of lombardy poplars now and then in an especially bold situation or where some special accent is desired may be entirely correct. But these strong accents and peculiar effects are not the things we want to live with all the time. They are the exceptions like the emergencies and the spicy places in life, a few will go a long way. If there are too many of them, we soon grow tired of them.

Finally, let me speak of one situation where tree groups or single specimen trees may be planted either in the rough or at the side of the fairway. These positions should be carefully located along the line of play usually near the end of a shot so that the tree or the group of trees will serve as a guide to the direction as well as a measure for the distance of the play. In addition to these useful purposes, such plantings will improve the natural appearance of a golf course and also afford occasional shady spots which often are very grateful along the way.

#### Determining Needs

In a brief article of this kind for general reading all over the United States, it is impossible to be very specific. I would like to give lists of trees and shrubs which would be useful for landscape work on golf courses but these must necessarily vary with the situation. What we use in New York state would not be used in California. The plains of the middle west are not like the mountains of the east. New York is different from Chicago and even Boston from Philadelphia.

I can, however, give a little general ad-

vice which may be helpful. Do not start out first to get a list of plants or to remember the names of certain plants that you think you want to use. Instead, go out and stand in front of the situation that you know is not right and that you want to make better somehow. Ask yourself, "What is needed?" Do you want tall trees? Should they be evergreen and dense for permanent screen and background all the year through? Does this situation need a tree under whose branches you can look, which like an American elm is tall and umbrella-like, which will frame the view and at the same time cast a grateful shade about the house or on the fairway? Do you want to increase the interest of the boundary planting on the inside by smaller flowering trees for spring or some bright autumn colors for fall? This is the way to approach your problem. Figure it out in the abstract first. State the requirements and then write the specifications by asking your local nurseryman or other plant authority what specific plants will fill these requirements.

Better still let me urge all who can to seek the advice and service of a good landscape architect. If you can not do this then at least enlist the help of the best men and women in the club. There are usually some members in every club who are interested and public spirited enough to talk these matters over. However, do not ask too much advice. Pick two or three people who are best fitted and then go over the situation with them, if possible separately and at different times. Perhaps follow this by a joint meeting for general discussion but at all times reserve final decision for yourself. Then make up your mind and go ahead as best you can. The way to do things is to do them. Keep an open mind and profit by other folks' mistakes rather than your own, if you can.

Here in the north we transplant narrow leaf evergreens such as cedar, arbor vitae, pine, hemlock, spruce, fir, and Japanese yew in late summer or early fall after the hottest part of the year is over. If you need such work done, it must be done soon and carefully.

Always move evergreens with as much earth around the roots as possible. Firm the soil thoroughly and never let the plant dry out either during the planting or afterward.

Deciduous plants are moved just as the leaves begin to fall or even earlier as soon

as autumn color begins to show. Ordinarily spring is the safest time for transplanting in the north because it is changing the plant just ahead of a good growing season. You are working with Nature, instead of against her, and this is a pretty safe rule to follow. However, evergreens (especially the tougher narrow-leaf types) may be moved in the fall provided you do it early enough so that the plants have time to get well established and make some root growth before winter sets in. Also the soil is often drier in the fall for planting hardy deciduous trees and shrubs and also there is usually less rush of work than in spring. For these reasons it is usually wise to get as much of the hardy deciduous material planted in the fall as possible and leave the spring for the planting of broadleaf evergreens and some of the more particular deciduous plants which are more difficult to plant such as oak, beech, and magnolia.

If I can help further in this improvement work, I shall do it gladly. I wish every greenkeeper success in his efforts be they large or small and I hope he makes the fewest mistakes possible.

## New England Greens Show at Brae Burn Sept. 9

THE annual golf course and equipment show of the New England Service Bureau will be held at Brae Burn C. C., West Newton, Mass., Sept. 9. New England stages a splendid meeting and demonstration at its annual event and the prospects this year promise a show that's "bigger and better." All greenkeepers and chairmen are cordially invited. Exhibition of equipment and supplies are by invitation only. Frederick C. Hood, chairman of the executive committee of the New England Service Bureau and John Shanahan, president of the New England Greenkeepers' club head the sponsors of the affair.

## R. G. ICELY, WILSON FACTORY CHIEF, DIES

Chicago, Ill.—R. G. Icelly, Wilson-Western Sporting Goods Co. plant superintendent, and brother of the organization's president, L. B. Icelly, died here, Aug. 10, after a prolonged illness.

For a number of years after leaving Sears, Roebuck & Co., where he had been head of the hardware department, Mr. Icelly was connected with Wilson-Western, and highly esteemed as a friend and as a manufacturer by the many in the sporting goods field who knew him.

# Pros and Makers Study "Hall Plan" of Buying

By HERB GRAFFIS

**W**HAT some close students consider the most logical foundation for a pro collective buying plan is that proposed by Charles Hall, pro at the Country Club, Birmingham, Ala., and president of the Southeastern P. G. A.

In brief, the Hall plan calls for the pros placing their orders for opening of the season stocks at the close of the previous season. It involves advance cash payments to be handled by sums deposited with the various sections of the P. G. A. and paid to the manufacturers in the fall when the orders are placed. This, Hall and the supporters of his plan maintain, would fully earn a substantial discount because of the firm orders it would give manufacturers far enough ahead to enable them to keep a good factory force on during the winter and because of the financing it would provide for factories during the selling "off season." Sums based on each pro participant's annual buying would be required as a down payment in advance before the individual pro could share in the additional discount contemplated in the plan.

The pros who are entertaining high hopes for the adoption of the general policy of this plan point out that basically it is one that brings about a consummation devoutly to be wished by the manufacturers. Many of the boys are stirring up discussion of the plan so when the Ogg collective buying committee reports at the P. G. A. annual meeting to be held at Atlanta the first week in November some definite agreement with the manufacturers may be reached as the Golf Club Manufacturers' association will hold its convention in the Georgia metropolis at the same time.

## View Various Angles

One of the shortcomings of golf as a business is the seasonal element. Despite the popular impression that everyone in the golf business is getting richer faster than the cash registers can ring up the totals, it takes only a few minutes with pros or manufacturers to reveal that the public is getting its golf goods cheap, considering

the factors that have a heavy bearing on profits in any business that has a pronounced peak load and a sales curve valley that the resort business of the south and California can't push up to the point where any degree of a reasonably even level is maintained.

Some of the probers of the plan raise the question of pro financing on this basis. When a pro gets through his season the prospect of several months of non-productive time may cause him to keep the band tightly wrapped around the roll rather than take an increased profit next year by cutting loose from a very respectable part of what his net earnings have been during the previous season. This is answered by the plan's proponents by saying that it would be a good thing if the pros would be educated in availing themselves of their bankers' help in financing. It would be a great education in business methods and an ever present incentive to thrift with bankers on the job as assistant guardian angels of the pros' money.

As we see it, the plan also would provide some impetus to more effective pro merchandising because the boys would be anxious to get their money back as soon as they could the following spring.

## May Help Earlier Hiring

At the start, the plan as now outlined, would mean that the biggest savings would be for the pros who are in the best positions for they are the ones who are so sure of their jobs the spring following that they can go ahead and order. The other fellows would have to take a long chance or be out of luck. Perhaps in the latter respect it would serve to correct one of the lamentable conditions the pro has to face—the late hiring of the clubs. During the course of a year GOLFDOM is directly instrumental in getting approximately a hundred pros and greenkeepers located. About nine-tenths of these are engaged in the six weeks immediately before the opening of the season. It makes it tough for the pros for they are the victims of uncertainty all winter, the club



doesn't get the benefit of having some good man spend his winter planning how he is going to serve his new club with surpassing satisfaction next season, and we spend a lot of the time, at a period vital to our own financial salvation, writing, wiring, telephoning and visiting clubs and fellows who want to get signed up.

If the pros have something that will get the clubs to sign up their men well in advance, by having it generally known what it means to the pro's actual cash outlay for the merchandise he will offer to the members, it may serve to eliminate this thoughtless and avoidable delay in hiring.

### What Help to Makers?

What seems on surface inspection to be a quite helpful and important phase of the plan is the aid that will be extended to the manufacturers' financing. To what extent this will be of assistance it is impossible to determine as it calls for prying into business details that properly are private property. However we always have held to the opinion that the pros should not unreservedly criticize club makers for letting go of big and partly frozen stocks of merchandise in the plant when the goods meant conversion of a frozen asset into cash required by good business judgment and nature's first law of self-preservation. Our howl has been in voicing the pros' protest that such sales are often made without consideration of the pros' right of protection against price demoralization—a right he has earned by making the golf market and by keeping in the saddle as the one who primarily forms and guides the public preference in golf goods.

With the pros buying in big units, paying in advance, and ironing out the expensive and violent variations in the manufacturing curve they give the manufacturers a big money inducement ranking the pros as buyers with the large spot cash stores. When these stores get busy with the bait of spot cash, it must be conceded by any pro who knows his business A. B. C.s that a manufacturer is going to be sorely tempted even though the manufacturer knows the store buyer is going to take the maker's pound of flesh in beating the price down.

### Pro Advance Must Continue

That point is brought up by those who think Charley Hall has put forth the germ of the idea that eventually will develop into a solution of the pros' problem of

buying on a fairly balanced basis with the rest of the retail golf trade.

During the past couple of years the pro has shown an astounding progress in his merchandising at his club. There is no manufacturer who is in intimate contact with the golf field who hesitates to concede this truth and to compliment the pro for coming out and claiming his due when it was being subjected to question—question that now has been definitely banished. If the Hall plan is the one that Willie Ogg's committee passes on for action at the Atlanta meeting as being the one it thinks will be valuable to the manufacturers as well as to the pros, then it is up to the makers.

In the meanwhile it will do no harm to thoroughly thresh out the plan, for and against, so each phase may be thoroughly surveyed and appraised. Any comments that pros or manufacturers have to make on the basis of this plan as above set forth, or any suggestions of policy or of detail that may be advanced, GOLFDOM will be glad to receive for publication, either under the writer's signature or anonymously, as the writer instructs us.

### Midwest Greenkeepers' Show Set for Sept. 9

SECOND annual equipment demonstration of the Midwest Greenkeepers association will be held at Sunset Valley Golf club, Highland Park, Ill., Sept. 9. The initial presentation of this event was well attended despite the rain and brought forth many interesting and practical demonstrations.

Greenkeepers, green-chairmen and supply men are invited by the Midwest organization to attend the affair and to make demonstrations of equipment and supplies. Details relative to exhibits may be secured from Peter Stewart, Sec. of the Midwest Greenkeepers association, 543 Central ave., Highland Park, Ill.

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# No Uniform Classification of CLUB MEMBERSHIPS

## House Operation Survey Shows

By JACK FULTON, Jr.

**C**ONTINUING GOLFDOM'S probe into standard practices of clubhouse operating methods, an investigation of the types of membership ordinarily offered at various clubs is necessary in order to understand what is behind these policies. This article is based on the questionnaire sent out recently to 200 representative country clubs, located in every state in the Union.

Analysis of the questionnaires returned indicates that the average number of members (of all classes) is over 300, and is the first surprise uncovered by the survey. Published figures on the membership roster of clubs have previously given estimates of 200 to 250. GOLFDOM'S survey indicates this figure is too low.

Dues at clubs returning the questionnaire range from as low as \$20 a year up to the top figure of \$400. This does not mean that there are not certain ultra-exclusive clubs in the country charging far higher dues, but in this particular questionnaire, no more expensive club made a return. Average dues seem to run around \$150.

### All Sorts of Members

The classification of various types of memberships in country clubs is almost legion. In addition to regular, women's, junior and non-resident membership classifications, found in practically all clubs, each club has at least two other types of membership under various names, carrying various privileges and at varying dues. We find memberships for widows, female relatives of regular members, for students, army and navy officers, the clergy, and the press. We find numerous varieties of temporary memberships, generally known as "playing" or "seasonal" memberships. And we find that each club has established its own schedule of dues and initiation fee for these various classifications.

### Non-Residents

About 80 per cent of the clubs making the return have non-resident memberships,

and ordinarily a man may qualify as a non-resident if he lives without the county, or which is saying about the same thing, more than 50 miles from the club. Dues are generally \$50 a year, although in some cases they run as high as \$150 and in others as low as \$30.

As a general rule, a non-resident membership in a club carries no privilege for other members of the non-resident's family, although in a few cases wives of non-residents may play the course on payment of regular green fees. A number of clubs have two classes of non-resident members—depending on the distance away from the club the non-resident lives. The Losantiville Country Club (Cincinnati), for example, has a non-resident membership for those living within 100 miles of the club, at \$100 a year, and those living beyond 100 miles, at \$50 a year.

The Teugega Country Club (Rome, N. Y.) has non-resident members living outside a 5-mile radius of the club, but within 20 miles; these members pay \$75 a year. All outside of the 20-mile radius pay \$25 a year.

At about half of the clubs making returns, wives of regular members are permitted privileges of the course and clubhouse without payment of dues, but their use of the course is generally restricted to week days and Saturday mornings, with no play permitted Saturday afternoons, Sundays or holidays. At those clubs charging dues for wives of members, the yearly cost runs from \$10 to as high as \$100, with the general average around \$30.

Practically all clubs have junior memberships, and the age limit in four clubs out of five is 21 years. In some cases, clubs permit junior play at a nominal annual fee up to the age of 21, after which these juniors pay increasingly larger dues each year until they reach the age of 30, at which time they must take out a regular membership in the club. This type of membership has been established to aid the young fellow just starting in business

who can't afford to pay the full rate for the golf privileges. In 90 per cent of the clubs, junior members must be sons of regular members. In the other 10 per cent, any young fellow may join the club, provided he is sponsored by a regular member, at the reduced junior dues.

### Social Memberships

A number of clubs have social memberships carrying all privileges of the club with the exception of golf, at dues considerably less than the regular membership, generally around \$30 a year. Occasionally these social members may play golf, on week days only, at the customary green fees. Inducements to social members other than the privileges of eating and entertaining at the clubhouse include dances, card parties and tennis, and in some cases swimming and winter sports.

### Special Members

A number of clubs reported unusual types of membership that have considerable possibilities for clubs needing added house business. The Orange County Golf Club of Middletown, N. Y., for example, charges regular dues of \$50 for man and wife and \$10 extra for each additional playing member of the family. Single men pay \$40; single women, \$35. The Country Club of Birmingham (Ala.) has a temporary membership at a cost of \$50 per year for golfers temporarily in the city. The Sioux City (Ia.) Country Club has a special membership for widows of members at \$40 a year, as compared with the regular membership fee of \$75. This club also has a special membership for clergymen at \$50. The South Bend (Ind.) Country Club allows students to become members at a special fee of \$25 a year. The Dubuque (Ia.) Golf Club has a membership for \$45 a year open to men under 24 years of age and to women regardless of age. Children of members may play golf or tennis for \$5 a year.

The Losantville Country Club at Cincinnati has a special women's membership at \$50 a year for those not relatives of regular members. Widows of regular members may have full privileges at the same price. Wives pay \$30. The Lenox Hills Golf Club, New York City, offers a special playing membership at dues of \$71.50 per year, but in addition these members must pay the daily green fees each time they play.

Attention of country clubs located in resort territory is called to the special

membership offered by the Bel-Air Country Club of Los Angeles, known as a "temporary" membership. It costs \$100 for 60 days. These members must be sponsored by a regular member and approved by the Board of Governors.

### Privilege Cards

At Detroit, Mich., the Plum Hollow Golf Club issues privilege cards each year free of charge to 5 clergymen, 5 newspaper men, officers of the Detroit District G. A., and to the presidents and secretaries of all golf clubs in the district. This is a splendid idea and one that could well be followed by almost every golf club for the purpose of creating local good will.

In addition to an investigation of the various types of memberships, GOLFDOM'S questionnaire delved into the subject of green fees and guest privileges with some interesting results. The great majority of clubs charge \$2 for week-day play and an increased amount, generally \$3, \$4 or \$5, for play on Saturday or Sunday. In some instances, out-of-town guests pay smaller green fees than guests whose residence is in the immediate vicinity of the club.

There are varying restrictions on the number of times the same guest may be brought to the club. In some, he may be brought any number of times without limit. In others, they are limited to once a month, twice a month, six times a year, etc. As a general rule, there is no restriction as to the number of times a non-resident may play the course.

A few golf clubs allow any golfer, whether introduced by a member or not, to play the course upon payment of regular green fees. A few of these clubs restrict these uninitiated guests to men who are members of some U. S. G. A. golf club. Fully three-fourths of the clubs making returns, however, do not permit strangers to play their courses without introduction by a member.

The questionnaire made it very apparent that almost every type of membership one can think of has been tried at some club or another. The prime reason behind this wide variety is to increase the patronage at the club and thus boost the house business, generally without increasing course congestion unduly. Among the classifications mentioned in this article are some that will fit nicely into the needs of many of the nation's clubs, and can well be adopted, particularly where added patronage would be welcome.