



NEWS LETTER

Do unto others as though
you were the others.

—*Elbert Hubbard*

DECEMBER

1939

This NEWSLETTER is published monthly by the Greenkeepers Club of New England, and sent free to its members and their Green's Chairmen. Subscription price ten cents a copy, or a dollar a year.

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The ideas and opinions expressed in the subject matter of this NEWSLETTER are not necessarily those of the Editor or the members of the club as a whole.

A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL AND HERE IS A HOPE THAT YOUR NEW YEAR WILL BE HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS

"Straight thinking is a good way to keep from running in circles".....Watch out for your notice to the annual meeting, which this year will have a banquet and entertainment.....One of our regular advertisers writes, ".....I feel this magazine is one of the most-worth-while things accomplished by your Association and that every member of your organization and every advertiser living and operating within these New England States could support this publication with renewed and expanded effort"..... thanks a million, friend.....Emil Masciocchi starts on February 1st as greenkeeper at the Onwentsia Club, Lake Forest, Ill. Emil has been greenkeeper at the Oak Hill C. C., Fitchburg, Mass. for the past ten years, and is well known for his playing ability as well as his fine velvety bent greens. We certainly will be sorry to see Emil leave us, but wish him luck and best wishes in his new position. . . . Tom Burke reports that he has been building a new equipment shed, to house all equipment, 56' by 27 1/2', at Cohasset.....We know some other clubs that need better equipment quarters..... The reaction to the article in the last issue, telling of the course of lectures and examinations given Australian

greenkeepers has been varied. Some like the idea, and others think the men were regimented, and all sorts of in-between opinions abound.....Manager Orville Clapper of the New England Toro Company has recently announced that his able assistant manager for the past nine years, Philip H. Kylander, has formed the Connecticut Toro Company with headquarters in Hartford, and will handle the Toro line as well as allied course equipment and supplies. We understand that the new firm will cover all of Connecticut except Windham and New London Counties, and Western Massachusetts Oscar Chapman has been busy since taking over at Misquamicut in September, as he has revamped two greens, some tees, and reseeded some fairways.....We hear that the Toro pony greens mower is to be available this Spring with power transmitted to the driving drums.....Some of the heavy equipment manufacturers are not showing at either the National Show in February or at Amherst, but plan to cooperate with local greenkeepers associations to give outdoor demonstrations..... A recent correspondent wrote that C.K.B. was certainly a heavy contributor to our columns. This ex-New Englander and fellow member has certainly helped out this past year with some 15,000 words, other editorial matter, and also securing several advertisements. Thanks a million to you, Kent, for all this help!How about you and you and you, fellow members?.....Don Young, now of the Indian Hills C. C., Kansas City, recently wrote us that he had been transferring his greens, the first time, he believed, that this machine had been used West of the Mississippi.....With some letters we receive these days we believe what we read a few days ago, "America is the Land of Opportunity and maybe that accounts for so much knocking"; but, we also have heard that "every knock is a boost", so why not smile? Lt's just as easy!

Adjustment of the Evidence

A certain fisherman acquired such a reputation for stretching the truth that he purchased a pair of scales and insisted on weighing every fish he caught, in the presence of witnesses.

The performance was convincing until one day a doctor borrowed the scales to weigh a new-born baby. The infant weighed 47 pounds.—*Ex.*

FROM THE GROUND—UP

The Road to Recognition

(continued from last issue)

by C. K. BRADLEY
R.F.D. 2, Paterson, N. J.

Be seated, Dave—sorry the weather delayed you. Sherwood had to leave on account of it, shortly after supper. He has quite a collection of pearls of philosophy, gathered from reading I suggested, and some of which I will quote. For instance:

“Greenkeeping as at presently understood is quite a modern science—and a most interesting one too.” “There can be no doubt that within the past twenty years the game of golf has made rapid strides.” “Golf courses have sprung up everywhere and the art of greenkeeping has attained a very high standard of excellence as, for a club with a course of its own nowadays, to hold its own in the golfing world, everything must be kept in the best possible condition, so that the greenkeeper now is a much more important individual than he used to be in the old days, when anybody was considered good enough to cut a fresh hole in the morning of competition, and fill a hole with a handful of sand.”—

That, Dave, sounds ultra modern, but it was written in “Golf Greens and Greenkeeping” edited by H. G. Hutchinson, and published in England,—in nineteen hundred and six, **thirty-three years ago!** That dates progress in course maintenance back more than half a century. Let's compare it with greenkeeping in **our** past twenty years.

These two recent decades have had enormous work produced by the U. S. G. A. Greens Section, our State Experiment Stations, short courses in turf management at our colleges, the organization of the Greenkeepers Club of New England over fifteen years ago, then the founding of what is now the national G. S. A., and after that, the New Jersey, and numerous other district organizations, some that have at least, continued to survive.

There can be no doubt that we have a wealth of means for better maintenance made available, Dave. Have we done **our** part, and put them to **use**? Or do these things lie within our grasp, but fixt, or leach away, like the elements in sodland that are in poor physical—or in the greenkeeper case, **mental** conditions?

I have some recent letters that contain a line of much discussed thought lately. Without mentioning names, greenkeepers, some famous ones at that, in different parts of the country are saying, “Turf research workers and the winter schools have helped us raise better grass, but go little beyond that in most cases, and have not raised the remuneration or earning capacity of the greenkeepers.” When I'm asked that in form of question, Dave, I prefer to reply with, “After giving the matter no thought, I have come to the definite conclusion that perhaps you are right.” Figure that one out,—but, Dave, since **when** is it up to research workers or educators in **any** field of bettering a **product** to better the returns of those whose jobs are to **produce** the finished commodity?

Why, of course,—just as you, or anyone with intelligence say, — attainment and recognition, by assimilation and **application** of turf research work in various phases is **OUR** business!

For some years now, I have advocated we need **less brooding** about our bugs, budgets and brown patch,—and **more boosting, by ourselves**, on a business basis. Others, too, in our vocation stress **this** need in our lines of thought and endeavor, so perhaps I'm not entirely wacky. Progress means change, and indications are that advancing ones will be made in handling the program of the forthcoming national turf conference and equipment show in 1940.

My actions are impersonal, but nevertheless, anyone who devotes much of his free time, voluntarily to a progressive cause, is bound to be discussed,—yes, even cussed, in disgust, by those who have little to do but take exception or argue what is said,—or written.

David, the Bible that mentions your name, is the universally read book, and is printed in scores of languages. There are numerous versions of the Scriptures,—and new interpretations increase every sixth and seventh day of the calendar. So I can expect that musings of a mere man as I, will, by some, be misinterpreted. Thanks be, that we don't have to believe all we hear,—it's bad enough just to have to listen to it!

History has a habit of repeating itself. Much can be learned from review, and profiting by others' past experiences. In an article, “Men of Vision”, published earlier this year, I wrote, “To progress we should reflect on the past, consider the present, and

look to the future." That vein is basically review and research, Dave. Most technical bulletins contain a list of references on which the new work advances.

A short time ago, August 26 of this year, to be exact, an article "Greenkeepers' Exam." appeared in "Golf in Australia", to which I occasionally contribute. October "Golfdom", November "Newsletter" and November "Reporter" carried editorial mention of that article. More than a year ago, the Secretary of the New South Wales Greenkeepers' Association wrote me that the members were planning group lectures and correspondence courses on turf technicalities. Later plans, I was told, were to meet for written tests to determine what the men absorbed from their studies. I will quote the salient points from the Australian golf magazine article:

"Few golfers fully realize the amount the greenkeeper if **competant** contributes to the enjoyment and comfort of the course. A greenkeeper now combines the practical with the scientific. Naturally, the benefits of such (an educational) course would be negative if the greenkeepers lacked the capacity to **apply** their knowledge in a practical way. One of the conditions governing the issue of a certificate of competency is that the candidate must have at least two years—as an employee **actually engaged in greenkeeping.**"

"---The improved standard of greenkeeping has been of immense benefit to clubs inasmuch as the improved conditions have made the game more enjoyable to members, and there is less responsibility for members of green committees. More important still, they, (many young, enthusiastic employees) have been given a new outlook on life. Where formerly their work was laborious and entirely mechanical, they now understand and appreciate the reasons for various operations carried out."---

I am still quoting, Dave,---"More important still, they have no difficulty in obtaining positions in charge of golf courses whenever vacancies occur.---As a matter of fact, numerous cases could be quoted of men who were formerly on the basic wage, or a little better prior to the first course of instruction who are now in charge of courses and **receiving better remuneration.**"---

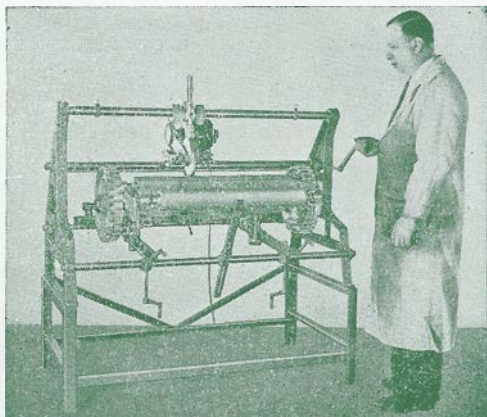
"The improvement of golf turf and golf courses," said the article, "Has been the subject of a considerable

amount of research work, notably in the United States and Great Britain. Whilst we realize the value of (and) that properly conducted research work is costly,—**IT IS ALSO REALIZED THAT WITHOUT COMPETENT GREENKEEPERS, ALL THE RESEARCH WORK IN THE WORLD WILL NOT PRODUCE GOOD GOLF COURSES.**"

That, is how they feel about the scientifically-practical application of greenkeeping research and education down in Australia, Dave. It is a matter of record, that "Down EAST", in OUR New England, the Greenkeepers' Club, years ago helped abolish the service bureaus, formed the first greenkeeping organization in the country, had the first school for greenkeepers, advocated stricter qualifications than short time "experience" for membership qualifications, and sponsored civil turf research work, even to the extent of voting money to start it, from the members' own association funds!

I'm wondering, Dave, if the men in the old stamping ground are content to rest on their laurels,—or will they do **their** share in making 1939-40 the renaissance in greenkeeping history? Quibblings of personalities retard progress. Working on sound principles elsewhere has accelerated the golf superintendents' position in recent years. Constructive suggestions and cooperation are needed. Those that offer little more than sit-back criticism, drag and hurt us, all, Dave. There is a great gap between the science of turf growing, and the mechanics of grass mowing. The logical ones to lead and unify the turf business, are the golf greenkeepers, whose maintenance standards make the rule by which **all** fine lawn upkeep is measured.

We know from experience that sprayed mercury salts are effective control for brown patch on greens, Dave. It is best though, to keep the solutions agitated and in suspension. We of the glib typewriters, therefore stir up thought to check or lesson outbreaks of **brain** patch among the **keepers** of the greens. Herb Graffis, "Golfdom" Editor described this mental disease a few years ago. There are the loud-moutheous, and the bull dosious, kinds that exist in a warm and moist atmosphere of those who are full of hot air, and all wet when they think they are always right, and the other fellows wrong. The treatment recommended is



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frequent and orderly discussions of our greenkeeping business, Dave.

It would appear that we need another Boston Tea Party, soon. If the Yankee greenkeepers, like their Minute Men ancestors desire administration by representation, in the "national" association, this too can be obtained when the "congress" meets again in Olde New York Towne. But the men need join as a majority, and affiliate before February, to accomplish this. Those who do not want to wait until they are led, can write me, Dave, and I will sponsor their membership applications.

Freed of foreign rule, the Colonies were in a sad state of affairs until they ceased bickering over borders, and got together. How greenkeeping history is parallel to that of our nation, Dave. It is well that this be given serious thought and spontaneous action, to profit by the experience of those who have gone before us.

In telling about grass strains being tried under playing conditions in many parts of the country by the U. S. G. A. Greens Section, Dr. Monteith said recently, "To have real merits and importance, newly developed grasses should not have their qualities limited by state lines." One cannot argue fact, Dave.

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Is it logical to therefore have American Greenkeeping divided by the Connecticut River, or any other "line"?

Organized greenkeeping cooperation has already spread from Canada to Cuba. The latter occurred this past summer, when J. F. Andia was guest at one of our New Jersey monthly meetings. He got our viewpoints, and we got his, in discussions. Afterwards, I spoke to him alone, gave him a copy of the "Greenkeepers' Reporter", a copy of the by-laws and a membership blank. Andia returned his application and check by Air Mail,—ordinary postage was not fast enough to carry out his desires to do the right thing toward his profession.

We who work for the advancement of all, do so as a labor of love for our fellow greenkeepers. We cannot spend just our own funds for such a tremendous task as building the road to recognition. The least our brother greenkeepers can do is financially support us, at less than a dollar a month during a year. Those who wish to offer their time and talents also, are welcome to help push greenkeeping onward.

When Frank Ermer was inaugurated G. S. A. President in Kansas City, last February, he said, "It's an old American custom—let's all work together, to make G. S. A. mean too—Go Straight Ahead." As a volunteer guide, Dave, I would like to add,—On the Road to Recognition,—a four lane highway,—room for all, Greenkeeper, Golfer, Turf Scientist, Golf Supplier,—Greenkeeping Scientifically Applied! Let's GO!!

(to be continued in an early issue)

VELVET BENTS

by Robert A. Mitchell

The self pollenization of grasses brings out a great variation in color, fineness, etc., as shown by the work done at the R. I. State College on Piper and other velvet bents. Old velvet bent greens that were first seeded to German Mixed Bent show great variation after the November frosts. When we realize that there are so many characteristics that keep appearing among seedlings, does it not seem better to propagate at least the foundation stock from stolons only?

Greenkeepers could use stolons only for raising sod. The farm, vegetable and flower seeds are reselected each year. So should turf growers reselect each year both seed and stolons.

Some are considering the use of mixed velvet bent greens instead of a single variety originating from a single seed. If one has a mixed velvet bent green that is satisfactory, there must be individuals in that same green that would be satisfactory if grown pure. I believe that with further work, selections will be found, each the product of one seed, that grown pure, will be better than any green of mixed strains.

Some of the first Creeping Bents, as Arlington, Richmond and Virginia, proved to be very poor. Then came Metropolitan and Washington, which are much better. Virginia is still a curse to some golf courses. If any grower can keep it healthy he is still the loser, because it is too coarse-grained. The U. S. G. A. Green Section is looking for better creeping bents and is testing out some selections in the pie-section greens at Ponkapoag and other places.

Possibly there may be a difference between the behavior of a velvet variety that originated in German mixed bent and had to compete with the other grasses which are mostly Colonial and the behavior of the same grass when it is planted by itself in newly prepared soil instead of working through the root system of the Colonial that first occupied the space. If so the behavior of a spot of grass in a green is not a safe indication of what may be expected when it is subjected to different conditions.

"Handsome is that handsome does." Several selections were made at Kernwood using 4" plugs cut in pieces to make rows 10' long. When they got old enough to grow seed stalks a marked variation could be noted. Some spread out like a mat almost making a fairway turf without mowing and with very few seed stalks. Others made a tall vigorous growth of seed stalks. One grew numerous seed stalks but only half the height of the average. The first mentioned variety would be desirable because of its few runners and fine texture. On the other hand its fine slow growth means less stolons for propagation. We may find that a variety not so fine as others and that throws stringers or runners in early summer may be best on a heavy play course because it fills in more

quickly. A variety of slow fine growth may be useful on a small membership course but not on a heavy play course. Kernwood velvet is more susceptible to dollar spot than Piper but we can control the dollar spot, while the Piper troubles we do not as yet know how to control. If the beautiful dark colored varieties have more undesirable characteristics than some of the lighter, even sickly looking, green colors, then the colors that can be maintained as the best putting surface will be preferred. Some varieties of fruit are excellent for home use but will not stand shipment.

"Handsome is that handsome does." Growers of Velvet Bent let us hear what your ideas are on the subject.

DECEMBER MEETING

The regular December meeting was held at the Waltham Field Station on December 4th. The speaker was Prof. Lawrence S. Dickinson of Massachusetts State College. Prof. Dickinson gave an interesting talk on golf course problems, illustrated by colored slides and motion pictures. Following the talk, there was a question and discussion period of over an hour.

At the business meeting it was voted, upon recommendation of the Directors, that there be a dinner and entertainment at the annual meeting, cost to be taken from treasury.

The Nominating Committee reported the following slate of officers for 1940:

Pres., John Counsell
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2nd Vice Pres., Arthur Anderson
3rd V. Pres., Sam Mitchell
Sec., Philip Cassidy
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Trustees:
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Secretary Cassidy passed around among those present new copies of the Constitution and By-Laws.

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NEWSLETTER

THIS BUSINESS OF GROWING GRASS

Nuts! But then, someone has to fill a little space in the Newsletter once in a while. What I write isn't worth the powder to blow it to Hades! Shucks, though, some one may feel that he isn't so dumb after all, when he reads this stuff, so perhaps it has some value from a psychological point. Be that as it may, here goes.

Greenkeepers are all allowed so much gasoline mileage, as a rule. I think they should be allowed Aspirin mileage as well, for all the headaches that go with the game.

What gives us our headaches? Well, I suppose the most important reason is the demand for perfection and near perfection, which we have had thrown at us during the last fifteen or more years. I have heard so many old timers say, "We didn't have those troubles in the old days and we had no complaints from the golfers." True, but the average golfer didn't expect a green to putt to such perfection as he does now. Greens were not expected to be mowed at 3/16", or to hold a ball, even though it had no backspin. Grasses were not expected to be of such fine texture as they are now. It seems that as each succeeding problem is conquered, up spring a thousand others.

We often wonder why that is, but let us look at it from this angle. Agriculture is, I believe, the oldest known industry in the history of mankind. Yet it has never been conquered by man. It doesn't make any difference whether it is market gardening, landscape architecture, poultry raising, cattle raising or the like. Their work still travels in cycles. Then turf culture, for golf, which is one of the youngest off-shoots from agriculture, must of necessity be a trying problem, to those who attack its many trying tests. Perhaps, one of the most effective means, of throwing a little light here and there, as we grope through the darkness of ignorance, is research work. But sometimes it has proved a boomerang, to smite down those who try to interpret these researches for their own purposes. Next comes impatience, or a desire to get benefits from experiments before they have been given a fair trial. Above all, however, we get the reaction of running around in circles. Here we are advocating the use of lime, which was ad-

vocated 12 or 15 years ago. But, in between times the mere mention of lime on a golf course was supposed to make the grass wither up and die.

In just a recent issue of our own "Newsletter" an article is brought in from the "Australian Greenkeeper", and they state lime should never be used on a golf course. What the deuce are they doing, are they 5 years ahead of us or are they 5 years behind us?

The same is true of sulphate of ammonia. It's just another case of in again out again; boy, what a merry-go-round!

There seems no good reason for all these happenings, there must be some place where all this stuff stops.

I remember when speed mowing was all the rage and we rode merrily over the fairways, banging and clashing along as though we were racing down the speedway at Indianapolis on Memorial Day, or mowing greens as though Paavo Nurmi, Joie Ray, or Glenn Cunningham were pacing us. Now we slow down to the old normal pace of 12 or 15 years ago, that makes the pace of a turtle look like a streamlined racing car in comparison. Did you ever see a dog chasing its tail? Well, ding bust, that's the way this thing looks.

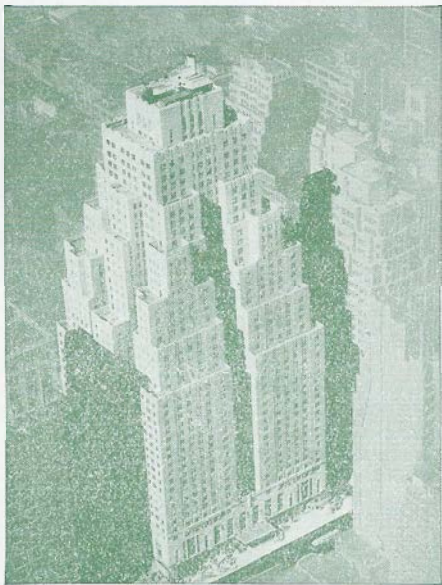
A few years ago, bing, we got hit by the velvet bent bug. Now every time the average greenkeeper sees a Velvet Bent he runs for the nearest doctor to get vaccinated against it. Gosh! it makes me think of a guy in the full throes of a big head, after the night before. Everything goes round and round.

Gee! now I have you fellows all keyed up to this thing it's rotten to let you down, I gotta get an idea pretty soon.

One guy will advocate putting all the fertilizer you can find in a fertilizer factory, in one application on a green, and any guy that doesn't is a sissy; while another guy will advocate putting on only enough fertilizer to fill a thimble, every half hour or more, and every guy that doesn't is slap happy.

Maybe this thing isn't so bad after all, perhaps variety is the spice of life, I hope.

No doubt we learn from these cycles, if we remember the parallel unhappy experiences we had a number of years ago. Ah! an idea. (Maybe it was a spark, or just a hollow knock, or maybe the after effect of baldheadedness.)



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Why not have a group of men in the greenkeepers organization, summarize all the information that has been obtained from experimentation on turf throughout the land, segregate that which is not finished, that which has no foundation in fact, and take all that is workable, and try to explain the conditions under which that is workable in New England localities.

Here is an extensive field that in my mind has never been touched, at least not thoroughly, that lies like a vast gold mine, waiting for us to dig in, and offer ourselves on the altar of knowledge. Why couldn't we publish these findings once a year in the Newsletter? Gosh! it would give some of our colossal brain power, something to do beside riding around on an overgrown Coney Island Merry-Go-Round, it could occupy a great deal more space than an article on trees, or abbreviated references to members of the family of Chick Sayles' one holers. Yet it would not make us all a bunch of bananas, under a guy named Hitler, because we would still have to be greenkeepers in order to apply it to our own golf courses. It won't cost us anything (maybe we won't be able to cope with the crowds after that) but a little hard work.

Aw! go ahead and laugh, it took up a lot of space in the "Newsletter",—didn't it?

—George J. Rommell.

Flight Was Unexpected

A golfer had lost his ball, and, not unnaturally, was inclined to be annoyed with his caddy. "Why didn't you watch where it went?" he demanded to know.

"Well, sir," answered the boy, "it doesn't usually go anywhere, so it took me unprepared like."

—*"Ex."*

(The Thread of Life).

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Christmas is a religious festival and many cards bear religious pictures or the symbols of Christianity. Many other conventional designs turn to older religions for their origin, and many are entirely without religious significance. The Yule log is a survival of the fire festival of worshippers of Scandinavian Thor. The mistletoe, through which Baldur met his death, in the same mythology, became the symbol of the kiss of peace and good will. Holly is a relic of the Roman worship of Saturn. The Christmas tree is the ash of Yggdrasil, which sheltered all human beings, whose roots went down to hell, and whose branches reached the heavens. The poinsettia, a Mexican and Central American flower, has little if any connection with Christmas except its color, which is the bright red inseparably associated with the feast, and with the fire and flame, with which the return of the sun and the beginning of the lengthening days have been celebrated from earliest times.

Candles which appear so frequently on Christmas cards have been associated with many religions. From the Jewish festival of the Feast of Lights they were incorporated into the Nativity celebration, and made to symbolize the end of darkness for the world and the beginning of the true light. They also formed an important part of all the Christmas celebrations of the northern hemisphere, and are naturally associated with the return of the sun, which has fixed the time for this feast for immemorial ages.

The spirit of Christmas has always been one of Joy, Light and Warmth, and for century upon century, the Yule log has fallen into embers to flame again the next year with a genial warmth that breeds forgetfulness of petty wrongs, jealousy and animosities; and kindles again a spirit of kindness, peace and good will.

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