AUCTION BRIDGE VARIATIONS

BOOKS ON BRIDGE

By A. E. MANNING FOSTER

AUCTION BRIDGE MADE CLEAR
(3rd Edition)
AUCTION BRIDGE TABLE TALK
THE LIGHT SIDE OF AUCTION BRIDGE
CONTRACT BRIDGE

THE LAWS OF ROYAL AUCTION BRIDGE
Arranged for ready reference
By W. A. GAYER
With Explanatory Notes by
A. E. MANNING FOSTER

AUCTION BRIDGE VARIATIONS

FOR TWO, THREE, AND FOUR PLAYERS

BY

A. E. MANNING FOSTER

AUTHOR OF

"AUCTION BRIDGE MADE CLEAR," ETC.

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PREFACE

WHILE, in the nature of things, it is unlikely that Auction Bridge has reached its final development, the variations given in the first part of this book are not put forward as rivals of the regular four-handed game. Much less do I suggest that they should supersede it. But to those who like occasional change—and I think most card-players are benefited by trying something new now and then—I recommend these variations.

There was a time when I thought that Contract Bridge might prove a serious rival to Auction. It has practically superseded it amongst French

and Belgian Bridge players. But, although it is still played in this country, it has not been adopted by the chief card-playing clubs and has never received official recognition.

When revising the laws of Auction in 1920, the Whist Club of New York, the legislative authority for card games in the United States, again considered drawing up an official code for Contract; but, after deliberation, it was rejected on the ground that it would almost legislate the poor bidder out of the game. Similar considerations also prevented recognition of Pirate and Nullos.

At the same time the Americans adopted for Auction Bridge one of the principal features of Contract and of some of the other variations given in this book, namely, the numerical count whereby a greater number of tricks

of any suit outbids a smaller number, irrespective of suit values.

I believe that it is likely, when our Auction Bridge Laws are revised by the Portland and allied Clubs, that this new count will be adopted. It is a logical development of the re-arrangement of suit values since the old days when Spades counted two. The aim was to place the suits on a more equal footing for bidding purposes, so that a holder of a minor suit would not be entirely left out in the cold.

The numerical count does that still more effectively, and, by encouraging brisker bidding, adds more interest to the game. The only serious criticism I have seen of the numerical count is that it makes the game more difficult.

Cairo Bridge, which I consider a

very fine game indeed, carries the process a step further by placing all the suits on an equality, both for bidding and scoring purposes. I would especially recommend this game to the serious consideration of scientific Bridge players. And I would suggest that the playing of it, even occasionally, might cure the faults and weaknesses of many players of Auction.

The section on card games for two based on Bridge will, I hope, appeal to many readers. That there is a great demand for good and new card games for two has been impressed upon me by the volume of correspondence I have received when writing of them in the Press.

I think the games given in this book constitute the most complete collection of recent developments, while I have included some of the older favourites.

I have in every case acknowledged in its proper place the authorship of the games, so far as my information goes, and I have tried to make my explanations of them as simple and short as possible.

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CHAPTER I

CONTRACT BRIDGE

THE main points of difference between Contract and Auction lie—

(1) In the bidding. At Contract the numerical system of declaration obtains. The call of a greater number of tricks in *any suit* takes precedence over the call of a lesser number.

(2) Only the number of tricks named in the bidding score towards the game. Over-tricks score as honours above the line.

(3) There is no standard system of scoring, but the rules of the game that are generally, though not invariably, used are as follows :

RULES OF CONTRACT BRIDGE

The Laws of Auction Bridge issued by the Portland and other Clubs in May 1914 apply with the following alterations:

(1) Nothing is scored below the line for tricks gained in excess of contract.

(2) Fifty above the line is scored for each contract gained and fifty above the line for each trick in excess of contract.

(3) If the contract is not gained, one hundred is lost for the first trick down, and fifty for each subsequent trick.

(4) A call of a greater number of tricks overbids any previous declaration, with the exception that an equal number of tricks may be called in a suit of greater value. (Thus "Four

Diamonds" or "Four Clubs" overcall "Three No Trumps"; but "Three Hearts" overcall "Three Diamonds," and "Three Spades" overcall "Three Hearts.")

(5) There is no score for chicane; and none for honours unless four or more are held in one hand.

(6) One hundred points are scored for each game, and three hundred points are scored for the rubber. (Thus the rubber game scores four hundred points.)

(7) Grand Slam counts two hundred and Little Slam one hundred.

(8) Doubling and re-doubling have the same effect as in Auction.

(9) *Revoke.*—The Laws of Auction apply, but when a player and his partner elect to take tricks to complete the contract, no bonus is scored in respect of any tricks taken by reason

of the revoke other than the contract bonus of fifty points.

The chief variation in these rules is in Rule 7. Many players score five hundred for Grand Slam *declared*, and two hundred and fifty for Little Slam *declared*.

PRINCIPLES OF CALLING

The great difference between Contract and Auction lies in the principles of calling.

To begin with, there is no room in Contract for the speculative or bluff call, and almost invariably anything of the kind leads to disaster. A first bid must have top winning cards: Ace, King, or King, Queen, Jack, or such great length with outside top cards as may reasonably point to making the contract if your partner

has an average hand. On the whole, it may be affirmed that a hand should be one trick stronger for an initial call at Contract than at Auction.

If you are certain, as dealer, that you have an attacking hand, that is, one strong enough to score towards game, you should certainly bid. When, however, your cards are of defensive worth only—that is, possibly helpful in saving the game or defeating an adverse contract—it is better to sit tight. On a hand that you might risk a call of "One" at Auction, without being prepared to go on even with support from your partner and with the score at love, resist temptation and pass. In particular, the light "No Trumper," often so useful at Auction, is a most dangerous initial bid at Contract. If second hand passes and your partner has little

or nothing, the fourth player with good cards is almost certain to leave you in and fine you, unless he can see a probable game-winning call in his own hand.

And here it may be noted that your partner at Contract does not take you out of a "One No Trumps" call from weakness. If he makes a suit declaration he is proclaiming considerable strength in the named suit. His purpose is to enable you either to call "Two No Trumps" or to support his suit if it fits your hand better. You do not want to risk a call of "Two" when you have no chance of making a winning declaration between you. On the other hand, if your partner declare "No Trumps," and you have a long suit Queen, Jack high, with cards of re-entry, it is well to call that suit rather than support his "No Trumper."

Y (Dummy)

B

Z (Dealer).

Take the following case from play:

Z declared "One No Trumps," holding—

Spades—Ace, Jack, X.
Hearts—Ace, X.
Diamonds—King, Queen, X, X, X.
Clubs—Jack, X, X.

A passed and Y (Z's partner) called "Two No Trumps." B passed and Z declared "Three No Trumps." Y's hand was exposed and contained:

Spades—King, Ten, X.
Hearts—Queen, Jack, Ten, X, X, X.
Diamonds—Ace, X, X.
Clubs—Ace.

It looked quite a good proposition both from Z's and Y's point of view when calling. But A opened Clubs; Z, after winning, led dummy's Queen of Hearts, and when this was not covered, played his Ace and another to clear the suit. B got in and led Clubs and A and B made five Clubs and the King of Hearts, putting Z two down on his contract. Had Y called "Two," or even "Three Hearts," a game declaration could have been built up; moreover, Y might have reasoned that Z was almost certain to hold at least the Ace or King of Hearts.

THE "NO TRUMPS" DECLARATION

An original "No Trumper" with three Aces only or four guarded Kings is not advisable at Contract. On the other hand, holding a really good "No Trumper" it is well to start

with "Two No Trumps." Your partner should then call three if he has a couple of tricks.

With no strength in one suit it is generally well to refrain from a "No Trumps" call, which you would have risked at Auction. Consider this hand:

Spades—Ace, King, Jack, X.
Hearts—Ace, King, X.
Diamonds—King, Queen, Jack, X, X.
Clubs—X.

It is policy to open with a call of "One Diamond" in preference to "One No Trumps" or "One Spade." If your partner declares "Two Clubs" you can safely go to "Two No Trumps." If he bids a major suit you can support him freely, while if your opponents call you can probably save the game. But the bid of a

minor suit initially at Contract should indicate considerable strength.

Although a call of "One" in a minor suit is not to be regarded as an invitation to the partner to go "No Trumps," it should mean that if he does call "One No Trumps" he can depend on finding material assistance. The following hands are good declarations of "One Club" by the first caller:

Ace, King, Queen, to five or more Clubs, with no other strength.

Ace, King, to five, and some strength in other suits.

King, Queen, Jack, to four or five, and at least one card of re-entry, either an Ace or two guarded Kings.

King, Queen, to four or five, with a couple of Aces or an Ace and a King, Queen suit.

The following is a good Club call.:

Spades—Queen, Jack, X.
Hearts—Ace, X, X, X.
Diamonds—Queen, Jack, Ten, X.
Clubs—Ace, King.

Why not "No Trumps" on such a hand? This is the argument. If your partner has nothing of value you are not going to make the odd trick. If your opponents have good cards in the major suits they are going to call them over "One Club," whereas, had you declared "One No Trumps," they might have left you to stew in your own juice. Should they make a major suit call or go into "No Trumps" themselves, you have almost a certainty of saving the game or defeating any big contract. If, on the other hand, your partner is able to show anything, you can support freely in any declaration.

There is the possibility of being left in with "One Club." But even then, if your partner has nothing, you will probably be no worse off than had you called "One No Trumps." And your opponents will not be nearly so chary of showing a suit over a bid of "One Club" as they would be if you opened with "One No Trumps."

Before calling at all, always look at the score. If you are 24 up and hold a good "No Trumper," do not necessarily call it if you can see game in a suit, especially a minor suit. Your adversaries will bid up if they have any chance. Give them the chance.

MAJOR SUIT DECLARATIONS

A good major suit declaration is a sound original call at Contract, though there is no greater pitfall than a doubtful or light suit call. A genuine

suit call should contain six potential tricks. For example, a hand containing:

Spades—Ace, Queen, X, X, X, X.
Hearts—X, X.
Diamonds—King, X.
Clubs—Queen, Jack, Ten.

may be reckoned as worth six tricks—four in Spades, one in Diamonds, and one in Clubs. They are not certainties, but six tricks may be expected with an ordinary placing of the cards.

The possession of four or five honours in one hand justifies an original call of "One" in the suit. Lacking the Ace, the suit should contain at least five and some other support. King, Queen to five is not good enough, unless with considerable outside support.

Without Ace and King it is advisable,

as dealer, not to name the suit, unless it be of six or more, headed by Queen, Jack, Ten, or Queen, Jack, with outside strength.

The following is a "One Heart" call, although lacking "tops":

Spades—Ace, X.
Hearts—Queen, Jack, Ten, X, X, X.
Diamonds—X, X.
Clubs—King, Queen, X.

With King, Queen, Jack to six of a major suit, and Ace, King of a minor suit, make a call of "Two" straight away. The "Three" call is generally a mistake unless it be a practical certainty.

The hands that justify an original call of "Two" in a major suit are:

(*a*) Eight of the suit headed by Ace, King, or King, Queen, Jack.

(*b*) Seven of the suit headed by Ace, King, and another Ace or two guarded Kings.

(*c*) Six of the suit headed by Ace, King, Queen, or King, Queen, Jack, and two outside tricks.

To call "One" with a hand like any of the above will give a wrong impression of your strength to your partner. With less than six never call "Two" as a beginning.

There is no room for a sporting bid at Contract. On the other hand, when you have slashing cards go right out and call "Three" or "Four" straight off the reel. If you are doubtful whether to call—pass.

THE SECOND HAND

If first hand has passed, second caller is in much the same position as dealer, though he must not assume

that the latter has worthless cards. But if Z has made a declaration, what should A do? At the score of love he should sit tight even with a good hand, which he would show at Auction, unless his cards be of such a character that he can reasonably expect, with average aid from his partner, to go game.

Of course if Z has called a minor suit and A has considerable strength in a major suit, or a good "No Trumper," he should at once declare it. But, generally speaking, at a love score, A, with good cards, should pass after Z's call. If his hand be not good enough for him to continue the bidding, his call may show the adversaries where the strength is and enable them to advance their own contract or switch to a more advantageous declaration. Here is an example from play:

Z called "One No Trump."
A called "Two Hearts" with—

Spades—X, X.
Hearts—Ace, Queen, Jack, X, X, X.
Diamonds—Queen, X.
Clubs—Queen, Jack, X.

But his call gave Y the tip to call "Two Spades." If A had not spoken Y would have supported Z's "No Trumper," and A and B would have saved the game. As it was, A's call caused Y and Z to switch and make four Spades.

Of course when the game, especially the rubber game, is at stake, you must, as in Auction, adopt freer methods. But you should remember that Contract has more traps in it than Auction; and should temper with caution and moderation any desire to keep the flag flying.

THE THIRD HAND

If Z, the dealer, has bid "One" of a suit and A has passed, it behoves Y, third hand, to consider whether he can support his partner's call, and if so, how far, or whether he can make a better or assisting call himself.

There can be no hard-and-fast principle laid down. It is, however, generally well for a partner to show a second suit when he is really strong. This applies both to suit calls and "No Trumps." It does not necessarily mean that he has no support in his partner's suit—as it would at Auction—but it shows him where strength lies. Here is a case in point. Z called "One Heart," A passed. Y held—

Spades—X, X.
Hearts—Queen, X, X.

Diamonds—Ace, King, Queen, Jack, X, X.
Clubs—King, Queen.

Now this might be a very useful hand if played in Hearts, but it might not. It is certain to be useful if Z can bid "No Trumps," and it is also very useful when played in Diamonds. If Y merely supports his partner to "Two Hearts," Z is left in doubt as to the position, and, should he get a call of Spades against him, will not know how far to go on. Y called "Two Diamonds," B "Two Spades," and Z "Two No Trumps." Y was then enabled to put the contract up to "Three No Trumps." If he had not shown the Diamond suit, Z could not have called "No Trumps," and could not have gone game in Hearts.

Beginners at Contract are diffident

about showing a fresh suit, and this means the losing of games that might have been won. A player will support his partner's call when he can, and sometimes when he hardly should, but is often too reticent about calling another suit. This is a legacy from Auction, where a partner's declaration of a new suit is regarded as a switch, signifying that he does not like the original call. But in Contract, where there is a somewhat different method of procedure in arriving at a game declaration, it is all-important to give your partner, after he has broken silence, every information in your power. So far from a call of "Two Diamonds" deterring your partner from declaring "Two Hearts," it may be an incentive to him to do so, as it shows him another source of strength.

The question of how far third player

should support a call of "One No Trumps" with a good hand is not always easy to determine. So much in "No Trumpers" depends on hands *fitting*. A long solid suit and a card of re-entry in another is the best kind of support for "Three No Trumps"—better generally than support in two or three suits. If in doubt as to the wisdom of supporting "Three," don't. After support to "Two," Z, if he has the "goods," will go the third.

If Y is going to support a suit declaration he should do so as at Auction, calling "Two," "Three," or "Four," at once, according to the score, and according to the value his hand justifies.

THE FOURTH HAND

If three players have passed, B should throw in his hand, unless he be

exceptionally strong. He should not risk starting the bidding on the off-chance of finding his partner good. For the rest he will be guided by the previous bids. If Z and Y have called, and A has also made a declaration, he will be chary of supporting his partner unless he has a very good hand. If Y has not made a winning bid he should, if in any doubt, pass. If his partner is silent, B should not be tempted into a risky "No Trumper" just because he holds well guarded the suit declared by his opponents.

DEFENSIVE DECLARATIONS

On the principle that it is of no use crying out till you are hurt, the defensive declaration is only necessary at Contract when your opponents make a game declaration according to the score.

As already explained, it is not good policy, as a rule, if second or fourth player, to reveal your strength when your opponents have made a non-winning declaration.

But defensive declarations are justifiable at the score. Thus Z and Y between them have made a bid of "Three No Trumps." A has passed. B holds:

Diamonds—King, Queen, X, X, X, X, X.
Clubs—King, Queen;

and no other card of value in his hand. B is justified in calling "Four Diamonds." Of course he may be doubled and go down 400 or more points if his partner has not a trick in his hand. But in this case X and Y will easily go game and perhaps make a small Slam, and B will lose as much by their doing so as by being penalised.

On the other hand, if A possesses a couple of tricks or more, B will not come to hurt in his contract and he may save the game by his call, through drawing his opponents into a suit declaration or by showing A what to lead in "No Trumps." The defensive declaration of a suit of six or seven is not nearly so dangerous as is often supposed and will frequently save a game.

The necessity for defensive declarations will most often come in when the opponents have a score of twenty or more below the line, and a successful contract of "One No Trumps" or two of any suit will give them the game. It is not in human nature to allow them a cheap contract if you can see your way, by calling, to pushing them beyond their depth, or saving the game at slight cost.

With your opponents at 20 you will

be justified in calling "One No Trumps" more lightly than if the score were at love, and your partner should understand the position and not push you too far.

A defensive suit call of "One" with the enemy 20 or more is not nearly so likely to be effective. It is more probable that it will encourage the other side to bid. When the hands are fairly evenly divided the defensive call of "One No Trumps" is so ambiguous that it often shuts out a two-suit call, whereas the defensive bid of "One" of a suit in which the bidder has not got top cards is more often than not an exposure to the opponents.

If the game is in jeopardy, especially the rubber game, and you hold as dealer a long suit of six, start as a shut-out bid with a call of "Two" or even "Three" of it. The position is

absolutely different from what it is at love, and your partner ought not to be deceived by it.

Here is a case in point. Score, game all. A, B, 24; Y, Z, 0. Z dealt and held:

Spades—Jack, Ten, 9, X, X, X, X.
Hearts—X, X.
Diamonds—Ace, X.
Clubs—Queen, Jack.

He called "Three Spades." A and B had a "Four Hearts" declaration, but did not know it and were shut out from their call. Z just made his contract, losing two Hearts, a Spade, and a Diamond. Now mark the position. At score of love, Z would not have been justified in calling "Three Spades." Had he done so his partner would have, rightly, put him up to "Four Spades."

But Y was a good player and realised the position. He held:

Spades—King, Queen, X.
Hearts—X, X, X.
Diamonds—X, X, X.
Clubs—Ace, Ten, X, X.

And he was, at the score, taking no risks, unless the opponents jumped into Hearts. The calling saved the game and rubber.

On the other hand, if Z had opened with "One Spade" or "Two Spades," A, for a certainty, would have shown Hearts, and A and B would either have gone game, or Y and Z would have been pushed to "Four Spades," and been penalised.

Of course Z might have found his partner with no support and have come down several tricks, but at the score the risk was worth while.

If the dealer calls "One No Trumps," second hand with the lead would be wrong to make a defensive call. But when the dealer and second hand pass, it is right for third hand to make a defensive call in a minor suit if he be unable to make an attacking declaration. This will show his partner a lead, in any case.

Defensive declarations must be distinguished from mere flag-flying calls. A defensive declaration is one where the declarer purposely over-calls his hand to shut out a call that he fears his opponents may make, and which would give them game. It is a declaration that, with just over average support from his partner, he may expect to win, but with less than average support will not involve big penalties.

A flag-flying declaration is one in

which the declarer cannot hope to succeed, even with a good hand from his partner.

This may seem an artificial distinction, but it is not really so. There are legitimate risks and illegitimate risks. The defensive call is legitimate at Contract: the flag-flying call is illegitimate. The latter does not pay, the penalties are too high.

The chief objections to Contract made by Auction Bridge players resolve themselves into:

(1) Penalties score too high, and are too punishing.

(2) Rubbers are too long.

(3) It is an expert's game and the average player has no chance.

(4) The holder of good cards is unduly rewarded.

The last two objections practically

cancel one another. Contract requires a nice sense of card values. Correct and skilful calling, judgment, and discrimination give greater advantages than in Auction. On the other hand, "smashing" cards do count, and the holder of big hands gets amply rewarded, so that the duffer or indifferent player is by no means necessarily out of the game.

The average rubber is very little longer than in Auction. You may have rubbers that are over in two or three hands, and occasionally you may have a rubber lasting an hour and a half or two hours.

With regard to scoring and penalties, only a readjustment of points is needed. If you are in the habit of playing Auction for 1*s.* per 100, play Contract for 9*d.* or 6*d.* per 100, and so on in proportion.

Coming fresh from Auction to Contract, the first considerations you have to remember are:

(*a*) *The numerical system of bidding.*

The fact that the minor suits have come into their own and rank for bidding purposes practically the same as the major suits brings a fresh element into the calling. Diamonds and Clubs are no longer shut out by a big bid in the major suits or no trumps. "Three Clubs" overbid "Two No Trumps," "Four Clubs" overbid "Three No Trumps," "Five Clubs" overbid "Four No Trumps," and "Six Clubs" overbid "Five No Trumps," and similarly in the suit calls.

Not only does this numerical system affect the bidding, but it often affects the doubling. You may have a perfect double of "Three No Trumps," but no good double of "Four Clubs" or

"Four Diamonds." But you will find as you progress that this numerical system of bidding adds interest, charm, and diversity to the game.

(*b*) *Importance of bidding a safe contract.*

It is wise to go by easy stages. It pays to make a safe contract rather than to take risks. It is essential, as dealer, that your first bid should be sound. Your object is to build up a contract between yourself and your partner, to enable you to declare game if your joint cards allow. If not, at any rate to make something towards game. The occasions in which on your own hand alone you can declare a game contract will be few and far between. In all bids you require to be at least one trick stronger for a Contract call than would be considered necessary at Auction.

A bid of "One" should mean Ace, King to five, or King, Queen to five, and *at least* two outside tricks. If you hold six of a suit to Ace, King, or King, Queen with an outside Ace, you should bid "Two" straight away. The reason of this is that your partner, if his cards in any way justify it, is going to put up your contract at once, whether the opponents bid or not.

Thus suppose at a love score you bid "One Heart," your left-hand adversary says "No," your partner bids "Two Hearts," and your right-hand opponent passes. You now have another bid. You can say "Three Hearts" if your cards justify it. But that may not really help you. Three Hearts will not give you game, and you have only increased your liability.

Having heard your bid of "Three Hearts" your partner may, in his

turn, be able to bid "Four." But that is unlikely, since if he held so strong a hand, he ought to have bid "Four" straight away. On the other hand, if you have bid "One Heart" and your partner immediately puts you up to "Three Hearts," call "Four Hearts" if your strength justifies it.

Over-calling at Contract is likely to lead to greater disaster than at Auction, not only because the penalties are higher but because it is opposed to the spirit of the game, and, if indulged in, causes distrust in your partner that may prove fatal.

You will be very tempted to bid a winning contract when you have a good hand and your partner has supported you. But if you are going to do any good at Contract you must learn to resist such temptation.

Supposing, for instance, you have bid

"Two Hearts" and your partner has put you up to "Three Hearts." You need four to win game. You call "Four" and are doubled and you go down one trick.

What is the result? You lose 200 points above the line. If you had been content to play the game in three hearts you would have won 24 below and 50 above. You throw away a plus 74 to lose 200.

And remember that the 24 below at Contract is much more valuable than the same score at Auction, because it enables your next hand to go game on a light contract or force your opponents into a big call that you may be able to double.

A further consideration is that the higher you put your contract the more you curtail your bonuses.

If you have contracted to make three

hearts and you happen to make, by good play or by the joint hands just fitting, four or five, you have the satisfaction of scoring 50 above the line for each trick above your contract. It is much better to do this than take a risk that is really betting against yourself. Do not exchange a practical certainty for an uncertainty.

Do not be deceived by the silence of your adversaries. The "silent trap" is practised by all good Contract players. Your opponent, when you have made a call in which he sees you cannot go game, and on which he may have the possibility of defeating your contract, neither doubles nor bids. He waits for you. If you are misled by this silence into overbidding your hand—and almost all beginners at Contract are—he pounces on you and brings off a big double.

That is where Contract differs so materially from Auction. At Auction you want to put your opponents up and you frequently bid with that purpose. At Contract you don't necessarily want to put your opponents up. You want to, and hope to, leave them in a contract that does not give them game. At Auction silence is always a virtue when you have a bad hand. At Contract silence is often a virtue when you have a good hand.

A third point is, *Never take your partner out from weakness.* At Auction it is frequently advisable to do so. At Contract it is entirely wrong. If your partner bids "No Trumps," don't take him out into two of a suit because your hand is weak. It is fatal. And, similarly, when he bids a suit in which you are weak, don't overbid him with a long suit headed only by Queen or Jack.

At Contract partners show their suits, but only when they are substantial. If, for instance, your partner bids "One Spade" and you call "Two Diamonds" because you have little or no support in Spades, your Diamonds must be solid (*i. e.* have top honours), as your partner, on the strength of your call, may branch into No Trumps.

CHAPTER II

BOLSHEVIK BRIDGE

An amusing variation of Contract Bridge is being played in several clubs in Paris. The innovation, the invention of a quick-witted Parisian, is a declaration called "Bolshevik."

It may be made by any player when it comes to his turn to call. *And it takes precedence over any other bid of any kind.* It does not matter if a Grand Slam has been called. As soon as any player announces Bolshevik, bidding is at an end.

The bid is the equivalent of *misère* at solo whist. The contractor undertakes not to make a single trick. He plays "on his own." Every man's hand is against him. His partner becomes for

the time being his adversary. There is no dummy.

Bolshevik carries no points towards game, but the successful declarer receives 500 points *above the line*, or if doubled 1000 points above the line from each of his opponents who have doubled.

Should he fail in the contract he loses at the rate of 500 points a trick, or if doubled, 1000 points to each of his opponents who have doubled.

Any or all of the adversaries may double in turn, but only those who have doubled receive the extra bonus.

The player on the left of the dealer makes the first lead.

The scores for the Bolshevik declarations are kept separately as they do not count towards the rubber, the successful declarer scoring no points below the line.

I can imagine old-fashioned and conservative players being horrified at this innovation.

But Bolshevik is excellent fun and adds considerably to the liveliness and interest of the game.

Of course you may play several rubbers in which there is no Bolshevik call made. Then you may have a rubber where there are two or three of such bids.

To succeed against three clever players demands a very high degree of skill. To bring off a Bolshevik bid is to secure the utmost of sensation that cards can yield.

It is rather hard, when you have a fine No Trumper or Spade hand, to be deprived of playing it, but you have the satisfaction of trying to "down" the Bolshevik bidder and securing solid penalties if you succeed. And it is

astonishing how often the contractor fails. The most promising looking *misère* hands can be defeated by astute team-work on the part of the other three players.

One word of warning. If you play Bolshevik, *reduce your stakes.* The game runs into very high figures. At some of the Paris clubs the best players are content to play for five francs a hundred.

CHAPTER III

CAIRO BRIDGE

CAIRO Bridge was invented by Mr. F. Comber, who was attached to General Allenby's Staff in Egypt during the war. It was introduced to me by Mr. John Prioleau, the well-known motoring writer. It was played by Service men and others in Cairo and other parts of Egypt during the winter of 1917, and was found a most excellent game. It has all the good points of both Contract and Auction.

The idea of the game is to encourage calling, and at the same time to reward correct bidding. For this purpose all suits are of equal value so far as scoring goes, but keep their ordinary sequence for declaration—Spades, Hearts, Diamonds, and Clubs.

The following table shows the method of scoring:

Tricks in any suit.		In No Trumps.	Penalty or Bonus.
1.	Scores 4	4	20
2.	„ 7	7	40
3.	„ 10	15	60
4.	„ 16	25	80
5.	„ 25	50	100
6.	„ 40	100	150
7.	„ 75	150	200

(Values are the values *per trick.*)

Now it will be seen that three tricks *in any suit* make a game. But these tricks must be *declared.* The player who calls "One Spade" or "One Heart" does not go game even when he makes a Grand Slam. He only scores at the rate of 4 a trick and secures 28 below the line. If he bids two of any suit he scores at 7 a trick. If three, at 10 a trick; and so on as shown in the table.

If he gains a Little Slam he scores 100 points above the line, and for a

Grand Slam 200 points. But for Little Slam declared he is rewarded by 500 points, and for Grand Slam declared 1000 points.

The "No Trump" declaration takes precedence, as in Auction, over all suits in bidding. But what is the good of calling "One No Trumps" when, if you are left in with the contract, you score only 4 a trick? The game, therefore, sounds the doom of the light "No Trump" fiend, and gives the holder of good cards, in no matter what suit, a fair chance in the bidding.

The numerical system is adopted, as at Contract; thus "Four Clubs" overbid three "No Trumps," "Three Spades," or "Three Hearts." And if the bidder of "Four Clubs" succeeds in his contract he scores 64 below the line, just as the bidder of four of any of the other suits would do—no more

and no less. The declaration may be doubled and re-doubled, as in Auction, when the penalties are doubled and re-doubled.

The bonus when the declarer is doubled and is successful in his contract is the same as the penalty. Thus the declarer who bids "One" of a suit is doubled and gets his contract scores 20 points above the line. Or if unsuccessful he loses 20 points for each trick below his contract. The game has also another novelty. The original bidder may increase his contract after the declaration has been passed by all the other players, but he may not vary it. Thus Z as dealer bids "One Spade." A, Y, and B pass. Z may now call two, three, or more Spades, but he cannot switch into "No Trumps" or any suit declaration other than Spades. A partner may, of course, assist his

partner's declaration, or make a fresh call. Doubling and re-doubling reopen the bidding as in Auction.

To make the matter perfectly clear let me give a few examples. Z declares "One No Trump." He is left with the contract. He makes four "No Trumps." He scores only 16 points below. Z declares four "No Trumps" and makes five; he scores 125 points below, but if he had declared five "No Trumps" and made them he would have scored 250 points.

While the game will appeal to the sporting instincts of those who love a gamble, since reward and penalties run high, it is not designed to increase the merely gambling element in Auction Bridge. On the contrary, it aims at putting every player, no matter what suit he holds, on better fighting terms.

In "Auction" the No Trump and major suit calls still have great advantage. They can shut out effectively any big bid of the minor suits. The declaration of "Four Spades" excludes the call of "Five Diamonds" or "Five Clubs." At Cairo Bridge not only four "No Trumps" but also five Hearts, Diamonds, or Clubs can be declared over it.

In thus giving chances of more bidding the game has greater interest and diversity than Auction. It opens up all sorts of new possibilities in calling, and gives immense scope to the agile speculator who is quick in sizing up the merits of a hand. But it is a mistake to suppose that it encourages freak calling. The player who undertakes a high contract *without having the goods* is severely dealt with. Suppose he declares "Five Clubs" and fails to get them. He will lose 100 per trick

undoubled, and 200 a trick doubled, for every trick he is down.

Moreover, at Cairo Bridge every declaration of three or more is a free double. That is to say, if your opponents make three by cards in any suit or No Trumps they go game. Therefore, if you have any sort of chance of defeating their contract you will double at once. If they succeed you will not have doubled them out. They were out anyway. If they fail, you are duly rewarded.

There is a great deal more in the game than meets the eye at first sight, and the more you play it the more you will realise its subtlety and ingenuity.

The declaration, for instance, has many special points. At Auction it is often advisable to call to try to put your opponents up in the hope, faint though it may be, of luring them into a contract you can just defeat. But in

Cairo Bridge you do not want to put your opponents up if they make only a small contract. It is to your interest to leave them alone unless you *have a game hand yourself.*

Thus, suppose your adversaries call two of a suit or two "No Trumps," do not jump in with a call of three which may possibly drive them to a winning declaration of three in their suit. Rest content with their bid of two. The bid of two only carries 7 points per trick in any suit or "No Trumps," and they therefore have to make five by cards to go game in it.

The "silent trap," so useful at Contract, is also very effective at Cairo Bridge. Leave your opponents in with a contract in which they cannot win the game. Don't drive them into one in which they can. And be content to go by easy stages.

Don't expect to have a game bid every hand. It often pays to lie low. Not in the sense of foxiness or waiting to double, but because your aim at the game is not to encourage your opponents to bid high. At the same time when you have a really good thing you can go all out for it and reap a rich reward.

When you have one of those brilliant hands where you can safely go four or five "No Trumps" without any undue risk, you will be rewarded by scoring at the rate of 25 or 50 per trick. And if you can declare a Little Slam you get an added bonus of 500, and for a Grand Slam declared 1000. Personally I think that the scoring at Cairo Bridge is considerably more scientific than at Contract.

It is based on sounder principles. The player who calls one of his suit

and goes down one in his contract loses only 20 points above the line, or, if doubled, 40 points. He has committed only a venial offence. But the rash bidder who calls up to four or five without the remotest chance of getting his contract is penalised to the extent of 80 or 100 per trick undoubled, and 160 or 200 per trick doubled.

After a few experiments the player will see that virtue is rewarded, and vice, in calling, duly punished on a sliding scale, according to degree. And surely a game based on such principles of fair play must be the nearest thing in this imperfect world to perfection—in card games.

CHAPTER IV

STANDARD AND COMPOUND BRIDGE

STANDARD BRIDGE is the invention of Major J. Montagu, for many years secretary of the Portland Club, London. It has been adopted and written about by Mr. William Dalton, Chairman of the Cards Committee.

This does not mean that the game has been taken up by the Portland Club, or that its laws have been finally framed. It is still in embryo.

Standard Bridge is a combination of original Bridge and Auction, with a touch of Contract.

The element of the old Bridge game is in the scoring. Instead of a player who fails to make his contract being

penalised above the line at the rate of 50 points a trick, his opponents are to score the value of his under-tricks below the line, plus a flat penalty of 100 above the line.

The flat penalty means that however much a player goes down on his contract he is not fined more than 100 points. But the fact that his adversaries would score the value of his under-tricks below the line for game is sufficient deterrent to wild calling or flag-flying.

Thus suppose you called "Three No Trumps" and failed in your contract by three tricks. Your opponents would score 30 below the line, game, and 100 points above. This is really a more severe penalty than the loss of 150 points at Auction that entails no loss of game.

Doubling does not affect the 100

penalty, but it doubles the scores below the line.

You bid "Three Hearts," are doubled, and make two less than your contract. Your opponent scores 32 below the line and 100 above. Now this seems to me excellent when it applies to big contracts, and I think the principle is absolutely sound and makes for better bidding and better Bridge. But I am not sure that it is right with a "One" contract.

You call "One Heart" quite justifiably and go one down. Adversaries take 100 above the line and 8 below. It is rather severe, and bigger than the much-criticised penalty at Contract, where you lose only 100. To go down one, is generally a venial offence and ought not to be too harshly penalised. I am in favour of graduated penalities.

If you are doubled and fulfil your contract you receive 100 points above the line, but no further bonus for over-tricks.

The majority system of calling obtains as in Contract and Cairo Bridge. That is to say, the higher number of tricks bid takes precedence over a lower number irrespective of the value of suit called. Thus "Three Clubs" overcall "Two No Trumps"; "Four Clubs" overcall "Three Spades," and so on.

Summarised, the rules are that the laws of Auction Bridge apply, except as follows:

(1) Under-tricks are scored to opponents below the line in addition to a penalty of 100 above the line for failure to fulfil the contract.

(2) Doubling does not affect the penalty of 100 above the line. The

declarer who is successful in his doubled contract receives 100 points, but no bonus for over-tricks.

(3) The bidding is on the majority or numerical system, as in Contract and Cairo Bridge.

The advantages of the new game are easily seen. It means shorter rubbers and sounder bidding. Reckless bidding is ruthlessly punished.

COMPOUND BRIDGE

Compound Bridge is the invention of Dr. J. W. F. Gillies, and is a mixture of old Bridge, Auction, and Standard Bridge.

The rules are :

(1) The declarer scores below the line only those tricks for which he contracts. All tricks over score 10 above the line.

(Thus the declarer bids "Two No Trumps" and makes three; he scores 20 below the line and 10 above.)

(2) If doubled, the declarer takes 100 above the line if successful in his contract, and 100 above the line for each trick in excess of his contract.

(3) The value of the trick or tricks short of the contract is scored by the opponents below the line.

(4) No penalty for one trick below the contract, 50 for failure by two tricks, and 100 for each further trick down.

(5) Doubling or re-doubling: doubles or re-doubles every trick below the line and also all penalities above the line.

The idea of the game is to encourage sound calling and at the same time make it worth while to call up, as you only score below what you contract

to make. The main defect of the game is that if you have a good hand it does not much matter what you do. You can go out on your own call or you can go out on your opponents' bid if you double them. The consequence is that the good cards hold the field all the time and the speculator is silenced.

This may be all to the good, but it certainly cramps the bidding. It is one thing to risk going down a hundred or two above the line, but it is a different matter when by so doing you present your opponents with the rubber and a bonus as well.

CHAPTER V

EQUALITY BRIDGE

THERE are players who, after a run of bad hands, complain that they do not get their fair share of good cards. In this variety, which Captain Hugh Tuite, the inventor, has christened Equality Bridge, any such complaints would fall to the ground, for all the hands are as equal as it is possible to get them.

Every player holds an average hand, that is to say every player is dealt an Ace, a King, a Queen, a Jack, and so on down to a two of the various suits. This is done by sorting the pack.

At the beginning of each hand the cards are placed so that all the cards of each denomination are together (*i. e.* all the Aces, all the Kings, and

so on right through the pack), but the suits are not placed in any particular order. The cards are then cut and dealt in the ordinary way.

The results are surprising and interesting. I have not played the game sufficiently often to come to decided conclusions about it—it has indeed only just been invented—but I can see that it possesses great merits as a test of skill in calling, play, and deduction. I can recommend it as an occasional change from the ordinary game.

The obvious drawbacks are the necessity of sorting out the cards at the beginning of each deal, and the advantage derived by the good card-player, who, after the first few tricks, should be able to place most of the high cards.

It might be thought that, with each player holding an average hand, there

would not be much scope for calling; but those who actually play the game will discover that it pans out in strange and curious ways.

A few illustrative hands are given from actual play.

In each case Z is the dealer.

No. 1.

Y

S—5.
H—Q., 9, 3, 2.
D—K., J., 10, 8, 7, 4.
C—A., 6.

S—10, 8, 6. H—A., K., J., 4. D—Q., 5. C—9, 7, 3, 2.	A	B S—A., Q., 9, 7, 4, 2. H—6. D—3. C—K., J., 10, 8, 5.

Z

S—K., J., 3.
H—10, 8, 7, 5.
D—A., 9, 6, 2.
C—Q., 4.

Score: Game all.

The bidding was—Z, "One No Trumps." A, No. Y, "Two Diamonds." B, "Two Spades." Z, "Three Diamonds." A, "Three

Spades." Y, "Four Diamonds." B, "Four Spades." Z, Double. A, No. Y, "Four No Trumps." All pass.

Before leading his partner's suit, Spades, A, following the usual procedure, led the King of Hearts, and this enabled Z to make the contract and win game and rubber. Y, of course, could not have ventured the bold bid of "Four No Trumps" had Z not doubled the "Four Spades" bid.

No. 2.

S—A., 9, 6, 4.
H—J., 10, 8, 5, 3.
D—K., Q., 7, 2.
C—Nil.

S—J., 8, 3. H—A., K., 6, 4, 2. D—10. C—Q., 9, 7, 5.	Y A B Z	S—K., Q. H—7. D—A., 9, 6, 5, 4. C—J., 10, 8, 3, 2.

S—10, 7, 5, 2.
H—Q., 9.
D—J., 8, 3.
C—A., K., 6, 4.

Score: Love all.

The bidding was—Z, "One Club." A, "One Heart." Y, "One No Trumps." All pass.

Y made "Two No Trumps." After the first trick Y knew that A had the Ace of Hearts, that therefore B held the Ace of Diamonds, and therefore that he could make the Jack of Diamonds in Z's hand. There was also an entry in Dummy in Spades, so that Y, though bare of Clubs himself, could depend on making the Ace and King of Clubs even though the adversaries avoided that suit.

As a matter of fact Y could have gone game. If Y had put Z in with the Jack of Diamonds early in the game, led Z's 10 of Spades, A would have covered with the Jack, Y himself could have taken the trick with the Ace, and led another Spade. Against this method of play A and B had no

defence, and Y would have made "Three No Trumps."

No. 3.

S—9, 5.
H—K., 10, 8, 6.
D—A., 4, 2.
C—Q., J., 7, 3.

S—A., K., 10.
H—Q., J., 9, 7, 4, 2.
D—8, 6, 5, 3.
C—Nil.

B

S—Q., 8, 4, 3.
H—A.
D—J., 7.
C—K., 10, 9, 6, 5, 2.

S—J., 7, 6, 2.
H—5, 3.
D—K., Q., 10, 9.
C—A., 8, 4.

The bidding was—Z, "One No Trumps." A, "Two Hearts." Y, "Two No Trumps." All pass. A led the 7 of Hearts and at Trick 2 B led the 6 of Clubs.

The reader will find it interesting to play out this hand, treating it, not as a double dummy problem, but as a case of deduction from the knowledge

that all the players have average hands. Unless A and B play skilfully, Y and Z can go game.

Although, in each of the three examples of hands given, the final declaration was in "No Trumps," this is by no means always the case.

Judging from what experience has yet been had of Equality Bridge, it would appear that there is a rather greater probability of players holding long suits than at the ordinary game. Mathematically there should be no difference; but, in a workaday world where one deals with time and not eternity, theoretical probability and fact do not always march in step.

CHAPTER VI

PIRATE BRIDGE

PIRATE Bridge was introduced into this country some years ago from the United States, but it is not widely played over here. The New York Whist Club, which legislates for Bridge in America, has refused to incorporate the game in its laws because it considers that it offers too great advantage to the skilled player.

The essence of Pirate Bridge is change of partnership. In this respect it is something like Solo Whist proposal and acceptance. You may make a bid, and any one of the three players may accept you, and if you are left in with that bid you may find yourself with the dummy hand on your right or left, and not necessarily opposite to you.

This introduces an entirely novel element into the play of the joint hands and gives opportunity for tactics and strategy.

The dealer has first bid, or he may pass. As soon as a bid is made each player in turn must either pass or accept. No bid can be raised, over-called, or doubled till it has been accepted.

As soon as a bid is accepted each player in turn has the chance of making a higher bid, which must also be accepted, otherwise the first bid stands. A player who has passed an acceptance cannot bid again unless some higher bid is made and accepted. But he may accept such a bid.

A call of a greater number of tricks in any suit outbids the smaller number. Thus "Three Clubs" outbid two accepted "No Trumps."

The scoring is kept in four columns marked with the four players' names at the top of each column. Only the player who made the final accepted bid can score towards game. He scores the value of the tricks he has made in the same way as at Auction, below the line, and his honours above the line. But if he makes game he adds 50 above the line. The acceptor scores only above the line, but he scores the total value of the declarer's win, with the exception that only the declarer scores the 50 points awarded for rubber.

Thus suppose the declarer has made four by cards in Spades, and there are four honours between the two hands. He scores 36 below the line and 36 above the line for honours and 50 for game—122 in all. His acceptor scores the sum total, 122 points, above the line. But if it be the rubber game, the declarer

will score an additional 50 points, which are not scored by the acceptor.

The average rubber at Pirate Bridge is between 500 and 600 points, and the average number of hands it takes to make rubber is a fraction over three. It is thus a quicker game than Auction and it has greater gambling elements.

Judgment in bidding and accepting so as to pick up the right partner at the right time, plays an enormous part in success. It is quite possible to win at the game without ever playing a hand if you can get the winning declarer for a partner.

ACCEPT WHENEVER YOU CAN

The very first point to bear in mind, if you would win at Pirate Bridge, is to accept a declaration that suits your hand, and this in spite of the fact that

you may have a good declaration of your own. The player who always wants to be the declarer is bound in the long run to go down heavily. With the sole exception of the extra 50 points for rubber, the acceptor gains as many points as the declarer, and the winners are those who amass the greater number of points, no matter whether they are scored above or below the line.

What does it matter if the declarer does win the rubber if you are his partner? Bar the 50 rubber points, you will win as much as he does. If he has a strong hand somebody will accept him, and in addition to the 50 rubber points you will have to pay two players all the other points scored in the game. The aim of each game is to get two players to pay you.

A player should regard each of the

three others as a possible partner, and try to visualise from the bidding the cards they hold. The Auction player when he begins Pirate is too apt to consider the bidder and his acceptor as his opponents, a notion that is fatal to success. The Pirate expert considers every bid as though it were made by his prospective partner, and every acceptance as though it were an adverse over-call at Auction, that is, when he wants to get the first bidder for his partner.

The following will illustrate the point:

Z bid a Spade, and A, on his left held:

Spades—X, X, X.
Hearts—Ace, King, Queen, X.
Diamonds—Ace, King, X.
Clubs—X, X, X.

A passed and the bid was accepted by B. A, a beginner, saw a Spade combination against him as at Auction, and bid "Two Hearts." This was accepted by Y. The bidding continued and was eventually played in Spades, when Z and B made five over-tricks.

A made the mistake of regarding Z as a certain adversary, instead of as a desirable partner. At Auction, with his hand, he would not have hesitated to support his partner in Spades, and here he should have overbid B's acceptance with "Two Spades." Z would have accepted him, and the combined hands would have made the five over-tricks he threw away by not visualising the position. As Z held simple honours, A lost 226 points that he might have won, a difference of 452 points.

SHOW YOUR HAND

In the example just given A was right to pass the first time, for to accept a one-trick bid a stopper in the suit should be held. But there is no need for a player to go on accepting that suit. The more a player can show, however, the more likely is he to be a partner in the final declaration. To hold off after one acceptance suggests a poor hand.

Calling and accepting show what you have got. If you hold off on a strong hand for a couple of rounds of bidding and then make a declaration yourself, no one is likely to accept you; it will be thought that with a weak hand you are trying to attach yourself to a strong one. In the same way, if at last you accept a bid the declarer will probably try to get rid of you by making another call.

REAL STRENGTH REQUISITE

To make an original call there must be real strength, that is, cards that would be useful in defence as well as in attack. A call of " Two " means that a suit is solid, " Three " that there is at least an outside Ace, and when calls of this nature are made, outside strength, not strength in trumps, is wanted by the declarer.

Original bids of " One " in a minor suit are never made with the intention of playing the hand in that suit, but merely to give information. Major suits, on the contrary, are always bid with the intention of playing them.

A free bid of " One " in a minor suit should mean the possession of Ace and King, and preferably not great length. The only exception is that sometimes a player holding a good " No Trumper," except that one of the minor suits is

not guarded, will sometimes bid that suit to discover, say, a holder of Diamonds with a view to a subsequent declaration in "No Trumps."

Auction players will know that an original or free bid is the first bid made, and to prevent any misunderstanding it may be as well to say that the same meaning holds at Pirate; all subsequent declarations are forced ones.

NO TRUMPERS

At Auction if one does not make a "No Trumps" bid when one can the opportunity may not return. At Pirate, on the other hand, an original bid in "No Trumps" should not be made without four Aces or three Aces and the fourth suit stopped twice. Holding four Aces a call of "Two" would be made. With a moderate

"No Trumper" either pass or, if strong enough, call a minor suit; you cannot be left with it, for after it is accepted you can bid something else.

In Auction general strength can be indicated only by a "No Trumps" call, whereas in Pirate information is being given all the time, and your object is to find a partner strong in your weakest suit, or to get dummy on the right side of you to make sure of guarded honours and the lower cards of tenaces. The best "No Trumpers" come, therefore, later in the bidding. You do not want to head any one off in calling, for till the final acceptance you do not know who is to be your partner; and you do want all possible information.

DOUBLING

Dangerous as doubling is at Auction it is far more so at Pirate. The free double is a snare and a delusion, for the double that fails, even when it is not re-doubled, is heavily penalised. Generally speaking, Pirate contracts are built up on a surer foundation than Auction contracts, and so many curious things can happen at the game—many of them due to the fact that partners are not necessarily opposite to one another—that unless the double is a cast-iron certainty—which mighty few doubles are—it is wiser to resist temptation.

It has to be borne in mind that in a game where partnerships depend on the bidding, doubling takes on a fresh significance. If you consider that you have a reasonable doubling proposition at Pirate, it really implies that in your

opinion either the bidder or the acceptor and yourself should be partners. Sometimes a double is deliberately made to induce the last declarer to bid for you; but if he does not, it probably means that he does not fear your double. Far better, therefore, to make a bid yourself than to double. It is practically certain to be accepted.

Suppose, for example, that the bidding has progressed till Z has called "Two No Trumps" and has been accepted by A, on his left. Y, sitting opposite to Z, passes, and B holds a really strong hand—what should B do? His proper course is to call "Three No Trumps." If he does this he will at once be snapped up by Z, who will prefer what appears to be a certainty of winning points to a problematical double. It will be a case of the right partners getting together. Z will

understand that B is more desirable than A, and will note that he can play from his own hand through A, to dummy on his immediate right.

Mr. R. F. Foster, to whose *Pirate Bridge* (McBride, Nast & Co.) I am indebted for much of the information in this chapter, states that in all his experience of the game he has never seen a good double, adding, that "in every case the doubler should have played the hand, or should have been the acceptor, at an early stage of the bidding, of the one that did play it."

THE NULLO

The Nullo declaration is fully recognised at Pirate. It is an undertaking to lose tricks at "No Trumps," the number bid being what the Nullo declarer contracts to force on his opponents, who of course will do their

utmost not to win them. A bid of "Three Nullos," for example, means that three tricks over the book of six are to be forced on the enemy, and that the declarer must not take more than four tricks himself. Honours are not counted, tricks are worth ten points each, and the bid ranks between Spades and "No Trumps."

There is no risk in a Nullo bid at Pirate, as there is at Auction, because nobody will accept unless holding a suitable hand.

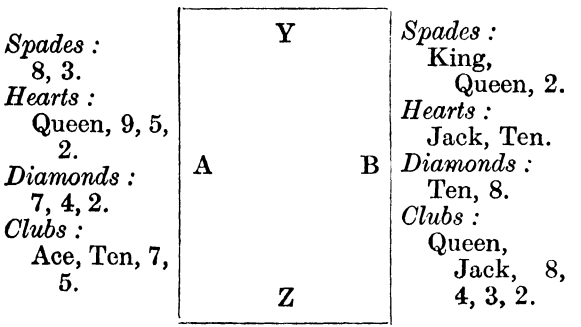
If two players are so strong in the major suits or "No Trumps" that the others have not a chance against them, the Nullo is the only defence—it may, too, result in pushing the adversaries beyond their strength. And here it may be said that the Nullo should never be used as an original attack, only as a means of escape from

powerful opposition at a late stage of the bidding.

The player who can get the utmost out of a Nullo declaration is likely to be good at any variety of Bridge, for a great demand is made on memory and observation. It is advisable to take tricks that must be taken early in the hand. Short suits are an important item, and the members of the opposition should seek to give each other discards and to prevent them from dummy.

The following interesting hands, given by Mr. R. F. Foster, show the possibilities of the Nullo declaration. Note that the partners hold between them three Tens, two Jacks, three Queens, and an Ace, and that dummy is in the worst possible position, opposite the declarer.

Spades : Ace, Jack, 9, 7, 4.
Hearts : 7, 4, 3.
Diamonds : Jack, 9.
Clubs : King, 9, 6.



Spades : Ten, 6, 5.
Hearts : Ace, King, 8, 6.
Diamonds : Ace, King, Queen, 6, 5, 3.
Clubs : None.

Z dealt and bid "Two Diamonds," which no one accepted, and the bid was void. A passed, Y bid a Spade, B passed and Z accepted. Then B bid "Two Clubs" and A accepted. When Y went back to the Spades and Z accepted, B shifted to the Nullo, accepted by A, and they carried it to

Four, which frightened Z back to his Diamonds. No one would accept the Five Diamonds, and it was played at Four Nullos.

It is intriguing to see how A and B get rid of the high cards and make game. Z led the middle Spade, the 6, A played the 8, and B won with the King. B then led the Jack of Hearts, underplayed by dummy with the 9, when Z played small, so as to win the ten of Hearts with the Queen and discard the Queen of Spades on the five of Hearts, holding up the deuce.

There is no escape from the attack. If Z wins either the first or second lead of Hearts and tries another Spade, B wins it and leads the deuce of Spades after getting rid of the second Heart (if he still has it). B and A can make Four Nullos against any defence Z and Y can put up.

It will be observed that B took the first three tricks and was then in a position to refuse to take any more.

Assuredly those who play Pirate Bridge will find plenty of scope for all the card talent they may possess.

CHAPTER VII

NULLOS

THE Nullo call has never been given a fair chance in Auction Bridge, at any rate in England, although it has taken firm hold in certain parts of Scotland. It has been scoffed at without due examination and treated like a poor relation of the positive calls, that is to say, it has not been allowed to speak for itself. By giving two partners holding more or less paltry cards an opportunity for attack the Nullo call undoubtedly adds a new sporting element to the game, and is the most skilful declaration to make and to play. To say that the holding of good cards should not be

penalised is to regard the matter from a muddle-headed point of view. The partners with the big preponderance of strong cards are at liberty to go on bidding as long as they like; all that the Nullo bid does is to give the weaker side a chance, not a certainty by any means, to escape from being overwhelmed by brute force.

It seemed probable at one time that Nullos would gain acceptance in the United States. They were advocated very strongly by several writers, including Miss Florence Irwin, who prophesied that they would become inevitably a part of Auction. But in her latest book, *The Complete Auction Bridge Player*, Miss Irwin has had to confess herself a false prophet.

"True, I loved Nullos, and Nullos didn't come—but they should have! They were no mere bag of tricks to

catch the public eye and the public pence. They were the most scientific, the most difficult, the fairest variant that Auction has ever known. And as science, skill, and fairness are my fetishes, I fought like a tiger for their child. . . . If a larger number of players had been experts . . . if unintelligent gamblers hadn't hated to see luck killed and skill substituted, we should have been playing Nullos to-day, and Auction would have had nearly as high a skill percentage as Chess."

Mr. E. V. Shepard, one of the most scientific of American writers on the game, also approved the game while considering that it gives expert players a still greater advantage over those who are less skilled.

It was this view of the game that was taken by the New York Whist

Club when in 1920 it revised the Laws of Auction Bridge and refused to incorporate the Nullo call as a feature of the game.

None the less I consider Nullos well worth consideration and study, and I do not see why one should not occasionally play them as a change.

The Nullo is a very subtle affair. It requires great care in the bidding, and the play of a hand in Nullos requires as much, if not greater, skill as any other declaration, and this alike in attack and defence.

And now to describe the method. The Nullo call is a negative "No Trumps" declaration. To call "One Nullo" means that you contract to make one trick less than "One No Trumps," otherwise that you are prepared to try to force the opponents to make "One No Trumps," and you

win if you do not make more than six tricks in all. There is nothing puzzling about it. Should you bid up to three Nullos, you win if you do not take more than four tricks.

Tricks under and over the contract score in the ordinary way. If you go three Nullos and make four, you score the value of four below the line. If you make only two Nullos, the opponents score 50 points above the line.

Nullo tricks count 8 points each, the same as Hearts, but Nullos rank below Hearts in bidding, so that, for instance, "Three Hearts" outbids a call of "Three Nullos." Perhaps this is the best place for Nullos, and it shows, moreover, that the strong hands still have the better of the matter. In Pirate Bridge the Nullo call ranks below "No Trumps," but counts the

same, 10 points per trick over the usual book of six. This Pirate value is really the more logical, seeing that the Nullo is a variety of "No Trumps," but weakness can be too much exalted at the expense of strength. There is, however, at present no definite legislation for the poor Nullo, and its trick value at Auction could be best decided after extended trial. Meanwhile it counts as a Heart but ranks below it.

There is room for much discussion as to honours. Amongst those who do patronise the Nullo, some score Aces in the same way as they are scored at "No Trumps," some score Deuces instead of Aces and at the same valuation, while some do not recognise any honours when the contract is being played in Nullos. Yet another notion is that Aces should count as honours to the side which

does *not* hold them; but this, I think, may be dismissed as too bizarre for serious consideration.

To score Aces positively, that is, to the side holding three or four of them, is to give an undue advantage to the defenders, for they would generally hold at least three between them, and sometimes there would be four in one hand. If there is to be an honour score the Deuce should be glorified, and the holding of Deuces at Nullos score as Aces do at "No Trumps"; still it would seem a little absurd that the holding of four paltry Deuces in one hand should score 100 points. My own opinion is that there should be no honours at all when the declaration is being played in Nullos. The Nullo call is an integral part of Pirate Bridge and has received much attention, and in that game no honours

are allowed when a Nullo bid holds the field.

Doubling and re-doubling have precisely the same effect as with any other call.

THE CALLING

An *original* call of "One Nullo" should mean that you do not believe you can be forced to take more than one trick, and that you do not see your way to taking two tricks in any other call. If your partner has a good hand this is a most disconcerting beginning, but at any rate he knows where he is, and if he takes you out it is entirely on his own responsibility.

If he makes an initial bid of "One" in a suit or "No Trumps," you should take him out if you would have bid "One Nullo" originally, and again he will know that you cannot help him

in any positive bid. But if you are certain to win two tricks, either on his call or in Nullos, do not take him out.

The danger point in Nullos is when dummy contains no very low cards and no short suit, such a hand, for instance, as—

Spades—King, Ten, 9.
Hearts—Jack, Ten, 8.
Diamonds—Queen, Jack, 8, 7.
Clubs—Queen, 9, 8.

There is no bid for a hand of this kind after a Nullo call, and the Nulloist will almost certainly be heavily penalised. There is, however, this to be said—unless the cards of the opponents are very evenly divided a call of "One Nullo" is scarcely likely to be allowed to stand.

A partner's bid of "One Nullo"

over " One Diamond " or " One Club " does not mean a trickless hand; if the latter is the case the bid should be " Two Nullos." There is more need for caution in bidding Nullos than in any other call; indeed I would advise a player never to carry Nullo bids beyond two unless with the support of the partner.

Position is of rather more importance with Nullos than other declarations, and it is advantageous to be on the left of a bidding opponent when your most dangerous cards are in his suit.

Chicane in a suit is most useful, and so is a singleton. Better to have an Ace bare than only the Jack, Ten; the first can win but one trick, the latter may win two. The point is that chicane or a very short suit gives scope for discarding.

The rôle of Nullos is to give a chance

to weak hands, and they should never be bid when there is a possibility of you and your partner supporting each other in a positive call. But the Nullo call is sometimes useful when you can no longer continue to bid your suit. Suppose you had bid up to "Three Hearts" without any support from your partner, and that the opponents, between them, had gone to "Three Spades," it is possible you might see your way to bid "Four Nullos." It is obvious your partner can have no real strength in anything, or he would have raised your "Three Hearts" to four, knowing now that you did not require help in that suit, and he might well be afraid to start Nullos himself after your spirited calling. But if you held six Hearts, say, Ace, King, Queen, 4, 3, 2; chicane or a singleton in Spades, the Ace to three or four low

cards in Diamonds, and the King, and two small Clubs, you might very well make "Four Nullos"—or perhaps push the opponents out of their depth into "Four Spades." Certainly in the rubber game it would be worth the risk.

THE PLAY OF THE CARDS

The first point for the declarer is to note how many tricks he can afford to win and still fulfil his contract. Unless he sees that he is in little or no danger of going down on the contract, it is generally advisable to take tricks at the beginning. The Nullo novice is rather apt to postpone as long as possible the taking of a trick, but experience has shown that the early taking of your medicine is helpful to forming a plan of campaign.

Most of what can be said about the

play of the hands applies equally to the attack and to the defence. If a trick must be taken, do so with your highest card. If a trick is already taken by the partner, take it yourself if possible and keep your lower card.

A singleton is always a good lead, for it paves the way to discarding troublesome high cards in other suits. An important part of the play is giving yourself opportunities for discards and denying them to the enemy.

Do not try to get rid of all low cards at once, otherwise a time may come when, on being forced to win a trick, you must win all the rest. This points to the usefulness of retaining as long as possible a low card of an adverse long suit, so that if you must win a trick you can lead it with a good chance of causing havoc in the opposing camp.

As a general rule, lead the lowest of four, the intermediate of three, and the higher of two.

The section dealing with the Nullo at Pirate Bridge in a previous chapter should be read in connection with this chapter, and the hands there given will afford some indication of the scope there is for skill in this declaration.

CHAPTER VIII

JOKER BRIDGE

THIS diverting variation is the invention of Captain Hugh Tuite, who writes as Tierce Major in *The Scottish Field.*

The first step is to substitute the Joker for the deuce of Clubs, leaving the pack with the normal fifty-two cards.

The power of the Joker is not quite the same as at Poker, where it can be made to pose as any denomination of card in any suit. At Joker Bridge the Joker is the highest card in the pack, and therefore whenever played takes the trick. It can be played at any time, even though the holder is able to follow suit, and possesses the

same power alike in a "No Trumps" or a suit declaration.

When the Joker is led, the leader must name a suit which the other players must, if possible, follow. It is not a case of the Joker representing the named suit. For example, Spades might be trumps and Hearts the suit named when the Joker is led; it would be useless and extravagant for an opponent bare of Hearts to play a Spade, because the Joker must always take the trick and therefore cannot be trumped.

As an honour the Joker is independent of other honours, and counts 25 points above the line to the side holding it.

THE PLAY

Although the inclusion of the Joker adds a highly speculative and spicy

element to the game, its employment to the best advantage affords scope for considerable skill, and it is easy to play it so as almost to waste its power.

Generally speaking, it is advisable to hold it up for a time and to leave the enemy guessing as to its whereabouts. The declarer obviously knows when it is against him, but he cannot tell on which side it may lie, and this amongst other things adds to the hazard of a finesse. Although the Joker beats any Ace, to reserve it entirely for this purpose would of course be foolish.

If led in a trump declaration, the trump suit would no doubt be usually named as the one for the other players to follow; but this is not obligatory, and would not necessarily always be the best medium for obtaining the greatest value.

The addition of the Joker to an already good hand adds greatly to its strength; while a really powerful hand may fail to go game if the Joker is with the opposition. As its possession depends on the chance of the deal, it cannot be said to make the game too difficult or too easy. Indeed it would be quite possible to overvalue it in bidding.

As to the actual play, a new and very subtle element is added. For one thing, it must be borne in mind that there are only twelve Clubs.

Perhaps in a " No Trumps " declaration the Joker makes its power felt most drastically, and this either in attack or defence. With the Joker against him and still unplayed the declarer must go very cannily, if his holding is not cast-iron, or he may speedily find his opponents making

their long suits instead of himself. As a matter of fact, the side holding the Joker would, oftener than not, supply the final bid.

This Joker is a menacing card to behold in dummy, but better there than in the declarer's hand, for at any rate both the opponents know where it is and can regulate their play accordingly.

At present I am inclined to think that the Joker is at the height of its power when led at "No Trumps" to enforce discards in a dangerous suit. To go to the other extreme, as a card of certain entry it may make an otherwise worthless hand of some service in being able to ensure a lead through a strong hand.

If used strategically the Joker should be worth more than the actual trick it takes, for it will, for instance, often

have trick-promoting value in forcing the establishment of a long suit.

So far it has not been found that the average value of a rubber has undergone any change, though perhaps there is a tendency towards shorter duration.

As this variation has only just been made public, it is too early to know to what extent it may "catch on," or how it may develop with experience. One can see that the presence of the Joker will affect the bidding, and still more the play; but till there has been time for fuller analysis, and a good deal of actual play, it is not possible to make many dogmatic assertions about its possibilities.

In any event the novelty is worth full trial, and it will certainly be found to make unexpected differences in the ordinary Auction game.

The principle of replacing the deuce of Clubs by the Joker and of giving the latter the power as described, can be applied as readily to Contract, Pirate, and all other descendants of the great Bridge family, including the three-handed and two-handed games.

CHAPTER IX

BRIDGE WHIST

BRIDGE WHIST is really Auction Bridge without a dummy.

The bidding and scoring are as at Auction, and the regular laws, except those relating to dummy, apply.

Old Whist players soon tumble to it, but to Bridge players who have not known Whist it is like learning a new game.

It is astonishing how much difference the elimination of dummy makes both in calling and in play. It is not until you play without a dummy that you begin to realise what a big element in Auction the exposed hand is, how it helps out frequently bad or indifferent bidding, and how it assists the play

of the declarer by enabling him to make a plan of campaign after the first card is led.

Take away the dummy and the faults of many so-called good Bridge players become ruthlessly exposed.

The light No-trump maker, to whom the exposure of dummy is often worth a couple of tricks, has not a chance when he has to fumble in the dark to find his partner's suit. The attacker loses the greater part of the advantage he undoubtedly possesses at Auction. A weak caller comes to hopeless grief.

On the other hand, the game encourages bidding. It becomes of supreme importance to indicate to your partner, in every legitimate way, what you hold. The supporting bid, the assist, the pre-emptive raise, and the "switch" assume a new value.

If, for instance, you bid "One

Heart" on five to the King, and all the other players pass, you do not know whether your partner has anything in his hand likely to be of assistance. But if your partner bids, as he should if he can, Two or Three Hearts, whether there be an intervening call or not, you have got something to guide you.

From general observation I should say that, roughly, you need to be at least one trick stronger in making a free bid at Bridge Whist than at Auction, and as a rule there are more suit declarations than No-trumps.

In play the game is undoubtedly more difficult when there is no dummy. The well-known rule, "Lead through strength and up to weakness," fails when often you cannot locate strength and weakness. The necessity for strict and accurate play becomes accentuated.

CHAPTER X

BRAILLE BRIDGE

It is good to know that Auction Bridge can be and is played by the blind. I understand that a considerable number of those who have lost their sight play it regularly, and that it is regarded by them as quite the best card game.

At St. Dunstan's they are most keen about it. To soldiers who lost their sight in the war it is a great solace to be able to play a game that they knew before their affliction. Men who have been blind from birth have learnt it.

Blind people as a rule make good players. It is one of Nature's compensations that when the sight is lost other faculties become more acute.

Blind Bridge players have remarkable memories and great powers of concentration—two of the greatest assets in card-playing.

Using Braille cards, which are published by the National Institute for the Blind, of Great Portland Street, London, they can play either among themselves or with those who are not blind.

The cards used are ordinary playing cards punctured slightly with small raised dots at the top and bottom. By means of these signs blind players can tell by touch the denomination of each card.

At the same time the cards can be dealt by the sightless player without revealing what they are, as the centre of the cards handled in dealing have no marks.

The bidding proceeds as usual.

When dummy's hand is put down the cards exposed are announced suit by suit. Each player quietly names each card as he plays to a trick.

I would have all blind people learn Bridge. If to us who have the blessing of sight the game is a wonderful tonic and recreation, making us forget the cares and bedevilments of the day, how much more to them might it serve to relieve the monotony of many blank hours!

CHAPTER XI

PAR AUCTION AND DUPLICATE BRIDGE

PAR AUCTION is the invention of Mr. Milton C. Work, Chairman of the Card Committee of the New York Whist Club.

The idea is to give a number of carefully selected hands, which have been pre-arranged, letting the decision of the best score rest entirely on the play of the cards.

By an ingeniously devised system of numbering on the backs of the cards the dealer is enabled to give to each player the pre-arranged cards he should hold without knowledge as to what those cards are.

The marks on the backs of the cards indicate merely the order in which

they should be dealt during the various hands and give no information as to the face value of the cards.

Instead of the usual pattern the backs of the Par Auction cards are divided into twelve squares or spaces. At the top of each space is a number showing the order of the deal, and with that number an indicator showing to which of the four players at the table the card should be given for that deal.

All the hands given are based on sound play and bidding, and each player in turn receives his due proportion of good cards, so that the old cry " They held all the cards " is done away with.

Each hand has its " par " value—that is, the score that has been decided as the highest it is possible to make on the cards. The scoring

is as at Auction for tricks and honours and 125 points for a game.

Thus suppose a certain hand were given that should be played in "No Trumps" and the declarer should make three "No Trumps," he and his partner holding three Aces, the "par" value would be 185 points—125 for game, 30 for tricks, and 30 for Aces.

Any player making less than 185 points would be penalised as a loser. The players do not know on what declaration they are supposed to play or what the result should be in tricks. It may therefore happen that a particular hand may be played on a wrong declaration or on a declaration that does not yield the highest results. A great deal therefore, of course, depends on the final declaration, and the hands are designed to offer ample scope for good defensive play.

The whole idea is most instructive as well as interesting.

The cards should be especially useful to Bridge teachers, and I should like to see how they worked out in the hands of many indifferent players who think themselves good, and many of those who are constantly complaining of their luck and that they never hold any good cards. I fancy the result would constitute an eye-opener for many.

The cards are obtainable from the Milton Bradley Company, Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A., and are not, so far as I know, published in this country.

DUPLICATE BRIDGE TOURNAMENTS

In the United States Duplicate Bridge contests are very popular. They are sometimes organised at individual clubs to determine the merit

of the players, sometimes they are interclub affairs. Occasionally they are given on a big scale, such as the series of war tournaments in the summer of 1917, which were held in the principal cities of the United States and Canada to create a special fund for patriotic purposes.

At Duplicate Bridge, I should explain, a certain number of difficult hands are prearranged which give scope for brilliant play. It is essential that the opportunity for good play should be distributed equally among the four players at the table.

The hands dealt should not be of the tricky, flashy, or freak nature. They should be so arranged that sound calling and play are rewarded. Bad bidding and faulty play are penalised. Both sides must be given equal scoring possibilities.

It will thus be seen that the compilation of such hands involves no little skill and labour, but I believe that Duplicate Bridge tournaments could be made as popular among Bridge players in England as are whist drives among adherents of the older game.

Duplicate Bridge is devised as a test of ability—a sort of examination. It affords an admirable opportunity for any two rival pairs who are in doubt as to their respective merits to determine conclusively which is really the stronger.

In the tournament to which I have referred twenty-four hands were prepared, the idea being that at every table, whether in New York or New Orleans, Montreal or Kansas City, exactly the same cards should be played. The hands are given in full with much

interesting matter on Duplicate play in Mr. Milton Work's book, *Auction Bridge Methods Up to Date* (Fisher Unwin).

The result of playing with these prearranged cards is, he claims, not affected by luck, or the mistakes of others. It is a 100 per cent. test of auction form and the vanquished are not entitled to sympathy. They have lost on their merits and not an excuse is in order.

Each hand is played and scored individually and carries a game bonus of 125 points. In all else the scoring is the same as in the ordinary game. Slams and penalties are all valued at the usual figures and doubles and re-doubles are allowed.

The twenty-four hands chosen for the tournament were so arranged that perfect play would produce a score

of 2500 points. In every case in which one pair was distinctly stronger than its adversaries the better players won by a decided margin, regardless of whether they happened to sit North and South or East and West.

CHAPTER XII

BRIDGE FOR SEVEN PLAYERS

It frequently happens when a hostess has arranged for two tables at Bridge one of the guests fails at the last moment, too late to get a substitute. The wise hostess generally takes precautions against this by inviting one or two extra players.

It is very annoying for a hostess to find her party only seven when all her guests are keen to play four-handed Auction Bridge and do not want "skip" or any other game.

Let me explain a simple and ingenious method whereby it is possible for seven people to play four-handed Bridge. It is done by the process of

borrowing the dummy at the full table to make up the four at the other table.

The game is the invention of an American, Mr. W. O. Preston, and has been described by Mr. R. F. Foster, the American Bridge expert.

In my opinion, so far from detracting from the evening's entertainment, it rather adds to it, as it introduces a note of variety into the proceedings.

The idea is this. You have your seven players. Let us call them A, B, C, D, E, F and G. They cut for seats and deal, and we will suppose A and B are partners against C and D at the full table (Table No. 1), and E, F, G are at Table No. 2.

As soon as the declaration has been settled at Table 1 and the lead has been made, whoever is dummy crosses to Table 2 and takes the vacant place. Suppose E and F are partners, and G

has the deal. The dummy from Table 1 becomes the partner of G for that hand and takes the vacant seat opposite G.

Having come into Table 2 he remains at the table till he becomes dummy again. Whoever is dummy in the next deal at Table 2 crosses over to Table 1.

But how about the scoring? you will ask. It is evident that players belong to two tables and may have a chance to win or lose at both.

The original arrangement at each of the two tables is placed at the top of the score card.

The *original partners* win or lose the result of the rubber whether they play all the hands themselves or a substitute plays some of them for them. Thus, suppose at the first table D is declarer and C goes to Table 2, the partner-

ships at Table 2 are entered as E and F against G and C. C is thus interested in two tables and the partnerships read:

At Table 1: A and B *v.* C and D.

At Table 2: E and F *v.* G and C.

If C later comes back to Table 1, he takes his old position as D's partner, which he was originally. This may sound a little complicated, but in actual practice it works out quite easily.

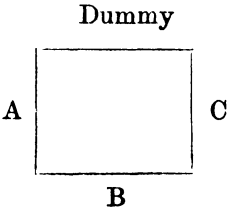
Mr. R. F. Foster suggests that it is a good idea to put the colour of the packs at the top of the score-pad, as after about the fourth or fifth deal of a rubber neither of the original partners with that pack may be in those seats. But they get credit for whatever is lost or won with the particular colour pack with which they started.

THREE-HANDED GAMES

CHAPTER XIII

CUT-THROAT OR SKIP, AND BLIND SKIP

THREE-HANDED AUCTION, otherwise known as "Cut-Throat" or "Skip," is played by three players, all against all. The simplest method is for the three players to sit on three sides of the table, leaving the fourth side vacant, and to keep their seats throughout the rubber. The cards for dummy are then dealt always to the vacant seat. The players A, B, and C sit as shown:



The dummy is always dealt to the

same hand, and receives the first, second or third card, depending on whether A, B or C is dealing.

The dealer makes his declaration, or passes, and the bidding continues as at Auction Bridge. The final declarer of the highest bid plays dummy's and his own hand, and shifts dummy's cards to a convenient position facing him.

The following are the complete official laws :

(1) The game is played by three players, all against all.

(2) The player who cuts the lowest card has the first deal; the player cutting the next lowest sits on the dealer's left, and the remaining player on the dealer's right. The cards are dealt as at Royal Auction Bridge, but the cards dealt to dummy are not taken up till after the final declara-

tion has been made. If a card be exposed while dealing, there must be a new deal.

(3) The dealer makes his declaration or passes, and the bidding continues as at Royal Auction Bridge.

(4) If, after the deal has been completed, and before a card is led, any player expose a card from his hand, he shall forfeit one hundred points to each of the other players; and the declarer—if he be not the offender—may call on the eldest hand not to lead from the suit of the exposed card. If he does not exercise this right, the card must be left upon the table as an exposed card. If the card be exposed by the declarer, after the final declaration has been made, there is no penalty.

(5) If a player double out of turn, he forfeits one hundred points to each

of his adversaries, and the player whose declaration has been so doubled shall have the right to say whether or not the double shall stand. The bidding is then resumed; but if the double has been disallowed, the said declaration cannot be doubled by the player on the right of the offender.

(6) The rubber consists of four games; but when two games have been won by the same player, the other, or others, are not played.

(7) When the declarer makes good his declaration, he scores as at Royal Auction Bridge; when he fails to do so, he loses to each of his adversaries.

(8) The scoring is the same as at Royal Auction Bridge, except with regard to honours, which are scored by each player severally—*i. e.* each player who has one honour in Clubs scores six; each player having two

honours in Clubs scores twelve; a player holding three honours in Clubs scores eighteen; a player holding four honours scores forty-eight; and a player holding five honours in Clubs scores sixty; and similarly for the other suits. In a "No Trump" declaration Aces count ten each; and if all four be held by one player, one hundred.

(9) One hundred points are scored by each player for every game he wins, and the winner of the rubber adds a further two hundred and fifty points to his score.

(10) At the conclusion of the rubber, the total scores obtained by each player are added up separately, and each player wins from, or loses to, each other player the difference between his score and that of the said other player.

As generally played the game is a gamble for dummy. The dealer generally opens with a bid of "Two No Trumps" if he has any cards of value at all, on the principle that whatever good cards he may find in dummy will help to establish his indifferent lot. His bid has the advantage, if he is undoubled, of putting up second caller to "Three No Trumps," or three of a suit, which third hand may possibly be able to double to the advantage of the dealer.

A slight variation is to fine the dealer an extra hundred points if he fail on an initial bid of "Two No Trumps."

BLIND SKIP

A variation now widely played is the dealing of the first four cards "blind," face down to the middle of

the table, the remaining forty-eight cards being distributed as four twelve-card hands. Final declarer, before examining his dummy, looks at the four blind cards and distributes them as he wishes, one to himself, one to dummy, and one to each adversary. This gives still more spirit to the bidding, and adds to its uncertainty.

CHAPTER XIV

STOP-GAP BRIDGE

(NEW FORM OF THREE-HANDED AUCTION)

It often happens that three players arrive at the club for an early game of Bridge and cannot find a fourth; or a four has been arranged and one of the players is detained or cannot come at the last moment.

"Let's play 'Skip,'" says one.

But everybody does not like "Skip," the ordinary form of three-handed Auction. It is too much of a gamble for dummy.

Another disadvantage is that the rubbers are too long. If, after you have started, a fourth turns up, you have either to keep him waiting while

you finish, or agree to terminate at the end of the next hand, which is often hard on the player who is ahead, as well as on those who are a lot down, who are given no chance of recovery.

To meet these cases a new form of three-handed Auction, called "Stop-gap Bridge," has been invented by the Lenox Club of the United States.

The rules of the game have been explained by Mr. R. F. Foster, who states that they were formulated by Mr. Walter Nettleton, of Stockbridge, Massachusetts.

The three players cut for seats and cards in the usual way, one sitting opposite the dealer, the other on his right. Dummy's cards are on the dealer's left.

The first bid must be in a suit, never in "No Trumps," and must be limited to a bid of One. This is to prevent

speculative No-trumpers and shut out high bids, which are so usual in the game of "Skip." Once the bidding has been started, however, it proceeds in the same way as at "Skip." There are no restrictions as to overcalling or doubling.

The highest bidder takes dummy and the player to the left of the declarer leads, and the play proceeds as in Auction. *Each deal is a complete game in itself.* The scores are kept in three columns and the honour scores are added to the trick scores.

When the declarer wins 30 or more points on the deal he receives 200 bonus for the game. When he fails to go game he scores only the trick and honour points on that deal in a lump sum. Thus if he bids "Two Spades" and makes them and holds simple honours, he scores 18+18=36.

Should he fail in his contract or honours are held against him, each adversary is credited with the amount, unless both sides score. Then the larger score takes the difference. Thus A, B and C are players. A bids "One No Trump" and gets it, but B and C hold 30 Aces. B and C score 20 and the declarer nothing. But if A bids "Three No Trumps" and makes them, and with dummy holds 40 Aces, he scores 270 points.

If A bids "Four Spades" and is doubled, and he is one down on his contract and holds, say, four honours in the suit between dummy and himself B and C each score 100—36 *i. e.* 64 points and A nothing.

Should a fourth candidate appear during a deal and before a bid is made, the deal is abandoned. But if a bid has been made it must be played out.

At the end of the deal the scores are added up. Points of 50 and under are not scored, and all points over 50 count as a hundred.

There are various advantages in this game over " Skip," and there is an especially good point in the rule that a suit must be the first declaration. This has the effect of stopping the wild bidding that frequently takes place at " Skip," and of adding much interest to the game.

CHAPTER XV

FIVE HUNDRED

FIVE HUNDRED is a popular game in the United States and Canada, but it is not very well known in this country. The advantage of it is that it is a three-handed game, and good card games for three players are rare.

It is easily learnt by those who know other card games, as it has features in it borrowed from Loo, Euchre, Nap, and Bridge. You play with a piquet pack of cards—that is, a pack of cards consisting of the 7, 8, 9, 10, Jack, Queen, King, and Ace of each suit, plus the Joker.

The Joker is the highest card, whether in a suit or in "No Trumps." Next to the Joker ranks the Jack of

the trump suit (known as the right bower), and after this the Jack of the same colour as the trump suit (known as the left bower). After these come Ace, King, Queen, 10, 9, 8, 7, of trumps in descending order.

The suits rank: Hearts (highest), Diamonds, Clubs, and Spades, as in the old game of Bridge. The cards are dealt three at a time to each player, then one card to each player. The three remaining cards are laid face downwards on the table and are known as "the widow."

After the deal, the player on the left of dealer either passes or makes a bid. If he bids he must *contract to make at least six tricks*, and must name the suit he wishes to make trumps or may declare to play "No Trumps." A higher bid by either of the two other players supersedes the lower. The

higher bid may either take the form of contracting to win a larger number in the same suit or in a suit of higher value or in " No Trumps."

The player who has bid highest is known as " the bidder," and he may take " the widow " into his own hand, discarding as he likes. The cards he discards are laid face upwards on the table. The bidder leads, and each of the two other players must follow suit. If they cannot they play what they please. The winner of a trick leads for the next.

In the " No Trump " bid the Joker may be played to any trick and wins it, the leader naming the suit he desires it to represent. In a trump suit, when the Joker is led, trumps must be played to it. If the left bower be led, trumps must also be played to it.

The following are the values of the various bids:

Tricks	6	7	8	9	10
In Spades	40	140	240	340	440
In Clubs	60	160	260	360	460
In Diamonds	80	180	280	380	480
In Hearts	100	200	300	400	500
In No Trumps	120	220	320	420	520

If the bidder wins his contract he scores as above. Should he make a Slam (*i. e.* win every trick) he scores 250 points, unless his bid bore a higher value as in the table, in which case he scores the higher value. Should he fail to make his contract he is "set back." The value of his bid is scored against him. The player who first scores 500 points is the winner of the game.

TWO-HANDED GAMES

TWO-HANDED GAMES

JUST as when four players are not available it is possible for three to play Auction, so when only two are gathered together it can still be followed by its devotees. Indeed there are, at present, more varieties of the game for two players than there are for three. The two-handed games may be divided into two classes, one in which tricks consist of the usual four cards, the other in which two cards constitute a trick. In the latter class will be found the more original features.

So far as applicable the laws of four-handed Auction are in force.

It is open, of course, to players to make any variations they like; for

instance, they can agree that the bidding shall be on the numerical system.

There is no reason, either, why all or any of the two- or three-handed games should not be played as Contract, as well as Auction Bridge—and by doing this two or three players can have double the number of Bridge games at their disposal.

No. 1.—DOUBLE DUMMY

If Double Dummy can claim the honour of being first in the field as a game of two-handed Auction, it is also open to the charge of giving the least scope for play as we understand the term at the game for four players. All the cards are known, and there is, for instance, no need to consider the more likely side on which to take a finesse—it is a matter of certainty and,

strictly speaking, it is not a finesse at all.

On the other hand, Double Dummy often presents intricate problems of a rather mathematical type, the solving depending mainly upon calculations as to discards.

The players sit next to one another, so that each has his dummy in front of him. The cards of both dummies are exposed, so that each player knows exactly where all the cards are. There is no chance about the bidding, for it is possible to gauge precisely how far one can go. Indeed, it is possible for experienced players to adjudicate upon a hand without any bidding or playing, and after setting down the score to go on with the next deal.

The whole game is a matter of analysis, but it is destitute of what to many of us is one of the great charms

of the card-table—the element of chance.

No. 2.—BLIND-TRICK DOUBLE DUMMY

With one small exception this is the same as the preceding game, but it is a potent difference, for it provides the missing element of chance and gives a sparkle to what was formerly somewhat on the drab side.

The first four cards are dealt face-down in the centre of the table, and at the end of the bidding, before a card is led, the declarer gathers them and places them before him as his first trick. These four cards may not be looked at till the end of the hand, and the uncertainty as to the exact holding of the adversary introduces not merely a desirable modicum of spice, but some opportunity for skill in deducing what are the unknown cards.

The bidding, and especially the play, will afford means for inferences and also for card-craft. As to the latter, for instance, the renouncing of a suit or the failure to take a much-wanted trick by the opponent may inform you that he does not hold a certain card, and it might very well suit your game to leave him guessing for a while as to whether it be in your hand.

It it as well for the players to change seats after each rubber, so that one player does not always make an initial lead through the two dummies to the closed hand, and the other always through a hidden hand up to an open one.

No. 3.—HIDDEN DUMMIES

The three methods about to be described under this heading make for still further improvement upon the original Double Dummy.

First Method

Each player sees his own dummy throughout both bidding and the play of the hands, though never the cards of his opponent till they are played. So that while you still know what cards are against you, you do not know how they are divided between the two opposing hands. The bidding is not likely to reveal much on this point, but information, according to opportunity and skill, is to be picked up during the play. At the beginning you cannot possibly tell what cards or combinations you are leading through or up to, and this uncertainty adds much piquancy to the game, while, as the play of a hand progresses, chances arise for making deductions just as they do at the four-handed game.

The cards in the dummies can be propped up against any suitable object, nor does it require much ingenuity to make a receptacle to hold them; racks for the purpose can also be purchased. The main point is that a player must be able to see only the cards of his own dummy.

Second Method

This differs from the first method in the same way as Blind Double Dummy differs from ordinary Double Dummy. That is to say, four cards are dealt at the beginning of a hand, and these are treated as the first trick of the declarer. These cards are not looked at till the conclusion of the play, and they add a sort of bunker to the game.

Third Method

The difference between this and the

first method is that the players bid on their own hands only, and do not look at the cards in their dummies till it is decided who is to be the declarer. A player knows nothing for certain beyond his own thirteen cards, and consequently the bidding becomes far more speculative than in the two former variations, indeed it is little more than a gamble.

Holding excellent cards yourself you may be completely let down by your dummy, or, on the other hand, discover you could have bid with more boldness. It is a game of surprises, rewards and heavy penalties.

No. 4.—CANFIELD DUMMY

This game introduces the intriguing novelty of a player seeing, in addition to his own hand and before the bidding

begins, seven cards in his own dummy and seven in that of his opponent.

This is due to the mode employed in dealing, which is as follows: The first six cards dealt in ordinary course to each dummy are placed in a row face-down; the next six cards that fall to the dummies are placed face-up, overlapping the face-down cards; and the thirteenth card for each dummy is placed face-up by itself.

Each player during the bidding can thus see 27 cards, while 25 are hidden from him. The bidding is apt to be very speculative, while during the play the most extraordinary things can happen; what looked like defeat may suddenly be turned to victory, and he who seemed on the verge of success may find it snatched away at the last moment.

Only the exposed cards in the dum-

mies can be played, and as soon as a trick is turned and quitted any uncovered card is turned face-up and becomes playable. It will be appreciated that many of the cards as they are turned up to active service give either a thrill of delight or a pang of despair !

One of the curiosities of the game is that a dummy may renounce a suit and be able to follow it the next time it is led.

There is one variation in the usual way of scoring, for honours are claimed as won instead of as held. At the end of a hand each player examines the tricks he has won and scores the honours he finds in them. An Ace in "No Trumps" counts ten points, and each honour in a suit declaration counts the value of a trick in the particular suit.

No. 5.—TWENTY-SIX TRICKS

In the remaining four games to be described the tricks consist of only two cards, instead of the customary four, and in this game, as its name implies, there are no less than twenty-six tricks to be made.

The players sit opposite to each other with their dummies between them. Dealing is conducted on quite original lines, as follows:

Five cards face-down are dealt alternately to each dummy. The process is repeated, but the second five cards are placed overlapping one on each of the first five. The dummies then receive another five cards each, this time face-up, and overlapping the ends of those already dealt. Again the dummies are given five cards face-up overlapping the others. The

dummy hands are now complete, each dummy having twenty cards, ten of which are hidden and ten exposed. The remaining twelve cards of the pack are dealt alternately between the two players, each receiving six.

At the start, then, each player sees twenty-six cards, or half the pack, that is, ten in each dummy and six in his own hand.

The bidding is on Auction lines, though with the quaint variation that the highest bid is "thirteen." The first thirteen tricks won by the declarer are his "book," that is, all tricks above that number count towards his contract. The opponents book is therefore the number of tricks bid deducted from thirteen. Thus the declarer would make a contract of "seven" by winning twenty tricks in all; and the adversary would begin

to score under-tricks after he had won six tricks.

The opponent leads to the first trick either from his own hand or from the exposed cards in his dummy, and the declarer also plays from his own cards or those face-up in his dummy, the two cards played forming the first trick. All the way through each player can play either from his own cards or those visible in his dummy, with the sole proviso that if possible he must follow suit.

When a player has played the two exposed cards from one of the groups of four cards, he turns up the next card, and when that has been played he turns up the last one. It will be seen that the principle here is that already explained in Canfield Dummy.

Honours are counted as at Canfield Dummy, that is, as won and not

necessarily as originally held. Owing to the large number of tricks it is possible to win there are four kinds of Slam, viz. Grand Slam, 26 tricks, or 13 over the book, 1000 points; Small Slam, 25 tricks, 500 points; Near Slam, 24 tricks, 250 points; Slamette, 23 tricks, 100 points. To alleviate any alarm concerning the 1000 points, it may be said that Grand Slam at this game is a very rare event.

No. 6.—TWENTY-SIX CARDS

The first step is to reduce the pack to twenty-six cards by removing all the twos, threes, fours, fives, sixes, and sevens; also the eights of Spades and Hearts.

The deal is similar to that of the last game except that eight cards, four face-up and four face-down, are given

to each dummy, and five to each player. The exposed cards in the dummies are placed overlapping on the ends of the face-down cards.

The play is as described in "Twenty-six Tricks," the players being able to play either from their own or from their dummy's cards, and the face-down cards in the dummies being turned up as the exposed ones are played. A trick, as before, consists of two cards, and the declarer's "book" is therefore the usual one of six tricks, tricks over the six counting towards his contract.

The average of over-tricks that can be won at this game is considerably lower than at regular Auction, and to meet this a readjustment of point values has been found necessary. Club or Diamond tricks count 10 points each; Heart or Spade tricks

count 15 points each; and "No Trumps" tricks count 30 points each. So that game may be won from love by three over-tricks in the minor suits, four in the major suits, and one over-trick in "No Trumps."

Honours are not counted, and the penalty for under-tricks is double the value as given above.

For this and the previous game I am indebted to Mr. Milton C. Work.

No. 7.—BLIND AUCTION

This game, which was first described by me in *The Daily Mail* in 1919, was the invention of the late Colonel F. de B. Young, C.M.G.

It is far more interesting and less cumbersome than Double Dummy Bridge, and is played as follows:

Thirteen cards are dealt to each

of the two players, the remaining half of the pack being placed face downwards. The dealer makes the first call, which his opponent can overcall, or double, just as at Auction. After the bidding is finished the game proceeds and the result is scored exactly as at Auction.

This first hand is, of course, pure chance. Neither player knows what the other has got, as there are twenty-six cards unaccounted for, and anything may happen. The strangest bids may succeed.

But after this first hand has been played, the remaining twenty-six cards are dealt, by the original dealer, and without shuffling or cutting, thirteen to each player. The dealer bids first, as before, and the bidding and scoring are as in Auction.

Now comes the test of memory and

skill. A good player with a card memory will know every card that is in his opponent's hand from the cards that were played on the first round. He will, therefore, be able to make his call with absolute mathematical accuracy. He knows just how far he can bid with safety, and when his adversary has overstepped the mark and can be doubled effectively.

This is a specially good game for novices, since it cultivates the card memory and teaches the necessity of noticing and memorising every card that falls.

It will be noticed that in this, and the following game, there are no dummy hands.

Honours are not counted in either of these two games.

No. 8.—DRAW AUCTION

Another good two-handed game is "Draw Auction." It is the invention of Mr. Sidney S. Lenz, of the Knickerbocker Whist Club.

The cards are dealt thirteen to each player. The twenty-seventh card is placed face upward on the table, and the remaining cards are put beside it downwards, to form the pack. There is no bidding, the hand being played as at No-trumps. The non-dealer leads for the first trick. Each player must follow suit if he can.

The player winning the first trick takes the exposed card to replace the one played. His opponent, who loses the trick, draws the unexposed card from the top of the pack and turns the next card upwards, for the winner of the second trick to take. This

process is repeated after each trick till the pack is exhausted. The winner of the thirteenth trick has the right to make the first bid, a point that is more subtle than may appear at first sight.

Now begins the game proper. At the end of this preliminary skirmish each player holds thirteen cards and he makes his bid as at Auction. His opponent can outbid him, or double the bid, or pass. Tricks are now stacked and scored as in the regular four-handed game. The playing of the first twenty-six cards before the game begins enables the player to locate valuable cards, to build up his hand for the declaration, and to weaken an opponent's hand by forcing him to play out high cards. There is much opportunity for judgment in avoiding taking worthless exposed

cards and forcing them on the adversary.

Once the second stage is reached players are dealing with known quantities, and can bid their hands with absolute accuracy.

No. 9.—KWANTUNG

This new game was evolved in the Far East by a couple of stranded "China Hands" unable to raise a Rubber, who had wearied of all two-handed card games known to either of them.

The following description of it was given by a correspondent signing himself "Old Hood" in *The Field* newspaper (July 12, 1923).

The game is based upon Royal Auction Bridge as played to-day, *plus* certain elements taken from the ancient

game of "Spoil Five" or "Five and Forty."

The two players cut for deal, cards and seats.

B

Y Z

A

A is dealer. The four hands are dealt as usual, after which the Y and Z hands are mixed together and left unexposed in a heap in the middle of the table, as at dominoes. They are not packed.

A then reviews his hand, and, if he is not content with it, has the option of drawing any three cards from the heap. He may draw one, two or three cards, or none at all. He discards from his original hand the equivalent number of those drawn

from the heap, and places his discards face downwards on his right hand.

B then has exactly the same option as A, and exercises it in the same manner. B may draw up to three cards, even although A may not have drawn any, or as many.

A then has the further option of drawing two more cards from the heap and discarding the equivalent number from his hand. He may draw one or two cards, or none at all. His second discards may be one or two of those he drew from the heap under his first option. His additional discards, if any, are placed with his previous discards, face downwards. A may exercise his second option of drawing up to two cards, even although he did not draw any cards under his first option.

B then has the same additional

option, and exercises it in the same manner. He may draw up to two cards, even if A has drawn none.

Discarding completed, the balance of the heap is packed, placed aside and remains unseen by either player.

A or B may refer to his own discards, but neither may view his opponent's, nor may A or B refer to his own, once A has declared or passed.

The position then will be—assuming that A and B have each discarded five cards—eighteen cards will be known and thirty-four unknown to each player; the unseen balance in the heap will be sixteen cards.

A has first option of declaring, and subsequent bidding proceeds as at Bridge.

Value of the suits is the same as at Bridge, viz., No Trumps, Spades, Hearts, etc.

Value of the cards is the same as at Bridge, except that in trump suits the Ace of Hearts is *invariably* the third best trump, the Knave of the trump suit is the second best, and the Five of the trump suit—known as the "Five Fingers"—the best. Thus with Spades trumps, the value of the cards in order would be Five of Spades, Knave of Spades, Ace of Hearts, Ace, King, Queen, Ten, etc., of Spades. With Hearts trumps the value would be Five of Hearts, Knave of Hearts, Ace of Hearts, King, Queen, Ten, etc., of Hearts. With Diamonds trumps Five of Diamonds, Knave of Diamonds, Ace of Hearts, Ace, King, Queen, Ten etc., of Diamonds. With Clubs trumps, Five of Clubs, Knave of Clubs, Ace of Hearts, Ace, King, Queen, Ten, etc., of Clubs.

Play of the hands is the same as at

Bridge, except that, in Trump Suits, any of the three best trumps may be held up at holder's option, *i. e.* not played to a lead of *any* card *lower* in value than itself. For instance, Spades are trumps and the Ace of Spades is led.

Neither Ace of Hearts, Knave of Spades nor Five of Spades need be played to the Ace of Spades, or, of course, to any lower trump. Similarly, to the Ace of Hearts led neither the Knave of Spades nor the Five of Spades need be played; and to the Knave of Spades led the Five of Spades need not be played. On the other hand, to the Five of Spades led, the Knave of Spades or the Ace of Hearts must be played if held singly, or, if both be held, one of them must be played, failing a guard to them. To the Knave of Spades led, the Ace of Hearts must be played if held

singly. And so on with the other trump suits. Except as regards the three best trumps, a player must follow suit.

At "No Trumps," the value and play of the cards are, in all respects, as at Bridge.

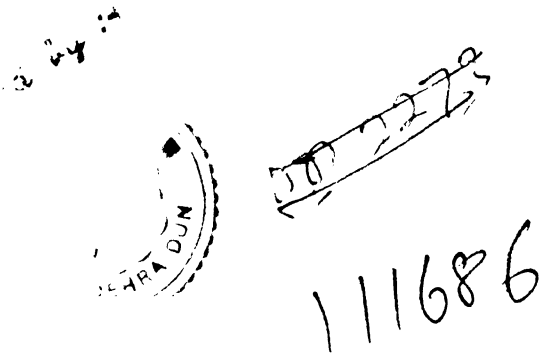
Scoring is the same as at Bridge, except that in Trump Suits nothing is scored for Honours, nor for Grand or Little Slam. Fifty or a hundred is probably enough to score for Rubber points, but this is as players may elect.

The two factors that make the game interesting are: first, the discarding and building up of one's hand, giving due heed to protection; second, the play of the hand in trump suits, affected as it is by the optional play of the three best trumps; this, together with the unknown cards in the heap, provides an element of uncertainty and

one often finds that one's calculations and best laid plans go wrong.

A " No Trumps " declaration is very seldom allowed to stand, and, indeed, is not often made.

Contracts usually run at least to a four-card make, and a five-card make is nothing uncommon. Scoring is apt to run into rather big figures, and therefore ordinary folk will be well advised to play for small points.



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