

Golfdom

The Business Journal of Golf
REG. U. S. PATENT OFFICE

VOL. 5

MAY, 1931

NO. 5

What Big Business Says To Clubs About Organization

By ARTHUR E. SWANSON*

WHEN I use the word "business organization," I know I have a different connotation from most persons. Business organization to a large number of people means "personnel." Ask the average man about his organization, and he is apt to think about his managers and sub-managers. When he says, "I am well organized in that business," he frequently means he has good men; he thinks of them as his "organization." That is a very common connotation that is given to the word.

Others confuse "organization" with *management*, and they say they are "well organized" when they really mean they are well *managed*. Very few business men, I have found, have a conception of organization, which is something in and of itself, and separate from either personnel or management.

THESE are days of clinics and major operations on club control bodies. Dr. Swanson, the noted management engineer, studies the golf club as a strictly business enterprise. His references to "manager" are not to be read as the term "manager" is generally understood in the golf field today. Under most of today's club organization plans, "president" or "general manager" might be accurately substituted for "manager."

Frequently a business man's problem of organization is solved when he gets a good manager, but it isn't solved because he happens to get a good manager; it is solved because when he gets that manager, he frequently in that manager also gets a good organizer, who, in organizing the business well, makes it possible

to manage it well. It is, I think, because of that that so many business men think of their organization as their personnel.

And the businessman himself doesn't really see that there has been a separate, distinct job of organizing done, because it has been done by a man whom he hasn't hired specifically for organization work, but for management; but who has, by virtue of his experience, or by virtue of his many native talents, been a good organizer.

The confusion between management and organization lies in the fact that organization is a tool of management. Organiza-

In the accompanying article, Dr. Swanson likens country club organization to an hour-glass—two triangles meeting at a point. GOLFDOM modifies this concept slightly to present club organization as a tree.

The root system represents the Ownership organization, with authority and responsibility gradually narrowed, first to the Board of Governors, then to Committees who, through their Chairmen and finally the President, act in all club matters.

The tree's branches represent the Operating organization of a club. At the base stands a General Manager (not to be confused with a "House Manager," the full and correct title for managers in most clubs today), who is responsible to and takes orders from the President only. Note that no other individual in the Ownership organization is authorized, under this plan, to contact the Manager on club matters.

Following the diagram outwardly along the various branches of the tree, it will be observed there are nine individuals, of varied importance to the club organization, who receive orders from and report to the General Manager: bookkeeper, stenographer, greenkeeper, head locker-man, storeroom man, housekeeper, steward, professional, and membership solicitor. These nine employes in turn delegate their authority to heads of smaller divisions under them, until eventually the individual in charge of the most minor duties of each branch is reached.

Thus, every employee is responsible to only one superior, from whom he also obtains his authority. No chance for conflicting orders by well meaning but contrary minded superiors.

Obviously, the club diagrammed here is large and complex, with well over 100 employes. Many clubs have smaller and simpler organizations, but all duties indicated on the diagram must be performed by someone, unless the department actually does not exist. It is simply a case of one employe covering duties performed by two or more employes in a larger establishment.

This is not the most common type of golf club organization. The average club turns the house departments over to a House Manager, who reports to the House Chairman; the grounds over to a Greenkeeper, who reports to the Green-Chairman; and the golf department over to a Pro, who reports to the Sports & Pastimes Chairman. This cannot help but result in certain overlapping of authority, with consequent waste motion and inefficiency.

The great advantage claimed for the Functional plan of organization, diagrammed here and discussed in detail in Dr. Swanson's article, is the definite fixation of responsibility and authority in smooth-flowing channels from the highest executive down to the lowest employee.

tion is a device that a good manager uses to make it possible to manage the business well. Just as a carpenter uses a saw and hammer for specific purposes, a good manager uses the tool of organization, and he organizes his business in order to manage it more effectively.

Five Steps to Organization.

One of the ideas in organization is the recognition of an objective. You cannot organize unless you organize for a purpose; thus, it is essential in an effort to organize successfully that you definitely have in your mind an objective, the thing for which you are organizing. That is the first step in organization.

The second step in organization is that you have enumerated before you, or in your mind, all the activities in the business you are going to organize, because organization involves doing something with those activities. By activities I mean, in a club, feeding activity, entertainment activity, service activity, mainte-

nance activity, and a long series of other activities.

Your third step is to group these activities for the purpose of creating units of activities. These units can then be assigned to individuals for the purpose of supervision and for the purpose of execution.

Having grouped your activities, the fourth step in organization is to assign those activities to individuals, and that is where we merge into management.

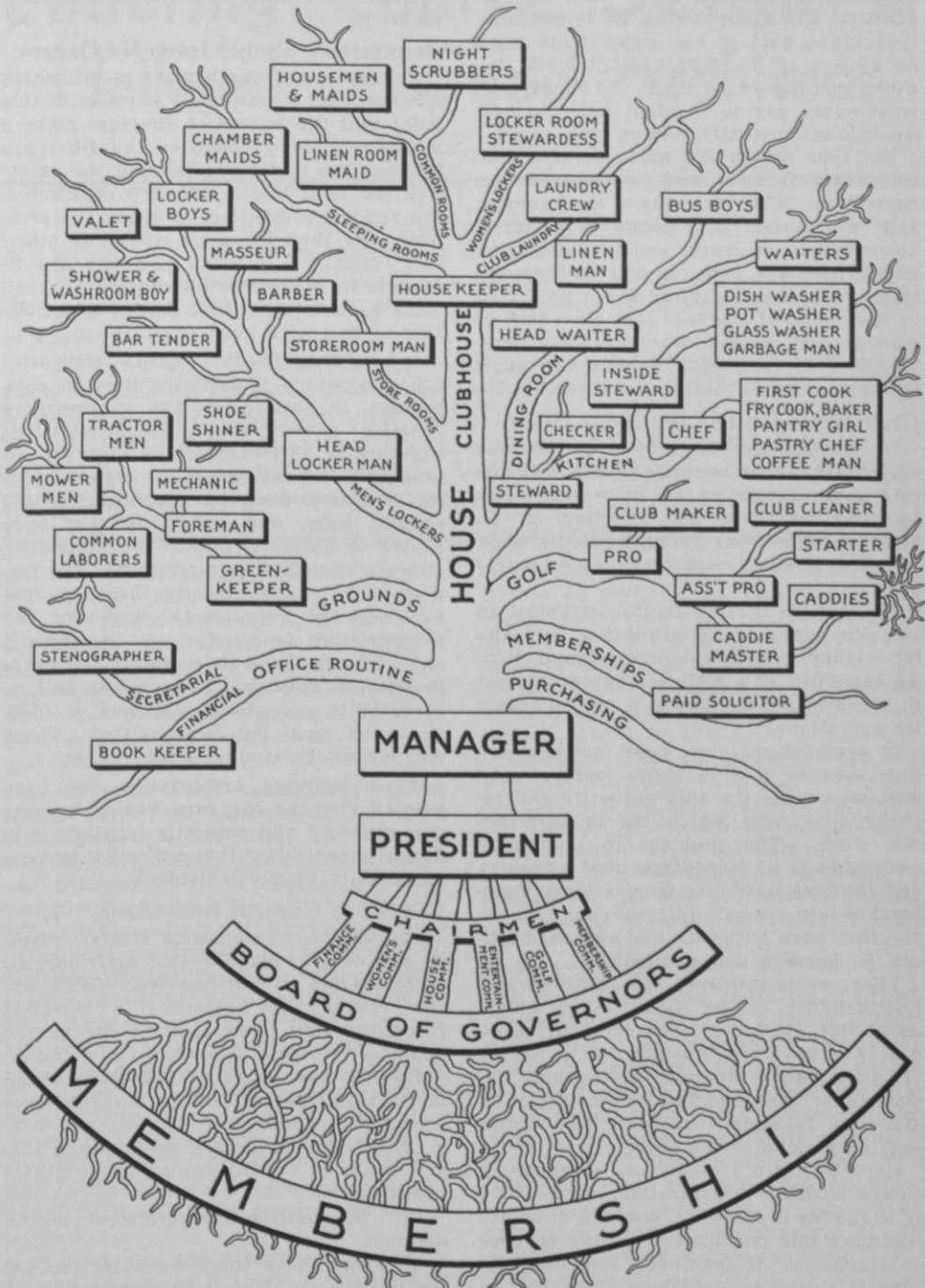
Your fifth and final step in organization is to relate those groups of activities to each other so that you have a complete tie-in from the top to the bottom of your set of activities.

Thus, organization is not a simple thing; it is complex, but nevertheless very definite.

Manager Organizes Constantly

Consider next the relationship between management and organization. I stated that the two are very closely related, and

THE GOLF CLUB "TREE"



(Explanatory note on diagram appears at top of page 22)

that organization is a tool of management. Now, in actual practice, when a manager is operating his club, he is constantly organizing and re-organizing, he is constantly doing a part of his organization work as a part of his management work, because business is not static. It changes almost every day to re-adapt itself to new conditions constantly coming up.

For that reason the manager of a club constantly remodels and revamps his organization. That interplay of management and organization is a condition which is necessary to business, and is a condition which, I believe, explains why so frequently the idea of organization is not separated in the minds of business men from that of management, because the two are so closely allied in fact, as a part of the day's work.

Club Make-Up Is Like Hour Glass.

In approaching the subject of business organization as it is applied to clubs, I picture organization as an hour glass, two isosceles triangles, one standing on its apex and the other standing on its base, the two meeting each other at a central point.

The bottom triangle in this organization is your *ownership* organization, and the top triangle is your *operating* organization. An organizer of a club has two problems: to organize the membership, and to organize operations.

In organizing a club, your members are your owners, and in these members, as owners, resides the only authority and responsibility with which the organization can work. The problem in organizing ownership is to concentrate that authority and that responsibility from a large membership into a small unit, necessary in order that such authority and responsibility can be handled and manipulated.

Thus, we concentrate the authority and responsibility of the membership into a small unit, known as a board of directors, who will have two functions to perform: (1) a legislative function (determining the policies of the organization) and (2) an executive function (executing the wishes and the policies of the board).

Here is where a great deal of confusion enters business organization, particularly as it applies to clubs. A board of directors organizes into committees for the purpose of legislation. It appoints a committee on admissions, another on house, another on maintenance, and another on finance. The function of such committees is to study

their problems, and to recommend back to the board the policies which should govern the board in its execution and management.

Committees Should Issue No Orders.

Committees, as such, have no executive function, and it frequently happens at this point that the boards of directors make a mistake by not recognizing the difference between the legislative job and the executive job with which they are confronted. We appoint committees to study the problems, and then for some reason or other, that committee is given authority also to execute its own recommendations. I shall come back to show how that cannot function in line with good organization.

In addition to the board's legislative function, which it performs through committees, as outlined, it has an executive function; namely, that of seeing to it that the various activities of the club are attended to and performed. It organizes for its executive work by appointing a still smaller body, and *eventually that body should organize itself into one individual*, either a chairman or a president, who represents its single executive head, so that for executive purposes *the authority and responsibility tapers down to one individual*. Why is that rule essential? Because in business organization authority and responsibility are coterminous, must be identical, and must not be separated. There will always be trouble when you do.

As a business organization, we have learned that the one sure way of keeping responsibility and authority together is to finally taper down this authority and responsibility to one individual.

Checks to Control Individual.

Immediately the question arises: "How do you dare to place in that individual all authority and all responsibility? What are the checks and balances?" Business recognizes that there must be checks and balances; we have three ways of doing it:

(1) By the board of directors laying down very definite policies for the chief executive to follow.

(2) By laying down a very definite budget, which is a detailed plan of control of operations.

(3) By auditing the results of the individual.

By using these three methods, you get the full benefit of correct organization, because you get your authority and respon-

(Continued on page 142)

Enduring Course Design Is Hallmark of Good Architect

By DR. ALISTER MAC KENZIE

Dr. Alister MacKenzie, veteran and successful golf architect, is the author of a golf course book that will be published in the near future.

MacKenzie's international fame is considerably due to his high ratings of finality of design and insistence upon a pleasurable character of courses for dubs as well as stars.

In the advance publication of some chapters from Dr. MacKenzie's forthcoming book, *GOLFDOM* brings to light in the United States the inside of some historic, friendly arguments he had with noted English professionals.

MacKenzie doesn't stray from the ultimate idea of thrift in golf course architecture, and in attaining this economy by finality of design he has had a prominent place in defining today's first-class course architecture.

ECONOMY in course construction consists of obtaining the best possible results at a minimum of cost. The more one sees of golf courses, the more one realizes the importance of doing construction work really well, so that it is likely to be of a permanent character. It is impossible to lay too much stress on the importance of finality.

Every golfer knows examples of courses which have been constructed and then rearranged over and over, and the fact that in every country thousands of dollars are frittered away in doing bad work which will ultimately have to be scrapped is particularly distressful to a true economist. As an example of unnecessary labor and expense, the writer has in mind a green which has been entirely relaid on four different occasions. In the first instance, it was of the ridge and furrow type; the turf was then lifted and it was made dead flat. A new chairman was appointed, and he made it a more pronounced ridge and furrow than ever; it was then relaid and made flat again, and has now been entirely reconstructed with undulations of a more natural outline and appearance.

In discussing the question of finality, it is well to inquire if there are any really first-class courses in existence which have been unaltered for a considerable number of years and still remain, not only a good

test of golf, but a source of pleasure to all classes of players. Is there any golfing course which not even the rubber cored ball has spoiled? And, if so, what is the cause of its abiding popularity?

The only one I know is the Old Course at St. Andrews, Scotland. It was the most popular course in the world in the days of the feather ball, the guttie and the Haskell, and today Bobby Jones considers that not only is it the best course in the world, but that he gets more joy in playing it than a hundred other golf courses.

Today, with the exception of lengthening some of the tees St. Andrews remains substantially the same as it was 70 years ago.

Joy for the Duffer

It (as well as some of the other British championship courses to a lesser extent) still retains its popularity among all classes of amateurs. In fact, it is characteristic of all the best courses that they are just as pleasurable (possibly even more so) to the long handicap man as to the player of championship rank. This fact knocks on the head the argument which is often used that the modern expert tries to spoil the pleasure of the player by making courses too difficult.

The successful negotiation of difficulties is a source of pleasure to all classes of players.

The origin of St. Andrews is shrouded in



The thrill of playing a well laid-out golf hole, such as this 13th at Cypress Point, a MacKenzie course, is never destroyed by "improvements" in clubs or ball.

mystery, but the fact of the matter is that St. Andrews differs from others in that it has always been deemed a sacrilege to interfere with its natural beauties, and it has been left almost untouched for centuries. No greenkeeper has ever dared to shave down its natural undulations. Most of the bunkers have been left where nature placed them, and others have originated from the winds and the rains enlarging divot marks left by the players, and some of them possibly by the greenkeepers converting those hollows where most players congregated, into bunkers, owing to the difficulty of keeping them free from divot marks. The bunkers at St. Andrews are thus placed in positions where players are most likely to go—in fact, in the precise positions which the ordinary green-committee would suggest should be filled up. This is a significant fact, and tends to show that many of our existing ideas in regard to hazards have been erroneous.

I frequently have mentioned what John L. Low pointed out years ago that no hazard is unfair wherever it is placed, and this particularly applies if the hazard is visible, as it should be obvious that if a player sees a hazard in front of him and promptly plunks his ball into it he has chosen the wrong spot.

I once heard a Yorkshire tale of an old farmer finding a man in his coal-house during a recent coal strike. He put his head through the window and said, "Now, I've copped you picking out all the big lumps." A voice from the darkness came, "You're a liar, I'm taking them as they come."

Take Them as They Come

On the old type of course like St. Andrews, the players have to take the hazards as they come, and do their best to avoid them.

There is nothing new about the ideas of the golf architect: he simply wishes to reproduce the old ideas as exemplified in the old natural courses like St. Andrews, those courses which were played on before over-zealous green-committees demolished the natural undulations of the fairways and greens, and made greens like lawns for croquet, tennis or anything else except golf, and erected eyesores in the shape of straight lines of cop bunkers, instead of emphasizing the natural curves of the links.

In the old view of golf, there was no main thoroughfare to the hole: the player had to use his own judgment without the aid of guide posts, or other adventitious means of finding his way. St. Andrews still retains the old traditions of golf. For

example, I have frequently seen four individuals playing the long hole (the fourteenth), and deliberately attacking it in four different ways, and three out of the four probably right in playing it in the ways they selected.

Play with the Head

At St. Andrews "It needs a heid to play gowf," as the caddie said to the professor. St. Andrews is a living example of the possibility of obtaining finality.

There are many golf architects whose courses have never been appreciably altered. I do not suppose Abercrombe's or Harry Colt's courses have ever required any material alterations, and I am quite certain that Max Behr's Lakeside at Los Angeles and his other excellent courses will always remain as they are at present.

It often happens that a club employs an architect and contrary to his advice carries out the work themselves so as to avoid paying for his supervision. Neither the construction of a new course or alteration to an old one can be a complete success by these methods.

Some years ago I advised the Prestwick club (owners of a magnificent piece of links land and of one of the most famous of the championship courses) regarding new 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th holes. The committee decided to carry out the work themselves.

The general opinion of the club is that the changes have a great improvement on the old holes, but I know, and doubtless other golf architects know, that they have made a mess of some marvelous natural golfing territory.

I was particularly distressed regarding the 11th hole. I visualized it as becoming the most famous of all one-shot holes, whereas the design and construction has been so badly carried out that it is a very indifferent hole.

When green-committees carry out an architect's plans it is rarely even a partial success, and in any case the committee takes credit for any improvement and the architect gets the blame for any failure. This is so much so that bitter experience has taught us to refuse work unless we are allowed a free hand in interpreting our own plans.

In the attempt to obtain finality it is of primary importance that the advice of the architect be taken in its entirety.

Cases not infrequently arise when clubs have not sufficient money to carry out his plans completely; then, the work should

be in the form of improvements made from year to year as more funds are available.

Millions for Alteration—BUT—

Founders of golf clubs are often deterred from calling a first class architect because they think he may be expensive.

An architect's fee is often less than one-hundredth part of the total capital expenditure, and surely this is a small sum to pay for the assurance of perpetual prosperity. The writer cannot recall a single example of the failure of a golf club that has taken the advice of a first class architect.

Even men of education have a curious disinclination to pay for mental labor; they are willing to pay stupendous sums for manual labor but mental labor, No! It is strange that a committee consisting of doctors, lawyers, architects, expert engineers, etc., who no doubt recognize the importance of mental training and experience in their own professions, attach so little importance to it in golf course architecture.

What does it matter what the fee of the expert is if owing to his advice the total cost can be reduced to 50 per cent and in addition far better results obtained? It is false economy to attempt to save a few thousand dollars in mental labor when without it there will be an additional cost of tens of thousands of dollars in manual labor.

The unfortunate thing about golf courses is that every professional and almost every golfer thinks he can lay out a golf course. Only this week I had a letter from a Scotch professional hinting that the time might come when I might be retiring, and suggesting that I should adopt him with a view to his carrying out my work.

I replied to him inquiring about his education and asked him if he had made a study of psychology, if he had been educated at an agricultural college and had acquired a knowledge of chemistry, botany, geology, and engineering, and above all, had he any training and love for art?

I pointed out that though it was essential a golf course architect should have an intimate knowledge of the theory of the game of golf and make a close study of all the best courses, yet the ability to play the game was often harmful as first-class players only too frequently were subconsciously influenced by their own particular type of play and only too prone to disre-



Real architecture consists in taking full advantage of all natural features, modifying them only to the extent necessary to simplify maintenance and expedite play. Fifteenth green at Cypress Point.

gard playing requirements of some others.

I remarked before, that although I know scores of excellent golf courses designed by amateurs, outstanding ones designed by professionals are not frequently seen. Not that there are not plenty of professionals who are men of considerable education, but the fact that they are constantly playing competitive golf makes them view with resentment anything that is likely to disturb their sequence of their threes and fours.

I have a great admiration for J. H. Taylor. He is one of nature's gentlemen, is exceedingly well read, has original and common sense views on health, politics and many other subjects, and moreover is a born orator and writer. On the other hand, in my opinion, he is not a success in designing golf courses.

At one time, because he was unable to play it with a pitch, his favorite shot, he condemned the 17th hole at St. Andrews in most emphatic terms. Recently, he admits that having given up competitive golf he has changed his views and in picturesque language puts a curse on any one who would dare to alter it.

Picks Taylor as Pro Prize

I have selected J. H. Taylor as the representative of the professionals not only because of his marked ability but because

in England he is the spokesman of the Professional Golf Association and for many years was their president and may be so still as far as I know.

We have always told each other in the frankest possible manner our respective views and one thing I admire more in J. H. than anything else is the fact that he is not afraid of changing his ideas and admitting he has changed them, when one has given him sufficiently logical reasons to convince him he is wrong.

Many years ago when Harry Colt and I were designing most of the golf courses in Britain, J. H. Taylor started an agitation to prevent us doing so and make golf course architecture a pro monopoly.

We contended that if it were not for the amateur golf course architect there would be very few professionals, and it was as a direct result of modern golf architecture that there had been such a boom in golf and golf courses. Subsequent events, I think, have proved that we were right, and that the very existence of most of the professionals is due to the fact that golf architects have made inland golf courses popular. There would be very few professionals if golf was still confined to sand dune country by the seashore.

(To be continued in June GOLFDOM.)

Staff Education in California Major Job of Local Greensmen

By ARTHUR LANGTON

AN ARTICLE, in an eastern golf publication, dealing with methods of handling labor on the golf course caught the eye of a California greenkeeper and immediately he gave voice to his objections. It seems that the offending article suggested that all greenkeepers give each of their men personal directions every morning as to the course of the day's work. This, according to the belligerent one, was utter nonsense and should not be countenanced by a self-respecting greenkeeper. Tactful enquiries elicited the information that a greensman who had to be told what to do every morning wasn't worth his salt.

All of which may be a trifle extreme, but the methods employed on various California golf courses would indicate that the writer of the article could not have meant his suggestions to apply to this state. Off-hand, perhaps, it would seem that the variety and change of conditions would make it imperative for the greenkeeper to direct personally every move to be made on his golf course. But experience has taught that the frequently extreme conditions in California are best combatted by specialists who are able to handle a particular set of kindred tasks to perfection. Thus there are greensmen, tractor-men, truckmen, irrigation men, and only two or three who might be termed "general practitioners" on every course.

The degree to which this specialization is employed varies on every course according to the size of the course, the number of men employed, and the economic situation of the club. The extreme, of course, is represented by the club which has one man equipped with a power mower to cut the greens, one or two men to cut the fairways, others to do nothing but care for traps, and so on down the list of tasks each one having a separate man to take care of it. This method is particularly effective on a course equipped with plenty of machinery and which has heavy daily play necessitating all work to be done as speedily as possible. On such a course, men

who continually had to be watched and told what to do would stick out like sore thumbs, and the greenkeeper who put such a practice into effect would be spelling his own doom.

Zone the Tasks.

Modifications of the extreme method seem to be most popular throughout courses of the Pacific Southwest. Many greenkeepers agree with the specialist system but apply it in a different manner; that is, they give their men various sections of the course for which the individual workers must be responsible. In this way the worker is able to acquaint himself with the many little traits peculiar to his section of the course and thus becomes an expert in his one locality. This may sound very elementary, but the practice of dividing the course among a group of workers has a new significance in California due to the fact that topographic and geologic conditions vary so much in any given locality that different sets of greens will require absolutely unrelated treatment. It is the exception rather than the rule that four or five greens on one course should require uniform treatment.

Another advantage of the section system becomes apparent when the greensmen become conscious of a certain competitive element entering into their work. Close upon the heels of this element comes another—pride, and many courses have shown the benefit of the greenkeeper allowing the two to be judiciously mixed. The fact that this state has long boasted some of the most polished courses in the country may be attributed to the men on the courses not waiting to be told what to do but obtaining a sickle or a hoe and putting a few finishing touches here and there around their assigned areas.

Mexicans Are Good Laborers.

In southern California work on the golf courses is done largely by Mexicans who have maintained their place over a long period of time in spite of efforts to dislodge them. It is the writer's humble opin-

ion that the Mexican is a very much maligned person and the common conception of him, based upon scenario writers' fertile imaginations, is absolutely unjust. He is pictured as being indolent but there are few men who can screen as much sand or cut as much grass under a blazing hot sun. Most of them have large families and are willing and even eager to work overtime under almost any conditions to earn extra pay. Further, left to his own devices, the Mexican golf course worker will transfer the ground in his care into a thing of beauty by the deft placement of a few plants and shrubs.

Greensmen Not Common Laborers.

It is unfortunate that the labor on a golf course is classified as unskilled, but nothing can be done about it until clubs see fit to pay a wage on a par with the amount of specialized knowledge necessary for efficient work. Western greenkeepers find that for about three months an inexperienced laborer on a golf course is more of a liability than an asset in spite of the fact that they are supposed to hire such a man on \$4.00 a day to turn out a first class brand of work. In the first place new men frequently know nothing about the essentials of the game and in such a state he is not safe to be allowed on the course.

It takes time to educate a man to the point where he does not question the sanity of a golfer who demands absolute silence while he is playing a stroke. It takes time for the laborer to learn how to be of use to his employers without being a nuisance as well. This must all come before he can learn the more technical matters concerned with the finer points of greenkeeping.

To teach a man to be a good greenkeeper requires patience, particularly in regard to the matter of weeding. In this most necessary practice, the human penchant for following the line of least resistance is very much in evidence. It is not the pleasantest kind of work to be down on hands and knees on soggy turf under a blazing sun hunting for Bermuda runners, crab grass, burr clover, or any other unwelcome invader, and many good greensmen have been known to rebel at this labor. One southern California greenkeeper relates the following experience in connection with weeding:

"Some years back I had the misfortune to suffer a yearly infestation of Bermuda grass in my greens. Although I kept up a regular weeding schedule I did not seem to be making any progress until I discovered that the men, when my back was



The setting of La Cumbre G. & C. C. at Santa Barbara, Calif., gives an idea of the geological conditions that make specialization of greens force advisable.