

The Green Section needs more money, and one desirable way to secure this is to get more golf clubs to become members. Over 800 clubs are members of the Green Section; about 2,000 are not members.

Won't you get busy with some of these non-member clubs and induce them to join?

Remember, the Green Section is a mutual-benefit association, and you ought to do all you can to get other clubs to enjoy the benefits, and at the same time enhance the benefits to your own club.

If you will send us names of men who you think ought to be interested in our work we will be glad to write them.

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## Slopes, Their Use and Abuse

By A. C. M. Croome\*

There is something mysterious about the character of golfing holes. Why should one by common consent be considered preeminently good, and another which is very similar in its more salient features regarded generally as unsatisfactory? For instance, the High-Hole-In, or Eden Hole, on the Old Course at St. Andrews, the eleventh of the round, is believed by all Scotsmen to be the best short hole in the world. I am pure-bred English myself, but I admit that I have never played at a better. Within a few hundred yards of it on the New Course a conscientious attempt has been made to duplicate it. The size and slope of the putting green have been reproduced by aid of the yard measure and theodolite. The distance from tee to pin is exactly the same. Hazards have been made, which by their position ought to exercise precisely the same influence on the play as the Hill Bunker, Strath, and the Shelly (or Cockle) bunker do at the hole by the Eden River. But the feelings of the player at the two places are entirely different before and after he has struck his tee shot, subsequent niblick shots, if any, and putts. The tee shot to the High Hole, by the way, is not made any easier by the fact that you generally have to wait for two or three matches to get away before you frame up to it. Consequently you are liable to be reminded by ocular demonstration of the various ways of getting into trouble. For this and other reasons you step forward hoping that you will take the right club and play the right shot. And if you give yourself a putt for a two you talk about it later in the club house. But everybody who is anybody confidently expects to get a three at the thirteenth on the New Course, and is ready to kick himself if he doesn't. Yet the only salient point of difference between the two holes is that the ground in front of the green on the Old Course is much harder and faster. So also is the green itself. But that does not explain why it should be so much more difficult to judge distance there, why Strath should be a few yards farther off than it looks, while his counterpart on the New Course merely serves to guide the eye of the player on the teeing-ground.

One might have thought that people would have realized from this example the futility of attempting to imitate an unique *chef-d'oeuvre* of Nature. But the fact is that a large proportion of modern courses are more or less spoiled by the introduction of the High-Hole-In model into the round. Constructors seem to search for plateaus on which to make

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their putting greens, and to be quite careless about the angle of the slopes leading up to them. Having found one they dig a bunker in the right-hand near corner of it, and another to correspond on the left. The result is a handsome spectacle but seldom a good hole. It stands to reason that when play to a hole finishes up-hill the fate of a given shot is in a greater or less degree on the knees of the gods. A ball pitching against a fronting slope may stop practically dead, or run unexpectedly far, from causes entirely outside the control of the striker. Little inequalities in ground sloping away from him do not diminish, rather do they increase, his mastery of his fate. It is a significant fact that the finish of the play to at least twelve of the other seventeen holes on St. Andrews' Old Course is slightly downhill. It is not to be wondered at then that a player is worried by having to play at holes which look about fifty times as fine as they are, and do not in actual play pass the supreme test. This test is to be found in the attitude of mind assumed by a good golfer after he has taken the hole, which is up for judgment, in the par figure. Is he exhilarated by the knowledge that he has done the job himself unaided by any outside agency, that he has put the ball right and it has stayed put? And did he know from the moment it left his club that it stay put it would? Within my recollection specimens of these spectacular plateau holes, finishing up more or less steep slopes, have been introduced on a number of first-rate courses—Hoylake, Muirfield, Westward Ho!, Sandwich, to mention only those on which championships are played. I have never heard anybody pick one of them when he has been asked to name the best hole of the round, or even take one of them into consideration. And yet some, for example the sixth at Westward Ho! and the tenth at Sandwich, are awfully good of their kind. The moral is obvious.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

All questions sent to the Green Committee will be answered in a letter to the writer as promptly as possible. The more interesting of these questions, with concise answers, will appear in this column each month. If your experience leads you to disagree with any answers given in this column, it is your privilege and duty to write to the Green Committee.

While most of the answers are of general application, please bear in mind that each recommendation is intended specifically for the locality designated at the end of the question.

1. **SPRING WORK ON NORTHERN FAIRWAYS.**—We should like your advice in regard to improving our fairways. The grass is nearly all Kentucky bluegrass, with here and there patches of Rhode Island bent. We have thought of applying bone meal early in the spring at the rate of about 500 pounds per acre, following this with another application about a month later. We have no compost pile, but are planning to make one in the spring, and the following year to use this compost in the spring as a top-dressing, after seeding, and then to roll, and follow in about a month with an application of bone meal or ammonium sulfate. We prefer to seed in the spring rather than in the fall, as there is almost no play on our course before July 1, and the maximum play is during the fall. Would