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The Pinehurst of Nineteen Eleven

(By "CHICK" EVANS)

(Editor's note.—Pinehurst friends will be delighted to know that "Chick" Evans will arrive here Saturday, February 7, for a week or ten days' visit. This will be the first time that he has been here for any length of stay since 1911. He has very kindly written the following article for the OUTLOOK on his impressions of the place at that time and of his eagerness to get back and see the Pinehurst of today.)

IN the Spring of 1911 I saw Pinehurst for the first time. I spent over a week there, and I have not seen it since except for a fleeting day or so years apart. Many a time I have wanted to go back, but winter is my busy season and I could never spare the time. Now, at last, I find myself able to make the long-wished-for visit, and I am looking forward with much interest to the changes that I am sure to see. I know that the courses have been much altered, and improved, and I am anxious to see just exactly what form these improvements have taken.

On my first visit I played in the United North and South Championship, which I was fortunate enough to win, and at the conclusion of the finals and as a sort of a reward perhaps, although I had already received a very beautiful prize, Lincoln Beachey took me up in his airplane. Riding in airplanes is an old story to me now, but then it was the most thrilling event I had ever known. Beachey's airplane was a crude affair compared with the ones in use at the present day, but I recall that his flew smoothly and gave me a chance to look down on Pinehurst, that fine monument of Mr. Leonard Tufts in its entirety, its golf courses, and forests, lying like a vari-colored map beneath us. By a singular co-incidence I was at the Panama Exposition in 1915 when Lincoln Beachey lost his life, and I think he was using the same machine in which we went up. I was rather a young boy in those days, and I remember that a dear lady told me that as she watched our flight from a window of the Carolina she prayed for my safe return, for she felt sure that I would never have gone up if my mother had been there. Probably she was right for judged by present standards the airplane was not safe.

The Pinehurst of 1911 was a very friendly, home-like place and I am wondering if the great growth has taken away anything of the family atmosphere. There was a fine cottage colony when I was there, and everyone seemed to know everyone else. It was a community of golfers, and they played the game all day and talked about it all night. Dear Mr. Walter J. Travis was there, and at that time he was the leading golfer of the country. I can see him now in evening dress after dinner, surrounded by golfers eager to talk with the great player; and during the day his distinctive costume out on the links made him a striking figure. He was a part of Pinehurst.

There is something else that I recall with much pleasure and that is Pinehurst galleries. They, too, seem different from any elsewhere, friendly, appreciative, and leisurely. There was something, too, in the way the sound of the well-hit ball re-echoed against the pines that gave an added pleasure to a good shot. In fact, as I look back upon it, Pinehurst was the ideal spot for golf, and I am anticipating by the light of my old memories a re-doubled pleasure in my visit next week. I expect to see again the Pinehurst Boy of the calendars, the negro caddies, the Donald Ross courses, and the background of dark pines.

My visit in 1911 was, as I have said before, to take part in the championships, but my trip this year is for rest and health, and, for me, that means a chance to indulge quietly in the game that I love best. I feel sure that I shall have a better opportunity to enjoy the improved courses in casual, friendly games than in the feverish anxiety of a tournament. As I write Chicago is suffering from near zero weather, and the ground is covered with ice and snow. There is not a spot in the whole vicinity, except in an indoor school, where a golf ball can be comfortably hit. If hitting were possible, its only fate could be a snow burial, with the player skating and diving frantically after it.

It will be a delightful change to get away from Chicago just now. And it is probably better to play in the mild climate of Pinehurst than in the more relaxing ones of the far southern courses. At least that is the thought that is thrilling me just now. Pinehurst in February!!

