

THE WAY AND MEANS OF TRICKS

	WE	THEY	WE	THEY	WE	THEY
HONOURS						
TRICKS						

W. W. GARDNER
AND
A. J. GARDNER



Class GV 1281

Book AG

80 net
4x
3/6

THE WHY AND WHEREFORE
OF
BRIDGE

THE WHY
AND WHEREFORE
OF
BRIDGE

BY

G. T. ATCHISON

AND

A. J. G. LINDSELL

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

1905

All rights reserved

GV1281

.A6

By Exchange

Army and Navy Club

JANUARY 16 1934

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	vii
LAWS OF BRIDGE	I
ETIQUETTE OF BRIDGE	20
SCORING	23
DECLARATIONS	24
(A) BY THE DEALER	24
(1) NO TRUMPS	26
(2) SUIT DECLARATIONS	30
(a) HEARTS	30
(b) DIAMONDS	32
(c) CLUBS	33
(d) SPADES	34
DEFENSIVE DECLARATIONS	34
(B) BY THE DEALER'S PARTNER	36
(C) DECLARATIONS TO THE SCORE	38
DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING	43
THE ORIGINAL LEAD	49
(A) AGAINST A NO TRUMP DECLARATION	50
(B) AGAINST A SUIT DECLARATION	57
(C) WHEN THE DECLARATION HAS BEEN DOUBLED	64

	PAGE
THE PLAY OF THE SECOND HAND	68
THE PLAY OF THE THIRD HAND	74
THE PLAY OF THE FOURTH HAND	77
PLAYING DUMMY	79
(A) WITHOUT TRUMPS	79
(B) WHEN THERE ARE TRUMPS	84
PLAYING AGAINST DUMMY	88
THE ELEVEN RULE	94
CALLING AND DISCARDING	96
THE SPADE CONVENTION	108
THREE-HANDED OR "CUT-THROAT" BRIDGE	109

PREFACE

IT may be safely asserted that never in the annals of card-playing has any game attained such a speedy and widespread popularity as Bridge. Once known, it carried all before it, and has long since relegated every other known form of cards to a suburban seclusion. Proficiency at the game has become a positive social qualification. We have more than once heard it said, "I should like to ask So-and-so, but he doesn't play Bridge." As an after-dinner amusement it has the strongest claim on the world's gratitude for having ousted the terrors of ping-pong. It is the recreation of the busy and the business of the idle; indeed, we do not doubt that, but for Bridge, many of the latter class would have succeeded in passing through life without ever using their brains at all.

Long ago Talleyrand replied to the young man who boasted that he did not play Whist, "*Quelle tri te vieillisse vous vous preparez.*" But, were he

now alive, and Bridge the game in question, he assuredly would not limit his prophecy to the scoffer's declining years. Some few malcontents there be who still remain obdurate in the face of all these testimonials, but they may safely be allowed to gnash their teeth in the outer darkness which they have chosen, and to fulminate their grievances against the "tyranny" of the game in the ever-sympathetic columns of the halfpenny papers. It is not with such that we are concerned, but with the ever-growing multitude who, seeing that in Bridge, and Bridge alone, lies their claim to consideration from their fellow-mortals, have wisely determined to bow the knee to Baal. To these neophytes, while offering our congratulations on their good sense, we must at the same time address a word of warning. The mysteries of Bridge are not to be lightly undertaken. An injudicious "No Trump" call has blighted the happiness of many a home, and though in the present benighted state of the law a revoke cannot successfully be pleaded as a ground for a judicial separation, we have little doubt that in this respect things are better ordered in America. Let no one therefore imagine that a smattering of Whist and

the knowledge that there are five declarations are a sufficient outfit for the game, and that the rest may be left to be picked up somehow in the course of play. Not that we under-estimate the value of practice to the beginner. At Bridge, as elsewhere, an ounce of it is worth its proverbial weight of theory. But while theory without practice is as faith without works, the converse holds equally true. There are a number of points acquaintance with which, and with the reasons for them, is essential to any intelligence of play. To grasp these a certain amount of book lore is indispensable. Herein lies our excuse for adding to the already considerable output of literary matter on the subject. Many admirable treatises have been compiled by men whose boots, as Bridge-players, we are unworthy to clean. But these authorities all have their pet theories on many of the most vital points of the game, and it may well happen that the neophyte finds that the views, which he has laboriously imbibed, do not pass current in the circles in which he is cast. Such divergences of opinion are most regrettable in the interests of the game, but as yet no Cavendish has arisen in the Bridge world, and, until that most desirable

consummation, we cannot hope for any uniformity of play. We have therefore endeavoured to collate the principal theories on each point, and, while indicating our preference for one or another, to state fairly the case for its rivals, leaving the final choice to the discretion of the reader. Moreover, while it is both difficult and undesirable to advance any radically new theories on the subject, it appeared to us, after perusing most of the standard works, that there was room for a considerable amount of explanation. Facts without motives are notoriously bald and unconvincing, and it has been our aim in every case to give the reasons for the course of play suggested, and to emphasize the principle rather than its particular corollary, devoting special attention to those points which experience has shown us to be most generally misapprehended.

THE
WHY AND WHEREFORE
OF
BRIDGE

THE LAWS OF BRIDGE

WE do not propose to set out at full length all the Laws of the Game of Bridge as laid down in the Club Code, but rather to state all the essential ones in simpler words. The code to which we refer is that adopted by the Portland and Turf Clubs (revised 1904), and may be obtained anywhere.

The rubber is the best of three games, each game consisting of thirty points *obtained by tricks alone*; but any points over thirty scored by the winners are counted when reckoning the total.

Number of
Law in
Club Code.

1, 2, 3.

4. The value of each trick above six varies according to the declaration made at the beginning of each hand.

Each trick above six when Spades are trumps counts 2 points.

„	„	„	„	„	Clubs	„	„	„	4	„
„	„	„	„	„	Diamonds	„	„	„	6	„
„	„	„	„	„	Hearts	„	„	„	8	„
„	„	„	„	„	there are No Trumps	„	„	„	12	„

5. Honours, when a suit has been declared trumps, are Ace, King, Queen, Jack, and Ten ; while the four Aces are Honours when there are No Trumps.

6. When a suit has been declared trumps, Honours are scored by the side holding them as follows :—

(a)	Three Honours	score	twice	the value of the odd trick.
(b)	Four	„	four times	„ „ „ „ „
(c)	Five	„	five	„ „ „ „ „
(d)	Four Honours in one hand	„	eight	„ „ „ „ „
(e)	Four Honours in one hand, and the fifth in the partner's	„	nine	„ „ „ „ „
(f)	Five Honours in one hand	„	ten	„ „ „ „ „

7. When there are No Trumps, Honours are scored by the side holding them as follows :—

(a)	Three Aces	score	30	by Honours.
(b)	Four „	„	40	„ „
(c)	Four Aces in one hand	„	100	„ „

Chicane, or holding no trump card in a hand 8.
when a suit has been declared trumps, is reckoned
as twice the value of the odd trick by the side
holding Chicane.

Double Chicane, or neither partner holding a
trump card when a suit has been declared trumps,
is reckoned as four times the value of the odd
trick by the side holding Double Chicane.

Note.—Chicane and Double Chicane are
reckoned as Honours.

Grand Slam, or winning all thirteen tricks 9.
independently of any tricks taken for the revoke
penalty, counts 40 by Honours.

Little Slam, or winning twelve tricks, inde-
pendently of any tricks taken for the revoke
penalty, counts 20 by Honours.

Note.—The scores for Honours, Chicane, and
Slam are not affected by any doubling which may
take place under laws 53-9.

At the end of the rubber the total points scored 11.
by each side for tricks, Honours, Chicane, and
Slam are added up. After 100 points have been
added to the winners' score for the rubber, the
losers' points are subtracted from the winners',

and the difference is the number of points won or lost by the winners of the rubber.

Note.—The winners of the rubber may lose on points.

14-18. In cutting to form the table, the four who cut lowest play. These four cut again for partners, the two highest playing against the two lowest. The lowest has first deal, choice of seats and choice of cards. In cutting the Ace counts lowest. Every player must cut from the same pack, and any one exposing more than one card must cut again.

19. If two players cut cards of equal value, intermediate between the highest and the lowest, these two cut again. The higher in the new cut plays with the original highest against the lower in the new cut and the original lowest. The original lowest has the deal, etc.

If the two lowest cut cards of equal value, they play together, but cut again for deal, etc.

20. If three players cut cards of equal value, they cut again. Should the fourth player cut the highest, the highest in the new cut plays with him, and the lowest in the new cut has the deal, etc. Should the fourth player cut the lowest, he

has the deal, etc., and plays with the lowest in the new cut.

Each player has the right to shuffle the pack, 30, 33. the dealer having the right to shuffle last.

The player on the dealer's right cuts the pack, 35. not leaving less than four cards in either packet.

There must be a new deal— 39.

(a) If at any time during the hand the pack is proved incorrect.

(b) If any card is found faced in the pack.

(c) If the cards are not dealt singly into four packets in regular rotation, beginning with the player on the dealer's left.

(d) If any player has more, and another less than thirteen cards.

(e) If the dealer omits to have the pack cut, and the adversaries discover the error before looking at their cards or before the last card is dealt.

Note.—There is no misdeal at Bridge; the same player deals again.

If, while dealing, either of the adversaries faces 40. a card, the dealer or his partner may, without consultation, claim a new deal. If the dealer or his

6 WHY AND WHEREFORE OF BRIDGE

partner faces a card, either of the adversaries, without consulting his partner, may claim a new deal. If no new deal is claimed, the card faced cannot be called. A claim for a new deal cannot be made by a player who has looked at any of his cards.

Note.—There is no ground for the superstition that a player may refuse to take a card faced in dealing and demand another. His only remedy is a fresh deal.

43. Should three of the players have thirteen cards and the fourth have less than thirteen, and not discover the deficiency until he has played any of his cards, the missing card is deemed to be part of the fourth player's hand, and he is liable for any revoke he may have made before discovering such deficiency. He may search for the missing card in the other pack or elsewhere.
45. Any one dealing out of turn, or with the wrong pack, may be stopped before the last card is dealt ; but after this the deal stands good, and the game proceeds as if no mistake had been made.
- 47, 48. The dealer, after examining his hand, has the option of declaring either No Trumps or a suit as trumps, or else of leaving the declaration to his

partner, saying, "I leave it to you, Partner." His partner, when the declaration is left to him, must either declare No Trumps or some suit as trumps.

If the dealer's partner makes the declaration 49. without permission from the dealer, the *eldest hand* may demand—

- (a) That the declaration stands good ; or,
- (b) That there shall be a new deal.

If, however, there has been any declaration as to doubling or not doubling, or if a new deal is not claimed, the declaration made shall stand.

If the dealer's partner passes the declaration to 50. the dealer, the *eldest hand* may demand—

- (a) That the dealer's partner shall make the declaration himself ; or,
- (b) That there shall be a new deal.

If either of the dealer's adversaries makes a 51. declaration, the dealer may, after looking at his hand, either claim a fresh deal or proceed as if no declaration had been made.

A declaration once made cannot be altered, 52. except as provided above.

The player on the dealer's left has the first right 54. to double. If he does not wish to do so, he asks,

8 WHY AND WHEREFORE OF BRIDGE

“May I lead?” If his partner does not wish to double, he replies, “Yes.”

55. If either the player on the dealer's left or his partner doubles, the *declarant* has the first right to redouble, and after him his partner. If the declarant does not wish to do so, he says, “Satisfied,” and his partner either redoubles or says the same.

56. If either the declarant or his partner redoubles, the player who doubled has the right to redouble again, and after him his partner.

57. If the player on the dealer's right doubles before his partner has asked, “May I lead?” the *declarant* has the right to say whether the double shall stand or not. If he decides that the double shall stand, then redoubling may be continued as described in laws 55, 56, 58.

58. The process of redoubling may be continued until the limit of 100 points is reached, the player who last redoubled having the first right to redouble at their subsequent opportunity.

Should any player redouble out of turn, the *adversary who last doubled* shall decide whether that redouble shall stand or not. If it is decided that such redouble shall stand, the process of redoubling may be continued as described above.

If any double or redouble is not accepted, there shall be no further doubling in that hand. Any consultation between parties as to doubling or redoubling shall entitle the declarant, or the original leader, as the case may be, without consulting his partner, to claim a fresh deal.

If the player on the dealer's left leads before 59. doubling is completed, his partner may redouble only with the consent of the adversary who last doubled; such a lead, however, does not affect the right of either adversary to double.

A declaration once made cannot be altered. 61.

As soon as a card is led, *whether by the right or* 62. *the wrong* adversary, the dealer's partner places his hand face upwards on the table. The dealer conducts the entire play of the hand, claiming and enforcing any penalties that may arise during the hand, unassisted by his partner.

After exposing Dummy, the dealer's partner 63. may take no part in the game beyond

(a) Playing the cards from Dummy which the dealer names to be played.

(b) Asking the dealer if he has no card of a suit to which he has played void.

Note.—Never omit to do this.

If the dealer's partner calls attention to any incident for which the dealer may exact a penalty, then by doing so he causes the dealer to lose that right.

Note.—Dummy may not make a claim for a revoke.

64. If the dealer's partner in any way suggests the play of any card from Dummy's hand, then either of the adversaries, but without consulting his partner, may call upon the dealer to play or not to play the card suggested.

65, 66. A card once played by any one can only be taken back to save a revoke except as provided in laws 82-94.

A card is deemed to be played by the dealer or Dummy as soon as he has named it, but should he detach a card from his or Dummy's hand without naming it, it is not deemed to be played until his hand has quitted it.

Note.—There is nothing in the rules to justify the widespread belief that a card may be taken back provided it has not been covered.

67. Dummy must not look over either his adversaries' or his partner's hands.

68. Should Dummy revoke, there is no penalty. If

the error is not discovered until the trick is turned and quitted, the trick stands good.

The dealer is not liable to any penalty for exposing any or all his cards, after a declaration has been made, since he has no partner who can profit by the information. Any card, however, that he has actually played cannot be taken back except to save a revoke.

A card exposed by the dealer or his partner after the deal has been completed but before a declaration has been made, entitles the original leader, without consulting his partner, to claim a new deal.

Note.—The difference between rule 40 and rule 70 should be carefully noted.

A card exposed after the deal has been completed but before a card has been led, causes the partner of the offending player to lose his right to double or redouble. If the leader's partner exposes a card, then the dealer may, instead of calling the card, require the leader *not* to lead the suit of the card exposed.

The following are exposed cards, and if they belong to the dealer's adversaries, must be left face upwards on the table, and are liable to be called.

- (a) Two or more cards played at once.
 - (b) Cards dropped face upwards on the table (but not on the floor or below the table), even though picked up so quickly that no one can name them.
 - (c) A card detached from the hand of either of the dealer's adversaries, so as to be named by the dealer. Should the dealer name a wrong card, his adversaries may call a suit as soon as he or Dummy obtains the lead.
75. Should the dealer declare that all, or any, of the remaining tricks are his, he may be required to place his cards face upwards on the table, but is not liable to have them called.
76. Should either of the dealer's adversaries throw his cards face upwards on the table, these cards are exposed, and are liable to be called by the dealer.
79. If a player, who has rendered himself liable to have the highest or lowest of a suit called, or to win or not to win a trick, or to have a lead from a suit called, fails to play as directed, though able to do so, he incurs the penalty of a revoke.

If either of the dealer's adversaries leads out of 80, 81. turn, the dealer may either call the card so led, or call a suit when it is next the turn of either of the adversaries to lead. The dealer incurs no penalty for leading out of turn from either his or Dummy's hand, but he may not rectify the error after the second hand has played.

If a player leads out of turn, and the mistake is 82. not discovered until all the four players have played, the mistake cannot be corrected; but if all four have not played, the cards are taken back, and only the original leader incurs a penalty, and then only if he is one of the dealer's adversaries.

A card cannot be called from a player which 83, 84. would compel him to revoke. The call may be repeated until such card can correctly be played.

Should a player have a suit called, and have 85. none of the suit, the penalty is paid.

Should the third hand not have played, and 86. the fourth hand play before his partner, the latter (not being the dealer or Dummy) may be called upon to win or not to win the trick.

If any one (other than Dummy) omits to play to 87.

a trick, and the error is not discovered until he has played to the next trick, the adversaries may claim a new deal. Should they decide that the deal stands good, or should the player so offending be Dummy, the surplus card at the end of the hand is considered to have been played to the imperfect trick, but cannot constitute a revoke therein.

88. If any one plays two cards to a trick, or mixes a card to a trick to which it does not properly belong, and the mistake is not discovered until the hand is played out, he (not being Dummy) is liable for all the consequent revokes he may have made. If the error is detected during the play of the hand, the tricks may be counted face downwards in order to discover whether there is among them a card too many; should this be the case, they may be searched, and the card restored; the offending player (not being Dummy) is liable for all revokes he may have meanwhile made.

89. To revoke is to hold a card of the suit which is led and to play a card of another suit. Dummy cannot revoke.

The penalty for a revoke

90.

(a) Is at the option of the adversaries, who *may*, at the end of the hand, *consult together*, and either

(i) Take three tricks from the revoking side and add them to their own ; or

(ii) Deduct the value of three tricks from their adversaries' score ; or

(iii) Add the value of three tricks to their own score.

(b) Can be claimed for each revoke in the hand ;

(c) Is only applicable to the score of the particular game in which it occurs ;

(d) Cannot be divided.

(e) In whatever manner the penalty is enforced, the offending side may never score Game, Grand Slam, or Little Slam on that hand. No matter what their score was previously, the offending side cannot advance their score towards the game beyond 28.

Note.—You may consult your partner before exacting the penalty for a revoke.

Note.—Many players often fail to take the most profitable penalty for a revoke. The crux of the matter lies in section (e) above. If by adding the value of three tricks to your score you can reach 30, always do so, for, however many your opponents may have made, they cannot raise their score above 28 on that hand.

In other cases you will have to use your judgment. If it is your deal next, take the penalty in the form that will advance your score the furthest; if it is your adversaries' deal next, in the form that will keep theirs back as far as possible.

Note.—If one side wins ten (or nine) tricks, and their adversaries revoke, by taking three tricks they win seven (or six) odd tricks, but do not score Grand (or Little) Slam (see rule 9).

- . A revoke is completed if the trick is turned and quitted, or if either of the revoking side leads or plays to the following trick, whether in or out of turn.

A player may, and always should, ask his partner whether he has not a card of the suit to which he has played void. If a player asks this question before the trick is turned and quitted, the revoke is not complete until the revoking player has replied in the negative or until either player of the revoking side has played or led a card to the following trick.

Note.—Never omit to ask this question. The usual form is, “Having no Spade, Partner?” or whatever is the suit to which he has renounced.

At the end of the hand the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks.

If a player discovers his mistake in time to save a revoke, any player who has played after him may withdraw his card and play another, and the card so withdrawn is not liable to be called. If the offending player is one of the dealer’s adversaries, the dealer may call the card thus played in error, or may require him to play his highest or lowest card to that trick in which he has renounced. If the offending player is the dealer, the *eldest hand* may require him to play the highest or lowest card of the suit in which he has renounced, provided that both the dealer’s adversaries have played to

the current trick ; but this penalty cannot be exacted from the dealer if he is fourth player, nor can it be enforced at all from Dummy.

Note.—The reason for this penalty against the dealer not being enforceable when he is fourth player is that in such case he has not learned the position of a certain card, which might not have been revealed had he not offended.

96. If a revoke is claimed and the accused player or his partner mixes the cards before they have been sufficiently examined by the adversaries, the revoke is established.
97. A revoke cannot be claimed after the cards have been cut for the next deal.
99. If a player on each side revokes, the penalties are exacted as before. Neither side can score Game on that hand.
101. Any player may demand that the cards be placed before their respective players at any time before, but not after, they have been touched for the purpose of gathering them.

Note.—Avoid asking, “Whose trick is it?” or such-like question. You are only entitled to have the cards placed before their respective players.

If either of the dealer's adversaries calls attention to the trick, before his partner has played, either by saying that it is his, or by naming his card, or without being required to do so, by drawing his card towards him, the dealer may require that opponent's partner to play his highest or lowest of the suit then led, or to win or lose the trick.

Should the partner of any player solely entitled to exact a penalty suggest or demand the enforcement of it, no penalty can be enforced.

Whenever a penalty has been incurred, the offending side is bound to give reasonable time for the decision of their adversaries.

Once a trick is complete, turned, and quitted, it must not be looked at (except under law 88) until the end of the hand.

ETIQUETTE OF BRIDGE

EVEN more important than the written are the unwritten laws of Bridge. The reason lies in the fact that they are more frequently violated than the hard-and-fast rules that are laid down in so many words.

The weakest point of the game is that the system of declarations opens up great possibilities of conveying unfair intimations to your partner as to the state of your hand. Consequently you cannot be too careful in your manner of declaring or passing.

Look through your hand deliberately on all occasions, making up your mind as you do so. To declare or to pass at first sight is a distinct intimation to your partner that your hand is either obviously strong or weak; while to hesitate and show perplexity before passing is tantamount to telling your partner that you hold cards upon which you are nearly, but not quite strong enough

to declare. We do not wish to imply that the Dealer's partner is justified in taking advantage of such information. Far from it. He has as much time as the Dealer to look at his hand, and should always endeavour to make up his mind as to the correct declaration before it is left to him.

Above all, *do not hesitate about doubling*. Unless you finally do so, it is grossly unfair to give the faintest indication of such an intention. Hesitation over declaring may bear more than one construction, but an obvious desire to double can only mean considerable strength. Nineteen times out of twenty such hesitation indicates either great strength in plain suits and weakness in trumps, or great strength in trumps and weakness in plain suits. Your partner will in all probability be able to judge which of these is the case from his own and Dummy's hands, and yet has to play all through the hand, feeling bound in honour not to take any notice of this information. The reputation of the game, and also your own reputation, depend upon strict probity in this respect.

Never intimate to your partner by word or gesture that a trick is won until he has played to

it. If he wishes to know how the cards have been played, he may ask to have them placed, but no information may be volunteered. An equally undesirable habit of some players is to play a winning card down with a bang by way of emphasizing its calibre.

Never play a card down and then snatch it up again, remarking that it has not been covered. The rules state the direct opposite to this widespread superstition. Once played, a card cannot be recalled except to save a revoke, and in that case it must be left on the table as an exposed card, unless it has been played by the Dealer or his partner. Do not put your opponents in the invidious position of having to insist on their rights.

Do not talk about your hand before or during the play.

Do not take it as a personal insult when your partner leaves it to you, and your only possible declaration is Spades. Still less should you imagine you have a grievance when your partner calls Spades himself either originally or when it has been left to him.

SCORING

Do not consider the scoring a sordid detail quite unworthy of your attention. The whole *raison d'être* of Bridge lies in the diverse values of the various declarations, and a thorough knowledge of these is essential to a sound game. "Hellespont" rightly says that there are three things which should always be taken into consideration before declaring : (1) The score, (2) the possibility of making game, (3) Honours. Always inquire the state of the score before the beginning of a hand, or, if you are scoring yourself, it is a good habit to call it for the benefit of your partner. This should, however, always be done before or during the course of the deal, and the player cannot be too careful to avoid volunteering such information after the cards have once been picked up, as under some circumstances such a practice is open to suspicion.

DECLARATIONS

THESE naturally fall under two heads :—

- (A) Declarations by the Dealer.
- (B) Declarations by the Dealer's partner.

(A) DECLARATIONS BY THE DEALER

The great art of declaring is to steer a middle course between rashness and timidity. Some players will never leave it to their partner if they have the faintest excuse for going No Trumps or a red suit. Others will not declare unless they see half a dozen tricks in their own hand. The first kind lives in deadly terror of his partner making Spades (a call which these players would gladly see abolished), while the second appears to be under the impression that the odds are considerable on his partner holding a "carte blanche." The same error is responsible for both excesses. You must not consider your partner at all. The most and the least you are entitled to expect from

him is average strength. Estimate your hand solely on its own merits, and you will seldom go wrong.

The Dealer, as the original declarant, is primarily the attacking arm. His first business, therefore, on looking at his hand, is to see if he can make such a declaration as may reasonably be expected to advance the score to game. In default of this, he must next consider whether any declaration is open to him which will probably result in a greater score than any his partner is likely to be able to make. To this end, as remarked above, he must be thoroughly conversant with the score, and must declare to it alone. However small the trick value, he is bound to declare any suit which will make a certainty of the game.

It is, however, impossible to lay down maxims for every combination of the score. The only way is to give advice which may profitably be followed when the score is at love-all, and to point out a few modifications which arise when either party is within a few points of the game. The many doubtful cases which crop up in the course of a rubber must be left for their decision to individual ingenuity and experience.

Original declarations by the Dealer must be divided into

- (1) No Trumps.
- (2) Suit Declarations.

(1) NO TRUMPS

This declaration is, according to the circumstances, both the easiest and the most difficult to decide upon. Some No Trump hands are obvious as such to any one who is not playing his first rubber, but there are many others which, though recognised No Trump calls, do not carry prima facie conviction. It is, therefore, of great importance to have some knowledge of the hands which the experience of the leading exponents of the game has stamped as worthy of the highest honours.

All the following hands are *jeu de règle* No Trumpers. Hands containing—

- (a) Four Aces.
- (b) Three Aces, unless the fourth suit consists of (i) six Hearts, (ii) seven Diamonds, in which case declare the Hearts or Diamonds respectively.

- (c) Two Aces, two Queens, and either one Jack or two Tens, with three guarded suits.
- (d) Average strength with three guarded suits and in addition an extra Ace, or King, or Queen, or two extra Jacks. The Ace should not be alone. Average strength for this purpose consists of one Ace, one King, one Queen, one Jack, and one Ten.
- (e) Six or more certain tricks in Clubs or Spades and another Ace. Six cards of a suit to a Quart Major or seven of a suit to a Tierce Major may be reckoned as certain tricks. A difficult hand to decide is one similar to case (e) above, but, instead of the second Ace, containing a King, Queen suit. On such a hand, personally, we always go No Trumps at love-all, but it is open to argument that the risk is too great.
- (f) Without an Ace, No Trumps should only be declared at love-all with *four guarded suits* and a hand containing eight picture cards, seven of which should be Kings or Queens.

To hand (*a*) above there is no exception under any circumstances. The honour score of one hundred, and the absolute certainty of a trick in every suit from the one hand, are sufficient to warrant a No Trump declaration, no matter what the remaining nine cards may be.

To hands (*b*), (*c*), (*d*), (*e*), (*f*) there is one universal exception. Holding four or five Honours in Hearts or Diamonds, declare the red suit *at love-all* for the sake of the honour score, even if the hand is an exceptionally strong No Trumper, unless of course you have four Aces as well.

In addition to the above hands, which do not as a rule present any great difficulty, you are sometimes dealt hands which are not *quite* up to the standard of the above, but which seem too good to leave to your partner. An example of such a hand is one which contains one Jack above the average, three guarded suits, with four Hearts and four Diamonds. Here the red suits may be too weak to declare originally, but sufficiently strong to render the probability of your partner being able to declare them very remote. On such a hand go No Trumps, and trust to your partner to hold cards that will fit well with your own.

In the above paragraphs we have used the term "guarded suit," and some explanation is necessary. An Ace is a guard in itself, but its value is vastly diminished if it is a singleton. A King must be backed by the Queen or at least two other cards. In reckoning the strength of a hand for the purpose of a No Trump declaration, a Queen should be considered merely as a guard to the King and not as contributing to the strength of the hand, unless there is also another card of the suit. A Queen should be supported by either (1) Jack and one small one, or (2) three small ones. A Jack is guarded when accompanied by three other cards, of which one should be the Ten or the Nine.

Do not be afraid of one unguarded suit. The weaker it is, the greater is the probability of your partner holding some strength in it. Remember that the advantage of playing the two hands is far greater in No Trumps than in any other declaration, while the call has a nameless terror, which often exercises an appreciable effect on your opponent's play. Our advice is, when in doubt whether to go No Trumps or not—go No Trumps.

(2) SUIT DECLARATIONS

Should the Dealer decide, on examining his hand, that it is unfitted for the No Trump declaration, he then has to consider whether it will be probably more profitable for him to declare a suit, or to leave the declaration to his partner. He should remember that by declaring a suit he deprives his partner of the chance of making the more expensive, and probably more profitable, call of No Trumps, in which, as we mentioned above, the advantage of playing the two hands is considerably accentuated. There are, however, a great number of hands, unfitted for No Trumps, on which it would be little short of criminal to ignore the excellent chances of appreciably advancing the score, on the shadowy chance of a possible No Trump call by your partner. It is with these hands that we are now concerned.

(a) Hearts

We have already mentioned two hands upon which the Dealer should declare Hearts at the score of love-all, namely—

- (1) Hands containing three Aces, the fourth suit consisting of six Hearts.

- (2) No Trump hands, not containing four Aces, but containing four Honours in Hearts.

Under this latter heading we may conveniently reckon any hand containing four Heart Honours as being a sound Heart declaration at love-all.

Other hands on which the Dealer should declare Hearts at love-all are—

- (3) Four Hearts, three of them Honours headed by Ace, King, and four Diamonds, three of them being Honours. But go No Trumps on a hand of this description if it comes nearly, but not quite, up to any of the standards laid down on the previous pages.
- (4) Five Hearts, two of them being Honours (one of the Honours should be Ace, King, or Queen), with a hand that looks good for five tricks with Hearts trumps, but which is unfitted for a No Trump call, owing to there being two unguarded suits.
- (5) Six Hearts with less than two Honours, if there are two tricks outside Hearts.
- (6) Seven Hearts, even if you have no cards in your hand higher than a Ten.

Hearts should never be declared *originally* at love-all with less strength than described above. It is a very common fault among Bridge-players to make suit declarations on hands that are too weak and to fail to make No Trump calls on hands that do not appear at first sight strong enough, but which would really be perfectly sound declarations.

(b) *Diamonds*

It may be safely asserted that there is no declaration over which Bridge-players make more mistakes than that of Diamonds. They are apt to forget that at love-all eleven tricks are necessary to make game, and that eleven tricks are very hard to get, while there are two better calls open to their partner. Hence we are of the opinion that a light Diamond call at love-all is the worst of all declarations.

We have already mentioned under the heading of No Trumps two hands upon which Diamonds should be called—

- (1) Hands containing three Aces, the fourth suit consisting of seven Diamonds.

- (2) No Trump hands, not containing four Aces, but containing four Honours in Diamonds.

Under this latter heading we may conveniently reckon any hand containing four Diamond Honours as being a sound Diamond declaration at love-all.

Other hands upon which the Dealer should declare Diamonds at love-all are—

- (3) Five Diamonds, three of them Honours, or five Diamonds to Ace, King, and a hand that looks good for five tricks with Diamonds trumps, but which is unsuitable for No Trumps owing to having two unguarded suits.
- (4) Six Diamonds, with less than three Honours if there are two tricks outside the Diamonds.
- (5) Seven Diamonds, even if you have no cards in your hand higher than a Ten.

(c) *Clubs*

Club declarations by the Dealer at love-all are very rare, and are only permissible as an offensive measure when they are from great strength both in

Honours and numbers. Such strength must consist of at least six Clubs with four Honours.

Be careful *not* to declare Clubs on a hand falling under heading (*e*) of the No Trump declarations.

(*d*) *Spades*

Spades should never be declared offensively by the Dealer with the score of love-all.

DEFENSIVE DECLARATIONS

It will be noted that under the Club and Spade headings we have qualified our remarks by the use of the word "offensive." As methods of attack by the Dealer with the score at love-all, Club calls are rarely and Spade calls are never employed. If, however, the Dealer finds that his hand is extremely weak, he must take steps to prevent his side being totally routed on a probable high-valued call by his partner. The weaker the Dealer is, the more probable it is that his partner will be strong, and hence in a position to make an expensive declaration. Under these circumstances it is the Dealer's duty to prevent such a call by his partner, foredoomed as it is to failure, by making some declaration himself.

If the Dealer has less strength than is indicated by one guarded King or two guarded Queens, he must declare Spades, unless he has either (1) seven Hearts, (2) seven Diamonds, (3) six Clubs, or (4) five Clubs, including either the Queen or the Jack, Ten.

In the exception (1) he will declare Hearts, (2) Diamonds, and (3) or (4) Clubs.

There are many people who object to this practice on the ground that it is admitting yourself to be beaten before you have been actually defeated. This argument is perfectly true, and even more valid is the objection that by admitting your weakness you enable your opponents to finesse deeply against you with every confidence. The argument in favour of these defensive declarations is that the Dealer has no trick in his own hand, and by leaving the declaration to his partner, he is relying on the latter to have a hand sufficient to make seven tricks on its own merits. Such a hand is as rare as beating the opposing eleven off your own bat. This consideration alone is sufficient to make it compulsory for the Dealer to make some declaration himself as a defensive measure when his hand is so weak.

There is one final maxim on suit declarations. When in doubt whether to declare a suit or leave it to your partner—leave it to your partner.

If you are contemplating a doubtful Heart declaration, and your partner, when you leave it to him, declares Spades, console yourself by remembering the occasions when you left it on doubtful Diamonds and made three tricks on your partner's No Trump call.

(B) DECLARATIONS BY THE DEALER'S PARTNER

The Dealer's partner, when it is left to him, has a much freer hand in declaring. The Dealer has intimated by passing that his strength is not sufficient to make a really profitable attacking declaration, and yet is sufficiently great to render a purely defensive declaration by him unnecessary. He is, therefore, entitled to expect from the Dealer the same assistance as is noted above in considering the original declarations, namely, average strength; and the deduction to be made from the pass is, that the Dealer has no *great* strength in Hearts, Diamonds, or all round, and no overwhelming strength in Clubs.

Any of the declarations previously prescribed for the Dealer are equally sound when made by the Dealer's partner. Suit Declarations on a pass may, however, be made on rather less strength than is required by the Dealer, but *No Trump declarations by the Dealer's partner must be fully up to standards laid down on the preceding pages.*

The minimum strength required for an attacking suit declaration on a pass may be estimated as four morally certain tricks in a hand containing four trumps with three Honours, or five trumps with two Honours. On less strength than this, declare Spades unless you have either (1) seven cards of a red suit, (2) six Clubs, or (3) five Clubs to the Queen or Jack, Ten.

Never declare Clubs or a red suit on inadequate strength because "Spades are so dull." The spice of interest you propose to add to the game will usually be increased by a double from your opponents. If you are unable on a pass to make a sound attacking declaration, it stands to reason that your opponents will probably get the odd trick on any call, and to run risks is merely to invite your opponents to score Game on your deal and to place them in a favourable position for

winning the rubber, perhaps on their succeeding deal.

Do not forget that your hand has to go down on the table, when its weakness will be exposed to your opponents, who will thus be able to take a much stronger line than when playing in the dark against a declaration by the Dealer. This should be especially remembered if you are contemplating a rather light No Trump declaration on a pass, when such a hand will very likely be badly cut up by being led through.

(C) DECLARATIONS TO THE SCORE

As we have remarked above, every declaration should be made to the score, but it is impossible to deal with every case that may arise in the course of the rubber. There are, however, two positions which demand special attention.

The first is when the declarant's side is ahead, and within reasonable sight of Game. In such cases it is obvious that no risks should be run and the original declarant should declare any suit, even Spades, in which he holds sufficient strength to ensure a practical certainty of going out. The

same tactics are, of course, equally obligatory on the Dealer's partner, but we purposely mention the Dealer, because some players are still under the impression that it is almost criminal to make an original Spade declaration at any state of the score.

Always, when there is any doubt, prefer the suit which will most conveniently with safety take you out; e.g., with your score at 22, holding strength in Hearts, declare them rather than No Trumps if there is one unguarded suit. At love-all, or with your score at 6 or 18, No Trumps would probably be your best declaration, but as you are merely playing for the odd trick, the greater security of the suit declaration should be decisive.

At the score of 22 Hearts should also be preferred to Diamonds, even though slightly weaker, because one trick less is necessary to make Game. If, however, the score be 24, Diamonds would be the correct declaration, as, if the odd trick in either of two suits will take you out, the least expensive should, *ceteris paribus*, be chosen.

In such cases as these, when the odd trick only is needed, suits may be declared on considerably less strength than prescribed as necessary at love-

all, especially in the case of Diamonds with the score at 24. The minimum trump strength quoted above for a Heart declaration at love-all may be taken as an ample standard for any suit declaration under these circumstances.

The second case which justifies a departure from the ordinary rules of declaration is when you are behindhand, and your opponents are within a few points of the rubber — not, we would add, within a few points of Game. To declare desperately, except at the last moment, is the height of folly, as, by giving your opponents a chance of making Game *on your deal*, the odds on their winning the rubber are vastly increased.

In this case the original declarant should always go No Trumps if possible, not only for the sake of the trick value, but also in consideration of the greater advantage which that declaration affords to the player of the two hands. Unless his partner has a fair hand, the game is up in any case, while, if he does prove strengthening, No Trumps is the best possible call.

For these reasons he should go No Trumps on hands weaker than those prescribed for such a declaration at love-all. A frequent instance of

such a hand is one containing two strong and two very weak suits.

If No Trumps is out of the question, the Dealer should pass unless he sees a really great chance of Game in some suit declaration. Hearts should not be declared without considerable strength. Under these circumstances the ordinary standards are insufficient, and Hearts should be fully up to the strength required for a Diamond declaration at love-all. Diamonds should very rarely and Clubs or Spades never be declared. Fair cards in Hearts, or very powerful cards in Diamonds, Clubs, or Spades, are a better excuse for going No Trumps than for declaring the suits in question.

The Dealer's partner, when it is left to him, must naturally act on the assumption that the above-mentioned rules have been followed. Therefore he *must never declare No Trumps except on a hand which is well up to the standard of a No Trump declaration at love-all*. With Hearts the case is totally different. The Dealer has only intimated that he has no great strength in the suit, but he may hold fair cards, perhaps cards upon which he would have declared Hearts at love-

all. The Dealer's partner can but hope for the best, and must take the only chance left to him by declaring Hearts if he has a shadow of strength in the suit. Four Hearts with one high Honour, or five with or without an Honour, are sufficient, if accompanied by one certain trick in plain suits. Failing this, declare the suit that seems most likely to avert any considerable loss of points.

DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING

THE chief kind of legitimate double is the double to the score: e.g. (1) When your opponents need only one trick in the suit declared to make Game, but you need two; (2) when one doubled trick will take your score to Game, but will not do so for your opponents. On these and similar occasions, holding fair strength in trumps, and sufficient good cards in other suits to ensure about five tricks in all on your own hand, a double is sound. With less than four trumps a declaration should very rarely be doubled, unless the trick-making power of your plain suits is very high indeed. It is of little use in such a case to rely on long plain suits, however strong the cards composing them may be, as they will in all probability be trumped on the second or third round. Double rather on short suits with Aces and Kings. If, however, you are strong in trumps, a long,

strong plain suit is of the greatest value. If the declarant outnumbered you in trumps, it is most useful in forcing out his surplus, while with equal or greater strength such a suit is almost sure to bring you in several tricks.

Another serious consideration in doubling is the position of the declarant. If he is on your right, double without fear on the strength specified above; but, if the positions are changed, considerably more caution should be exercised, as many strong cards will be rendered valueless for trick-making purposes by the declarant sitting over you; and, having proclaimed strength, you are sure to be heavily finessed against. Consequently, be careful in such cases that your hand is not one that can be seriously cut up if led through.

Beware, when doubling, of relying to any extent on assistance from your partner. A sound offensive declaration and a sound double (especially in No Trumps) leave very little for the other two hands.

A defensive call may, of course, be doubled with greater freedom, as in this case you are generally entitled to assume that the bulk of the

making cards are distributed between yourself and partner. Do not, however, get into a mechanical habit of doubling every time Spades are declared. Redoubled they are worth 8 a trick. The Dealer also should beware of redoubling Spades declared by his partner, as it is generally a *faute-de-mieux* call, and cannot be taken as indicating any strength in the suit. Still more should Dummy beware of redoubling Spades declared by the Dealer, as such a call indicates absolute weakness on his part.

The doubling of No Trumps is a more difficult matter. The trick value being so high and one suit as good as another, no risks should be taken. The original leader to double No Trumps must (except with great all-round strength, which is highly improbable) hold one long, strong suit. If this suit is of such calibre as to ensure six or more tricks in itself without stoppage, the composition of the rest of the hand is of little importance. If not, and one trick is almost sure to be lost in establishing it, sound cards of re-entry in *two* other suits are essential.

In either case the position of the original leader is a strong one.

If, however, your partner has the first lead, there is no such certainty. All he can do is to make a blind shot at your suit, which may result in disaster. In consequence of this risk, the convention has arisen that the leader's partner should only double on a hand that, provided his suit is led to him at once, is good for six or more tricks.

Unfortunately there are two conventions as to the original lead to such a double. The first is the lead of a Heart, which renders success certain, but restricts doubling to great strength in, or possession of the Ace of that suit. The second is the lead of the highest card of the original leader's weakest suit, provided it does not include Ace, King, or Queen. This gives greater freedom, but no certainty that the suit so led will be the right one.

Of the two systems, the Heart Convention is the one now more generally adopted on account of its certainty.

As an example of disaster that may result from a double when playing the Short Suit Convention, we can remember seeing a game in which the Dealer had a hand with great strength in Hearts,

Clubs, and Spades upon which he declared No Trumps, holding no Diamonds. The leader's partner held the nine top Diamonds and doubled; the remaining four Diamonds were in Dummy's hand and the dealer secured Grand Slam in No Trumps doubled, the original leader opening with a Club. Of course, a solitary instance cannot be conclusive, but we certainly think the more popular Heart Convention is correct. In any case, be certain that you settle with your partner before the commencement of play which convention you intend to follow, and adhere to it.

From the considerations noted above, it may be laid down as a safe maxim that No Trumps should never be redoubled except upon an absolute certainty.

All the above-mentioned doubles have been assumed to be made to the score. In our opinion the only other legitimate double is the double on a certainty. The mere point-raising double so often resorted to by inexperienced players cannot be too strongly deprecated, and gives occasion to the enemies of Bridge to brand it as a gambling game. It will invariably be found that the higher the standard of play, the less frequent are the

doubles. Those players who cannot rest content with ordinary points would do well to return to Poker and cease to involve their partners' finances in their wild-cat speculations.

THE ORIGINAL LEAD

THE original lead is a matter of great importance.

In the majority of cases the Dealer is in the strong position of having a declaration made for attacking purposes, in addition to his advantage of having full knowledge of the strength of the forces under his command. The leader therefore must make the most of his privilege of being allowed to make the first move in the campaign which is about to commence. His tactics will vary greatly according to circumstances. So greatly do they differ when the declaration of No Trumps has been made from those to be employed when a suit has been declared, that we must divide the question of original leads into the two headings—

- (A) Against a No Trump Declaration.
- (B) Against a Suit Declaration.

To which we must add a third heading—

- (C) When the Declaration has been doubled.

(A) AGAINST A NO TRUMP DECLARATION

Although at first sight this is the easier case owing to there being one well-recognized policy, it is in reality by far the harder, owing to the numerous circumstances that necessitate variations in the method of carrying out this policy. Unless your partner has doubled, the original lead against a No Trump declaration must always be from your longest suit.

The reason is obvious. Since there is no suit which has more extensive trick-making powers than the other three, the game resolves itself into a struggle between the rival parties to be the first to establish a suit, and thus to enable the small cards of this suit to make tricks at the expense of the higher cards held by the adversaries in the other suits.

Having discovered his longest suit (and clearly in cases of equality in length, the strongest will be selected), the leader is confronted with the difficult problem of how best to establish it. The first question to settle is whether to lead a high

card or a low one. Obviously the lead of a high card will clear the suit more quickly; but in such a case after two or three rounds the leader may find his suit established, but his opponents with the lead. Hence his methods must be slightly varied according to whether or no he has a card of another suit wherewith to regain the lead. Such a card is known as a card of re-entry, and it is of the highest importance to be able to recognize with certainty the presence or absence of such a card in the leader's hand. An Ace is a practically certain card of re-entry, as is a King, Queen suit; while you can regard a suit headed by Queen, Jack, Ten as very probable to obtain you the lead in the later stages of the hand. A King slightly guarded is a probable card of re-entry if held on the declarant's left; but a King must be *very strongly* guarded, if on the declarant's right, to have any great chance as a trick-maker.

Without any such card of re-entry it is a very bad policy to lead an Honour originally unless you hold at least three of the Bridge Honours in the suit, or a suit of altogether exceptional length. Holding Ace, King, and five others, or King, Queen, and five others, an Honour should be led,

but not under other circumstances, if you have only two of the Honours and no card of re-entry. "Hellespont" advises leading the Ace from Ace, Queen, and six small ones without a card of re-entry, on the chance of catching the King. We cannot believe this lead is sound, as the odds are greatly in favour of the King being guarded, and, in the event of its being guarded in one of the adverse hands, it is necessary for your partner to hold the remaining three cards if you are to make another trick in the suit—a most improbable distribution.

If you have three or more Bridge Honours in a suit, it is always right to lead one originally, even without a card of re-entry. We now propose to indicate the Honour to be led from each possible combination of three or more Honours, after which we shall tabulate our results, stating the exact combinations of cards from which each of the Honours is led.

Our readers will be able to decide for themselves which is the easiest method to employ in order to remember the correct leads.

Leads of an Honour from two Honours, without a card of re-entry—

Ace, *King*, and five others.

King, Queen, and five others.

Leads of an Honour from three Honours, without a card of re-entry—

Ace, King, *Queen*.

<p>Ace, King, <i>Jack</i>, and less than four small</p> <p>Ace, King, <i>Ten</i>, and less than four small</p>	}	<p>with seven or more in suit lead <i>King</i> (being the same as Ace, King, and five others).</p>
--	---	--

Ace, Queen, *Jack*.

Ace, Queen, *Ten*.

Ace, *Jack*, Ten.

King, Queen, *Jack*.

King, Queen, Ten.

King, *Jack*, *Ten*.

Queen, *Jack*, Ten.

Leads of an Honour from four Honours, without a card of re-entry—

Ace, King, *Queen*, *Jack*.

Ace, King, *Queen*, Ten.

Ace, *King*, Jack, Ten, and three others
(being the same as Ace, King, and
five others).

Ace, King, *Jack*, Ten, and less than three
others.

Ace, Queen, *Jack*, Ten.

King, Queen, Jack, Ten.

Lead of an Honour from five Honours, without
a card of re-entry—

Ace, King, *Queen*, Jack, Ten.

Holding a card of re-entry, you are able to adopt more vigorous and daring tactics. It is not of such supreme importance that you should retain the lead when your suit has been cleared ; and you are justified in trying to clear your suit more quickly in the hopes of gaining extra tricks.

The differences, however, are but slight, and the chief point to be noticed is that holding a card of re-entry you more frequently lead an Honour which is bound to win the first trick.

Lead from two Honours, when holding a card of re-entry—

Ace, Queen, and five others.

Leads from three Honours when holding a card of re-entry—

Ace, King, Jack.

Ace, Queen, Jack.

Ace, Queen, Ten.

Leads from four Honours when holding a card of re-entry—

Ace, Queen, Jack, Ten.

Ace, King, Jack, Ten.

Your second lead, should you win the first trick, will depend so largely both on the Dummy hand and the fall of the cards in the first round, that no rules can be laid down. Ingenuity and a small amount of experience will be amply sufficient in any case that may arise.

We now propose to tabulate our results, dividing them according to the card that is led originally.

1. Without a card of re-entry—lead

Ace,

from No possible combination of cards.

King,

from *Ace, King*, and five others.

King, Queen, and five others.

King, Queen, Jack.

King, Queen, Ten.

Queen,

from Ace, King, Queen.

Queen, Jack, Ten.

Jack,

from Ace, King, Jack with less than
seven in suit.

Ace, Queen, Jack.

Ace, Jack, Ten.

Ten,

from Ace, King, Ten, with less than
seven in suit.

Ace, Queen, Ten.

King, Jack, Ten.

But 2. With card of re-entry—lead

Ace,

from Ace, Queen, and five others.

Ace, Queen, Jack.

Ace, Queen, Ten.

King,

from Ace, King, Jack.

Should you hold less than three Honours in the suit, or a suit of insufficient length to lead an Honour from two, lead your *fourth best*.

From the above it will be noticed that you rarely

lead an Honour from only two, but *always lead one if your long suit is headed by three or more Honours.*

In using the above schemes for leads you should notice that as a general rule your lead will be the same whether you hold a card of re-entry or not. In few exceptional cases, namely those set out under heading 2, you adopt a bolder course when you hold such a card. Hence, if you have a card of re-entry, and you find your suit described under heading 2, lead according to it. If it is not especially described there, lead in precisely the same way as you would if you had no card by means of which you could obtain the lead in the later stages of the game.

(B) AGAINST A SUIT DECLARATION

Here circumstances are entirely changed. The trump strength as a rule having been declared against you, it is obvious that you have not much chance of making tricks with any but high cards ; in consequence the lead should be from strength rather than length, and tricks should be made as speedily as possible. Many a game and many a Slam have been saved by the original lead of a

winning card, which would otherwise have been ruthlessly trumped had the Dealer been let in at once. This policy must, however, be employed with discretion, as its soundness is based on the presumption of an adverse preponderance of trumps. Any intimation to the contrary, such as the fact of the Dealer having declared Spades, is sufficient to restore the validity of the long-suit theory. The effect of a double by the leader's partner will be dealt with later.

Holding an Ace, other than the Ace of Trumps, it is often advisable to lead it at once, partly as mentioned above, to try to make sure of the trick, but also (a more important consideration) in order that you may retain the lead after seeing the exposed hand, the contents of which are often a valuable guide to your subsequent proceedings. Some authorities advise the invariable adoption of this lead when it is possible, but there are several considerations which, in our opinion, render other tactics preferable. These are:—

(1) Strength in trumps, especially when their quantity is superior to their quality.

(2) If the suit headed by the Ace is a short suit, the chances of the Ace being trumped if not

led at once are remote, while the lead might have the effect of clearing the suit nicely for the opponents.

(3) Should the Ace be accompanied by the Queen, thus forming a valuable winning tenace, it will generally be more advisable to wait for the suit to be led to you, on the chance of catching the King.

Failing an Ace, or not wishing to lead an Ace, the King may be led from a suit headed by King, Queen.

Should neither of these leads be possible, a lead of a Queen from Queen, Jack, Ten is often cogent. If you are lucky enough to find the King in Dummy's hand and the Ace with your partner, the position is highly delectable. In any case the lead can do no harm. With a hand which contains none of these combinations it is often puzzling to know what to do.

A not uncommon practice is to open a short suit of one or two cards in the hopes of getting a ruff. We class these two leads together, inasmuch as their ultimate aim is identical, but when discussing their merits and demerits we must deal with them to a large extent separately. The

practice of leading a two-card suit in the hopes of a ruff has, we think, been carried somewhat to extremes by some authorities. Such a lead from a suit of two small cards on the chance of trumping the third round is a far more desperate measure than can be warranted at such an early stage of the game, and the most probable result will be to destroy any chance your partner may have had of protecting the suit. The argument for the lead is that your weakest suit is the most likely one for your partner to be strong in, but, in default of knowledge, it should always be presumed that the cards are equally distributed, and it follows that your partner can only be expected to hold one high card in three. A more reasonable modification of this coup is the lead of a *strengthening card* from a suit of two ; but, on the question of what is and what is not a strengthening card, far too liberal views have been advanced, and the lead of a Queen, Knave, or Ten with one other card advocated. As regards the Queen, the lead seems reasonable. It does not compel your partner to sacrifice an Honour to a presumed lead from strength, and, being unguarded, it cannot well make if kept in. Accordingly, and especially

if your hand is such that it is improbable that you will get the lead again before trumps are cleared, the Queen may reasonably be led from a suit of two. It is only necessary for your partner to hold either Ace or King to enable him on getting in to carry the suit to the third round, when the desired ruff *may* be obtained.

With regard, however, to the Knave and Ten the case is different. They are not strong enough in themselves to prevent your partner sacrificing his Honours, and for that reason alone we cannot but condemn the lead, especially that of the Ten.

It should be understood that our objections to the two-suit coup only apply to the original lead. Once the exposed hand is on the table, rules are at a discount, but, for the first leap in the dark, risks should as far as possible be avoided. Afterwards, as leads through strength or up to weakness, they are often most valuable, and your partner, seeing the motive, will not be misled into crediting you with any strength in the suit.

The original lead of a singleton is open to the same objections as the two-suit lead with regard to cutting up your partner's hand, but has this

advantage, that, should he hold a winning card or get the lead again before trumps are cleared, you are at once able to ruff. But, and it is a big but, he may not choose to return your lead. As we shall show later, against a trump declaration there is no compulsion to do so, and it is often apparently more advisable to lead up the weakness in the exposed hand, or to open a strong suit of his own, and this risk should always be taken into consideration.

We have been at some pains to set out the darker side of the short-suit system, because, as mentioned above, it has been prosecuted in some circles to an extent far beyond its merits. Its proper scope is as a last resource, when length and strength are lacking; but to raise it to the dignity of a lead by choice is a *reductio ad absurdum* which we cannot view with any degree of equanimity, and in the hands of the inexperienced it is a weapon far more dangerous to the assailant than to the assailed.

Should the leader be still unable to find a card to lead, let him lead the lowest card from a suit of four to a King or Queen, or the highest of three or more headed by two Honours.

If he cannot do even this, he may lead whatever he likes except a trump.

Original leads in plain suits when there are trumps—

- (1) Ace (subject to the above-mentioned considerations).
- (2) King, from King, Queen.
- (3) Queen, from Queen, Jack, Ten.
- (4) Singleton or Queen, from Queen and one other.
- (5) Highest of three suit headed by two Honours.
- (6) Lowest of four suit to a King or Queen.
- (7) Anything except a trump.

The above leads are in descending order of merit.

Holding a plain suit headed by Ace, King, against a trump declaration, lead the King before the Ace if the suit consists of three or more cards. To lead Ace, followed by King, informs your partner that you hold no more of the suit, and he will, on getting the lead, give you another round of the suit for you to ruff.

(C) WHEN THE DECLARATION HAS BEEN
DOUBLED

Clearly when the original leader has himself doubled he will require but little advice on the play of his hand. There is, however, one point upon which players sometimes make a mistake, namely, in the rare cases when the leader doubles a suit declaration on great all-round strength but with only a short trump suit. In such cases, if the double is sound, he must do his best to clear trumps. He is, perhaps, justified in leading an Ace in order to look at Dummy's hand, but even then his second lead should be trumps. If his overwhelmingly strong plain suits are to be employed to their best advantage, he must extract from his opponents as many of their trumps as he can. Should they outnumber him in trumps, he will then be able to obtain the lead in any suit and proceed to force out the remaining trumps with some of his high cards in plain suits. If, on the other hand, he neglects to clear trumps, he may find that one of the hands which is opposed to him is very short in one of his strong suits, and

thus give it the opportunity of making small trumps.

When, however, the leader's partner has doubled, it is the leader's bounden duty absolutely to sacrifice his hand to that of his partner.

If the double is in a trump suit, he *must lead his trumps, beginning with the highest and continuing with the next best as long as he retains the lead.* The importance of this cannot be overestimated. By leading his trumps in this way he not only strengthens his partner's hand, but also enables him to locate the trumps, usually with considerable accuracy, often with absolute certainty.

Many players do not consider themselves under an obligation to lead trumps when Spades have been doubled by their partner, on the ground that Spades are at times doubled from considerable all-round strength, but with comparatively weak trumps. As we have pointed out above, to take full advantage of all-round strength, every effort must be made to clear trumps, and we see no reason why an exception should be permitted in the case of Spades.

Do not be afraid of leading trumps through your partner up to the declarant. If he has

doubled with the declarant on his left, by so doing he has intimated that he holds very great strength, and wishes for the trump lead. Not to lead trumps when your partner has doubled is tantamount to telling him that you have Chicane, and your partner will play on this assumption.

When the leader's partner has doubled a No Trump declaration, there are, as we have already pointed out under the heading of Doubling, two rival conventions. If your partner is a disciple of the Heart Convention, you will lead him your best Heart without any fear. Should he be a follower of the Short Suit Convention, you will lead him the best card of your shortest suit, provided such suit does not contain an Ace, King, or Queen. In cases of equal brevity, lead the weakest suit. When confronted with two equally weak suits, lead the one which is the more valuable as a suit declaration. And in all cases you will live in fear and trembling until you see the card your partner plays.

Before, however, you lead a suit for the benefit of your partner who has doubled, you should always play any certain winning cards you may hold in your hand. This is especially important

when your partner wishes you to lead your shortest suit, as by first playing out your winning cards, you are enabled to see Dummy's hand, and this may show plainly that your partner's suit is not the one you would otherwise have led.

THE PLAY OF THE SECOND HAND

THE play of the second hand is a subject of the greatest complexity. We do not, therefore, propose to enter into all its multifarious details, but rather to indicate the general lines upon which you should base your play, and to give examples of a few of the more common awkward positions in which the second player may find himself.

Ordinarily the second hand will play his lowest, but exceptions may arise to this general rule from one of two causes: either from the fact that the leader has led an Honour in a suit in which the second player holds a higher Honour, or else that the leader has led a card of a suit in which the second player holds an Honour but slightly guarded.

In No Trumps, holding an Honour singly guarded other than the Ace, play it whenever

it is higher than the card led. To this there is one exception. Do not cover an original No Trump lead of a Queen with a King from the Dummy hand, even if it is only singly guarded, unless you as Dealer hold the Ace. A moment's consideration will show the reason for this exception. A Queen is only led originally from either Ace, King, Queen, or from Queen, Jack, Ten. If you hold the King in Dummy, the lead must be from the latter combination, and unless you hold the Ace, your solitary chance of stopping the suit is to compel the third player to hold it up until he blocks the leader's suit with it.

In No Trumps, holding an Honour twice guarded, as a rule you will play a small one. An exception to this must be made in cases of a card led for clearing purposes, when the leader's partner will obviously finesse against you. If there is any hope of your partner having a lower card guarded which your sacrifice may make good, play your Honour and hope for the best. For instance, the Dealer leads a Jack through your King up to Ace, Queen in Dummy's hand. If you play your King on the Jack, there is just a chance that by doing so you may make good the

Ten twice guarded in your partner's hand. If, however, you see the Ten with Dummy in addition to the Ace, Queen, you can do no good by covering with your King the Jack led; the only chance rests in its being the Dealer's solitary card of the suit. Of course, even when you see the Ace, Queen, Ten in Dummy, you would play your King, if it were only singly guarded, on to the Jack led. For in these circumstances your only chance is that your partner holds the Nine and three small cards.

If you hold as many as three guards to your Honour, do not play it second in hand in No Trumps unless it is certain to win the trick, and you will lose tricks by any delay. This case practically only arises when such an Honour is held by the Dealer or Dummy, and the combined hands are exceptionally powerful.

Holding a *fourchette*, i.e. the cards next above and below the one led, always cover, even in the case of very small cards.

In No Trumps you will often, indeed usually, find it advantageous to hold up a winning card in your opponents' suit until the opponent who does *not* hold the long cards of that suit is void.

Obviously there is no object to be attained by holding up such a card beyond this point.

When a suit declaration has been made, all the above principles apply except that of holding up a winning card of your opponents' suit. In plain suits do not hold up a winning card for more than one round. Indeed, it is often good policy to play it first round, if it is at the head of a very long suit which you think may be trumped later. Holding the two top cards in a suit, play one of them in the first round. If you have any card, other than the Ace, that you see is certain to win the trick, play it first round. Should you hold Honours in sequence higher than the card led, the lowest should be played second hand in a plain suit.

Above all, **DO NOT HESITATE.** To fail to play with your customary speed is usually just as good as putting the doubtful card down on the table and letting your adversaries finesse to their hearts' content.

In the later rounds of a plain suit the second player is often in doubt as to whether he should trump and which card he should employ for the purpose. If you are uncertain whether your part-

ner or opponents hold the winning card in the suit, you should trump, unless you yourself hold considerable strength in trumps. Even if your strength in trumps consists in their numbers rather than in their quality, you will do well to trump when playing against an attacking declaration.

If the leader is leading out winning cards of a suit in which both the second and third hands are void, the second hand *must trump*. The fact that you are certain to be overtrumped does not remove the obligation. By passing such cards you enable the third hand to discard from his weak suits, thereby, perhaps, depriving you of otherwise certain tricks later in the game. Always in such cases play a high trump if it is at all likely either to win the trick outright or to assist your partner by forcing a higher trump from the third hand.

If, under similar circumstances, the leader plays a losing card for his partner to ruff, your play must depend on whether the third player is the strong or the weak trump hand. Obviously to play a small trump second hand is useless. If the strong trump hand follows, generally let the

trick go, unless you hold a single or unguarded Honour other than the Ace. Such a card should be played for the object noted above—namely, on the chance of strengthening your partner in the trump suit. If the third hand is weak in trumps, play any card likely to win the trick, as it is most undesirable that the weak hand should make his small trumps.

THE PLAY OF THE THIRD HAND

ORDINARILY the third player will play his highest, provided such card is higher than the two already played to the trick. If his top cards are in sequence, he will play the lowest of that sequence.

Exceptions are, however, introduced when the original lead is an Honour and the declaration is one of No Trumps. Here a thorough knowledge of the Honour leads in No Trumps is requisite. The dual object at which the third player aims is to avoid blocking his partner's suit, and yet to avoid so reckless a clashing of his Honours with those of the leader, that a card lightly guarded in an adverse hand is enabled to make.

If your partner makes an original lead of an Honour against a No Trump call, you should always retain the *lowest card* of your suit, in order to ensure being able to put him in again. This simple device, assisted by the sight of Dummy's hand and an intimate knowledge of the correct

Honour leads, should enable the third player to get out of his partner's way at the psychological moment.

If your partner leads originally a small card against a No Trump call, *you must play your highest* (subject, of course, to the second player not having already won the trick), unless the exposed hand renders a finesse either certain or compulsory. To decide if a finesse is certain, the "Eleven Rule" (see p. 94) is invaluable. A finesse (but only against *one* card whose position you do not know) is compulsory, when you see that Dummy is *certain* to block the suit if you do not finesse. For example, Dummy holds King and one small, or Queen and two small; you hold Ace, Jack, and small. To play the Ace under these circumstances would ensure the King or Queen blocking the suit in the second or third rounds respectively. Your only chance is to credit your partner with the Queen in the first, or the King in the second instance, play the Jack, and trust to clearing the suit in this way.

When there are trumps, only the certain finesse is justifiable. Unless you see in Dummy's hand the card, or cards, intermediate between your

best and second best in the suit, you must play your highest. Never fall into the common error of playing Queen from Ace, Queen unless the King is exposed on your right.

THE PLAY OF THE FOURTH HAND

THE fourth hand will, as a rule, win a trick which is against him whenever he can.

There are, however, occasions when he may refuse to win a trick in the hope of securing a greater profit.

The first is when he holds the top card of a suit the bulk of which lies with the opponents. In such cases he will often do well to hold it up as long as he can, with the object of exhausting the weaker of his opponents' hands in the suit. This device is of the utmost importance when No Trumps are declared, and should almost always be resorted to. When there are trumps, the danger of such a card being ruffed makes it necessary to play it sooner.

If the fourth hand holds, say, Ace, Jack, and others of a suit of which the leader has led the King, it may prove profitable to refrain from winning the trick. The leader, supposing the Ace

to be with his partner, will be almost certain to continue the suit, thus ensuring a trick for both Ace and Jack. Had the fourth player won the first trick with the Ace, his Jack would have remained guarded, but, being on the leader's right, it would very likely have been finessed against and failed to make.

When the third hand holds a strong tenace, e.g. Ace, Queen, Jack of a suit, he will usually play the Jack in the hope that the King is with the second player. Should the fourth hand, under the circumstances, hold the King, he may encourage the delusion by not playing it. The third hand will then have to put the leader in again in another suit, and in order to attain this object and so repeat the finesse, a valuable stopping card may have to be sacrificed. Like the above, this coup is mainly applicable to No Trumps.

PLAYING DUMMY

(A) WITHOUT TRUMPS

THIS is the most beatific position in which the Bridge enthusiast can find himself, and is certainly the greatest test of skill that the game affords. The three chief guiding rules to be observed are: (1) Get out your long suits; (2) Hold up your weak suits; (3) Make the game.

(1) Too much importance cannot be attached to the necessity of playing out your long suits as soon as possible. By long we mean any suit in which there is a reasonable probability of extracting all your opponents' cards in that suit with a bit to spare. These suits should be led directly you get in. It gives you a comfortable lead, is apt to demoralize your opponents, and by making them discard both saps their strength and often affords useful information as to the disposition of important cards in other suits. If your long

suit is not of this calibre and one or more tricks must necessarily be lost in it, go for it all the same, and establish it as quickly as possible. Always before leading your long suit count the number of cards you hold between you, and, in corollary, the probable distribution of the remainder. Do not attach a superstitious value to Aces and Kings, but consider, primarily, length. Remember, if you hold seven between you, you have the odd card, while eight or nine is a great preponderance. Until the contrary is indicated, you should assume that the remaining cards of the suit lie evenly between your opponents, and play accordingly.

Do not finick about with aimless finesses in suits in which you hold no particular strength. It is the surest way to lose tricks, as you are playing your opponents' game.

Always be on your guard against blocking a long suit by unnecessarily retaining high cards in the weaker hand. Unless there is any very valid reason to the contrary, it is a sound rule that high cards in a long suit should always be led or played first from the weak hand, or, to put it in another way, *the shorter hand in a suit should never be left*

with the highest card or cards of that suit and no little card wherewith to return the lead. This apparently obvious precaution is so constantly and outrageously neglected by indifferent players that we feel bound to emphasize the point. It is no excuse that the long hand has a card of re-entry in another suit, as the unnecessary use of such a card will often seriously weaken your subsequent operations.

Another case which sometimes arises is this. The declarant's partner holds no card of any value whatsoever in three suits, but in the fourth holds, say, Ace, King, and four small cards. The declarant himself has only two small cards in suit. Obviously, either the Queen, Knave, or Ten must be guarded in one of the opposing hands. If the Ace and King are led out, the suit will probably be cleared on the third round, but, as the declarant will then be exhausted in the suit and there is no possibility of re-entry, the remaining cards will fail to make. The correct play is for the declarant to lead one of his two small cards in the suit to which he should also play a small card from the long hand. On getting in again he can then give the lead with his remain-

ing card to the Ace, King, and all should go well.

(2) When, as often happens, the suit first led by your opponent is one in which you can only hope to make one trick, do not (unless your other suits are so strong that delay may entail loss) be in any hurry to play your winning card. For example, holding Ace and two small cards of a suit and (say) two small ones in the exposed hand, hold up the Ace until the third round. By this time, supposing the original leader to have led from five, his partner will be exhausted in the suit and you will be able to risk his getting the lead with impunity.

Of course, should the leader's partner prove void in the suit on the first or second round, the winning card should be played at once. The only object in holding it up is to exhaust the weak hand.

On the same principle never play out the winning cards of your opponents' suits unnecessarily. So long as you retain them you can go on establishing your long suits and attempt finesses without fear. There is little risk of such cards not making, as your opponents on getting in will

generally be bound to lead to them. By playing them out you are not only establishing their suits, but are also depriving yourself of the most valuable cards of re-entry.

Do not be carried away by the possession of even the Ace, King, and Queen of a suit, unless the two hands contain at least seven cards of that suit between them. Nothing is more fettering to the best play of the two hands than the knowledge that your opponents hold established cards. *So long as you are in a sound position all round, try not for the certain tricks, but for the doubtful ones.*

(3) Never endanger the game for the chance of making an extra trick or so. When you see the necessary number of tricks in your hands, make them at once, however dull it may seem, if there is the least risk to be run by your opponents getting the lead: for example, if they have established a suit against you. You may find all the remaining cards of that suit in one hand and be forced to throw away winning cards on them. It needs a very forgiving partner to condone an error of this description. To risk the odd trick in the same way is equally bad play. On the other

hand, when the only chance of making Game is to hazard something, any course of play which does not endanger the odd trick is justifiable.

(B) WHEN THERE ARE TRUMPS

Get them out. Given a sound attacking declaration, and reasonable support in the other hand, the best chance your opponents have of getting on terms with you is to cut up your hands by ruffing before you can draw their trumps. Therefore, take the lead as soon as possible. Be careful how you finesse in the suit originally led, as it may be from a singleton. Holding a winning card, you may do well to put it on at once, while of two winning cards you should always play one in the first round. Having got in, your bounden duty is to lead trumps, and go on leading them. Do not be carried away by the chance of making a small trump in the weak hand. Only a certainty or a very difficult hand will justify such a proceeding, while to mess about in plain suits is little short of lunacy. Above all, do not be guilty of the crowning

idiocy of leading losing cards for the strong trump hand to ruff. To waste trumps in this way before leading them is little more reasonable than, in a covert shoot, expending half your cartridges on blackbirds before the rise begins. Do not consider it a terrible thing to draw two trumps from your and Dummy's hands for one from your opponents. So long as there are losing trumps against you they must be extracted. It is only when the outstanding trumps are winners and all in one hand that you should stop leading, and try instead to force them out with your plain suits.

Having exhausted the opposing trumps, be niggardly of such as remain to you. Their function is now to apply the closure to your opponents' long suit while your own is being established, and, as they are bound to make sooner or later, there is absolutely no object in using them unless compelled to. You are, in fact, playing a No Trump hand with your long trumps supernumerary Aces, and all the principles described above for No Trump play should be followed.

Supposing, however, that a defensive declara-

tion has been necessary, or that you have declared on minimum strength and find yourself poorly supported, the conditions are completely altered. Act on the defensive in Trumps, do all you can to get a ruff from the weak hand, and make at once any tricks which may be at all endangered by delay. If it is feasible to establish a cross-ruff, do so, and keep it up as long as possible, regardless of the quantity or quality of the trumps expended.

In all cases when playing the two hands, play false cards whenever you can. You have no partner to deceive and two opponents: e.g. when called upon to win a trick with Ace or King, win it with the Ace. Each of your opponents may then imagine the other to hold the King, to their subsequent discomfiture. On the same principle avoid winning tricks from your own hand which can with equal convenience be won by Dummy. Try to remember from which hand you have to lead. Nothing is more irritating than a player who after long consideration leads from the wrong side, and has to commence the process all over again. Make a point of

thinking out some definite plan of campaign at the beginning of the hand, and do not leave the consideration of the possibilities of each suit until it is led. Make up your mind what suit or suits you intend to rely on, and, subject to the fall of the cards, adhere to your original project.

PLAYING AGAINST DUMMY

THE one and only way to succeed is to play in closest combination with your partner. The advantage possessed by the Dealer in seeing all the cards at his disposal is so great that the most perfect co-ordination is often powerless against it. How much more so when each of his opponents is intent only on his own hand! In every hand and every suit one player will usually have to sacrifice himself to his partner. Never, therefore, refuse to adopt any course of play for which your partner is obviously asking (e.g. to win a trick or to trump), unless you are certain that you are in the best position to judge. Loss of confidence is far more injurious than the loss of a trick.

A question which often arises is the advisability or otherwise of returning your partner's lead. In such cases the best criterion is the declaration made. Against No Trumps nothing but great strength in another suit, or disadvantage made

obvious by the exposed hand, will justify the adoption of any other tactics. By disadvantage we do not mean merely that the highest card or cards of the suit are against you. When the exposed hand holds a strong tenace over your partner, or has such strength as to preclude the possibility of establishing the suit, then, and then only, should it be abandoned. An attempt to establish two suits will result in failure in both, and is about as sensible as trying to get pace out of a boat by rowing alternate strokes. The only universal exception to the rule is when your partner has led from a strong suit which has obviously been cleared by the opening round or rounds. In such cases, having the lead, you should first lead any certain winning cards you may hold in other suits before returning it.

When trumps are declared there is no such obligation, as your partner may be leading from almost anything. All that can be done is to try to diagnose the combination from which the lead was made, and, if you see no particular advantage to be gained by continuing, it is perfectly justifiable to try any other opening that may suggest itself.

In the absence of any other obvious consideration for a lead, your play must be regulated by the position of the exposed hand. If it is on your right, you should *lead up to any weak suit* it may contain, always, if possible, opening with a card higher than any held by the exposed hand. Unless the Dealer holds considerable strength in the suit, such a lead will probably seriously embarrass him. If the exposed hand is on your left, *lead through its strength*. Prefer for such a lead a suit in which the exposed hand holds high cards, but no particular length, especially when such cards form a tenace and you do not hold the intervening card. The lead of a strengthening card, such as Jack or Ten, is as valuable in this case as in the lead up to weakness. In both cases the lead is soundest from a suit in which you yourself hold no strength to speak of.

Another important point to decide is, whether to make your certain tricks at once, or wait. Against a No Trump declaration the latter course is generally the most advantageous, as, if the cards are fairly equally divided, each suit will probably be fought out before the end. If, however, you hold enough winning cards to make the

odd trick or save the game, utilize them at once, if there is any risk of their failing to make on the Dealer getting in.

Against an attacking suit declaration, however, in nine cases out of ten it is best to make all the tricks you can at once, if there is the least risk of their being trumped later.

Do not, however, be afraid of being trumped. To force the declarant's trump suit is often the best game you can play, and is almost invariably safe. Avoid, however, giving the weak hand a ruff. When there is one small trump in the weak hand which may make in this way, or which is preventing you from making tricks in a plain suit in which it is void, it is a good plan to lead a trump through the strong hand to get rid of it.

Never under any circumstances lead a suit which both of your opponents can trump, as the Dealer will, in such cases, trump from the weak hand and throw away a losing card from the other; the most advantageous state of affairs he could possibly wish for.

Trump all you know, even if by doing so you are unguarding an Honour. Trump and trump high if your partner leads a suit in which he must

be aware that both you and the fourth hand are void. His motive for such a lead will be the hope either (1) that you will hold a trump higher than any in the fourth hand, or (2) that you will hold a trump high enough to force out some big card and thereby enable him to make a trick later.

The doctrine of "assumption" is very important when playing against the declarants. It often becomes obvious towards the middle or end of a hand that, unless your partner holds certain cards, you are doomed to defeat. In such cases assume that your partner does hold such cards, and play accordingly. For example, three rounds of a hand remain to be played. Dummy has the lead and holds the King and two small Hearts. You on his left hold Ace and another Heart and an established card in another suit. All three tricks are necessary to save the game. To this end obviously the Queen of Hearts must be with your partner. Assume this to be the case, and on a small Heart being led, pass it. If you are right, all should go well. If not, you may lose another trick; but the game being already won, this is of no great importance.

Assumption must of course be coupled with

observation, and the exposed hand and the Dealer's discards carefully watched. If, for instance, the exposed hand holds good cards in a suit in which you are weak, and the Dealer appears to avoid opening it, the deduction is that your partner is also strong in the suit, and you are accordingly entitled to lead it. If, too, on a suit declaration, the Dealer seems shy of leading trumps, the same principle applies, and, if on the right side, you may take the opportunity of leading a trump through the declarant's hand.

Trumps should often be led against a defensive declaration. In such cases you are generally entitled to assume that the bulk of the making cards are distributed between yourself and your partner. Consequently the best thing to do is to clear trumps.

Avoid playing false cards. You may deceive the Dealer, but you are certain to deceive your partner. If he subsequently gets the lead, he will probably play the very game you are trying to choke off.

THE ELEVEN RULE

THIS is a simple but extremely useful device employed when you are third player and your partner has made an original lead of the fourth best card of a suit. By it you are enabled to calculate instantly the number of cards jointly held by your adversaries that are higher than the one led by your partner.

Subtract from eleven the pips of the card led by your partner and you obtain the number of cards that you and your two adversaries together hold in the suit that are higher than the one led. From this, seeing your own and Dummy's hands, you can easily determine whether such a card, provided it is not covered from Dummy, is good against the Dealer. For example, your partner in his first lead against a No Trump declaration plays a Seven of Hearts; Dummy holds Queen, Eight and Five; you hold King, Ten and Three. Subtract seven, the pips of your partner's lead,

from eleven, and you obtain a remainder of four, showing that there are only four higher cards than the Seven outside your partner's hand. These four cards you see in your own and Dummy's hands, and hence unless the Dealer covers from Dummy you can safely play the Three, knowing that the Seven led is good against the Dealer.

This rule is also important to the Dealer in his play of the combined hands. Should he have no card in his hand higher than the one led by the opponent on his left, he should remember the third player can detect the fact, and should play accordingly; in many cases he will find it wise to cover from Dummy, and so prevent a second lead from the first player up to his obvious weakness.

It should be noted that the Eleven Rule only applies to leads of a fourth best card.

CALLING AND DISCARDING

THESE two points, though hardly identical, are yet so closely connected in actual play that they are most conveniently treated under a single heading.

Unfortunately the all-important subject of discarding is still in the melting-pot. At least three well-known systems are in vogue, and, as our aim is to avoid being arbitrary on any unsettled point of the game, we propose to set out all three, giving the pros and cons of each for individual consideration.

It is always advisable to find out from your partner before starting a game which system he proposes to follow, and also to inform him which you yourself favour.

The importance of discarding correctly, and according to some system which is understood by your partner, is threefold. In the first place you naturally wish to weaken your hand as little

as possible. Thus small cards, in themselves worthless, may well be valuable as guards to high cards in the suit. Secondly, your system of discards must be intelligible to your partner in order that, when he wishes to lead a card for your benefit, he may select one from the right suit. And thirdly, that by correctly reading your discards he may be able to discard himself with far greater confidence than would be possible had he no idea in which suits lay your strength or your weakness.

(I) THE INVARIABLE DISCARD FROM WEAKNESS

This system is easily described. The first discard is from your weakest suit. Should you discard from two suits, the remaining suit is the one you wish led. And, if compelled to discard from three suits, the one from which you discard last is your strongest.

The great advantage of this system is that it is very simple, and as it accords with one's natural inclinations, is not likely to be forgotten. It is, perhaps, the best to begin on, but, in view of the greater benefits obtainable under the other sys-

tems, we cannot recommend it to the more aspiring, although it is now undoubtedly the most generally adopted.

(2) THE INVARIABLE DISCARD FROM STRENGTH

The converse of No. 1. Your first discard is from your strongest suit. Second and subsequent discards are viewed as forced, and do not signify either strength or weakness.

This system is as simple as the last, and has, moreover, the further advantage of indicating to your partner speedily and exactly the suit in which your strength lies. As soon as you have discarded, he knows not only what suit to lead to you, but also that he can trust to you for its protection, and so discard from it himself without fear. Moreover, while it is usually but little assistance to the Dealer for him to know which of his opponents is strong in his weak suits, it is often of the greatest use to him to be able to guess on which side a card in his strong suits is guarded, and the discard from strength is less likely to give this information. The great disadvantage is that, when the cards are evenly distri-

buted, you are at times faced with the dilemma that you must either mislead your partner by discarding from weakness, or seriously impair the strength of your best suit by reducing its numbers from four to three. This may, however, sometimes be obviated by employing the double discard from weakness described later.

(3) THE MIXED DISCARD, OR "HELLESPONT'S" SYSTEM

In medieval times, when Whist was in favour, the convention was adopted by many of the best players of departing from the general rule of discarding from weakness when once the trump strength had been declared against them, and a directory discard from strength was permitted. "Hellespont" saw the possibilities of this method, and adapted it to suit the requirements of Bridge. His theory is that when in an attacking position, as when your partner is leading winning cards, you will naturally elect to discard the least valuable cards in your hand, namely, small cards from your weakest suits. When, however, your adversaries are in, and defensive measures must be

adopted, these small cards may be indispensable as guards to any Honours you may hold in the suit. Accordingly the procedure is to discard from well-protected suits which can spare a card or so.

As there is a slight difference in the working of the system according as the declaration is No Trumps or a suit, we have thought it best to give the two separately.

(1) *No Trumps*

In No Trumps, when your Adversaries are leading, your First Discard is from the Suit you wish to be led. Your partner will (subject to the exceptions mentioned later in the case of double discards) draw his inferences solely from your first discard, all subsequent discards being viewed as forced.

In No Trumps, when your Partner is leading, your First Discard is from your Weakest Suit. Should you discard twice from different suits, your partner will infer that the suit from which you have not discarded is the one you wish him to lead.

(2) When there are Trumps

In this case the discard depends, not upon the position of the lead, but whether you are playing an attacking or defensive game. If the declaration has been made from weakness or has been doubled, you will discard from your weakest suit, as when attacking in No Trumps. Otherwise discard from the suit you wish to be led, as you would in No Trump hand when your opponents are leading and making tricks.

We venture to think that this system unites the advantages of both the others. When used in conjunction with the general conventions next described, the result is wonderfully complete and harmonious. The only objection that can seriously be urged against it is that it is somewhat complicated, and therefore dangerous in the hands of beginners, but by good players this can hardly be weighed against its extreme utility.

GENERAL CONVENTIONS

There are a number of conventional discards and calls which do not form an integral part of any of the above systems, but can be used in conjunction with all, and will often prove most valuable as variations when it is desirable to depart from the principles upon which your partner expects you to discard.

(1) THE DOUBLE DISCARD

It often happens, especially in No Trumps, that a long suit is being led in which it is obvious that you will have to discard more than once. In such cases, if you are particularly anxious to show strength or weakness in a certain suit, the following methods may be adopted.

(a) *To show strength.*—For this purpose discard from your strong suit an unnecessarily high card, discarding next a lower card from the same suit. For instance, should you discard the Six of Diamonds and afterwards discard (or sometimes play) the Three of Diamonds, you have shown strength in Diamonds. The occasion for this

device will generally arise : (1) under the "weakness" system when your opponents are leading their long cards, (2) under "Hellespont's" system when your partner is leading and making tricks. In both cases your arrangement with your partner is to discard from weakness, but by calling in the manner indicated the danger of misleading him is obviated.

(b) *To show weakness.*—This convention is the converse of the last, and is of far greater practical utility, namely, the *To discard twice successively from a suit without calling shows absolute weakness therein.* As a variation from the discard from strength or from the discards under "Hellespont's" system, it is most valuable when your opponents are leading in a No Trump hand. Although under such circumstances you have covenanted to discard from strength, it may be that by so doing your only respectable suit would be seriously weakened, while many of your other cards are only fit to be thrown away. By these means the strong suit can be retained in its entirety. Thus if your partner sees your original discard to be the Two of Hearts, he will rightly deduce that your strength

lies in Hearts. When, however, he sees that your *next* discard is the Five of Hearts, he will argue, "My partner has discarded twice successively in Hearts without calling; he is therefore absolutely weak in the suit, and cannot afford to discard from his strong suit without unduly weakening it." He will therefore keep his own Hearts guarded as fully as possible, and, when he gets the lead, will choose some other suit to give you. Note carefully that under this convention your discards must be made successively.

(2) THE CALL BY A SINGLE DISCARD

This call is often useful to show strength when other methods are impracticable or undesirable. Holding a very strong suit, say five or six headed by a Quart Major, discard the Ace. Your partner will naturally infer your great strength from the fact that you are able lightly to cast away a card of such calibre. Likewise, a discard of the King from a suit headed by a Quart to the King will serve the same end.

(3) THE CALL FOR A RUFF

This call, of course, will only apply when trumps are declared, and should only be used when your partner is leading. Under these circumstances, holding only two cards of the suit led, you may indicate the fact by playing the higher of the two before the lower. For example, your partner leads King, Ace from a suit of five. On them you play the Seven, followed by the Three. Your partner can then lead a third round, confident that you and not the Dealer will ruff. On the other hand, not to play in this manner is tantamount to telling your partner that you have at least one card of the suit left after the second round.

For example, your partner leads King, Queen from a suit of five, headed by a Tierce Major. If there are three of the suit in Dummy's hand, and you do not call in the first two rounds, your partner will know that the Dealer is void, and will not lead a third round of the suit unless he wishes to force him in trumps. It is, in fact, the old Whist call for trumps with a new meaning. Beginners *must remember to make, and to look out for it.*

(4) THE ECHO

This call only applies when there are No Trumps, and is employed to show a strength of four or more cards in the suit your partner has led. It is effected in the same way as the call for a ruff, namely, by playing first an unnecessarily high card of the suit, followed by a lower one. It is not perhaps as important as the other conventions, but it is well to bear it in mind, should occasion arise for its use.

Whatever system of discards you adopt, you should be careful, when playing against a No Trump call, to retain as long as possible at least one card of your partner's original lead. It may be, if he has led from a great suit, that it was established in the first round, but that he has no hope of getting the lead except in that suit. In any case it is a suit that is partly established in your favour, and hence is probably the best one to lead.

Never, unless absolutely compelled, discard all the cards you have of an unopened suit. Should

you do this, when you play void in the first round, the Dealer can locate every card in the suit, thus enabling him to finesse with certainty against the cards your partner has so carefully kept guarded. You may, moreover, find later from your partner's discards that this is the very suit he wishes you to lead should you get an opportunity.

To discard correctly and to read accurately the meaning of your partner's discards is a matter of the greatest importance, and at the same time a matter of the greatest difficulty. Think of the number of times you could have saved the game in an adverse No Trump call if your partner had only led you the suit you wanted !

THE SPADE CONVENTION

COMPARATIVELY recently the American idea of not playing out Spade hands has become more common in this country. This custom consists of allowing the Dealer and his partner to score one odd trick in an undoubled Spade declaration, while each side scores its Honours without the hand being played out. If, however, either side has reached the score of twenty, or, as we have mentioned above, if the declaration is doubled, then the hand is played out in the ordinary way.

As to the merits or demerits of this system there is little to be said, as it is largely a matter of individual taste. When there are players sitting out waiting to take their turn at the table, it has the advantage of saving time, and making shorter the periods of waiting. On the other hand, there is the undoubted disadvantage of the tendency to avoid Spade declarations and to launch out into unsound calls of higher value.

THREE-HANDED OR "CUT-THROAT" BRIDGE

AT times a Bridge-party finds itself reduced in numbers to three, and the following game is a by no means bad makeshift. The three players, *A*, *B*, *C*, cut for deal; the lowest deals, the next lowest sits on his left and the highest on his right, while a vacant seat is left opposite to the Dealer.

The cards are dealt into four packets in the ordinary way. *A*, the Dealer, looks at his hand, and either makes the declaration himself or leaves it to his Dummy. The declaration is made from Dummy according to fixed rules—

- (1) If Dummy holds three or four Aces, he declares No Trumps.
- (2) Failing this, he declares his longest suit Trumps. In case of equality of length of two or more suits, the pips must be added up and the strongest suit declared. Each Ace counts eleven, each picture card

ten, and the other cards the number of their pips. In case of equality of length and strength, the highest in value of the equal suits is declared, i.e. (1) Hearts, (2) Diamonds, etc.

Any points that the Dealer scores by tricks count to him below the line, while any he loses by tricks or otherwise count to each of his adversaries above the line.

Each player reckons the value of one odd trick for each Honour he holds, while in No Trumps each Ace counts ten to the holder. The Dealer, of course, counts Dummy's Honours in addition to his own. Four or five Honours in one hand do not reckon more than four or five held separately.

Inasmuch as the Dealer's adversaries, if they make the odd trick or more, only score this above the line, and not towards winning the game, doubling is practically non-existent.

At the close of the hand, *C* moves to the vacant seat opposite to *A*, while *B* has the deal; and so on, in turn.

A player scores 50 for each game he wins, and

the player who first wins two games scores an additional 50 for the rubber.

Each player plays "on his own," i.e. it is perfectly legitimate for one player to purposely allow the Dealer to make extra tricks at the expense of his temporary partner if it is to the particular player's own advantage to do so. For instance, *B* and *C* are playing against *A*. *B* has already won a game, has scored 28 towards his second game, and has the deal next. *C* has won one game and scored nothing towards his second, while *A* has not yet won a game. *C* would be perfectly justified in allowing *A* to win this game, in order to place him (*C*) and *B* on an equal footing towards winning the final game.

Since the Dealer cannot rely on an intelligent call from Dummy if he leaves the declaration to him, and since any tricks he loses on his own deal count above the line to his opponents, he will often venture on very light No Trumps and red suit calls, or perhaps will call Clubs or even Spades himself rather than leave it to his partner, who may have to declare Hearts from five or even four small cards.

A distinct disadvantage in this game is the

rarity of the occasions upon which Dummy is able to declare No Trumps. This may be obviated by assigning to each of the Honours in Dummy's hand the following fixed values—

Each Ace to be valued at 6 points.

„ King	„	4	„
„ Queen	„	3	„
„ Jack	„	2	„
„ Ten	„	1	„

Should the value of the hand total up to 20 points, or should it contain three Aces, then Dummy declares No Trumps. This variation, although it makes the declaration rather more complicated, undoubtedly makes the game more interesting.

We ourselves should like to suggest a slight further variation in the same direction, namely, that the Dealer, on leaving the declaration to his Dummy, should be allowed to state the minimum number of points on which No Trumps is to be called by him.

Owing to only the Dealer being able to make points towards Game, a rubber is usually a prolonged affair, and the points are considerably

higher than in the orthodox game. At the close of the rubber each player's points are added, and each player pays or receives the difference between his score and that of each of his adversaries.

Third Edition. 18mo. Price 3s. 6d. net.

With the New Laws of Bridge (1904),
as adopted by the Portland and Turf Clubs.

MODERN BRIDGE

BY "SLAM."

THE WORLD.—"With 'Modern Bridge,' by 'Slam,' it really seems that the good Bridge Book, for which the world has been so long waiting, has at last appeared. . . . This modest volume appears to us to rise like a safe little rock upon which the doubting Bridge player may take his stand in absolute security. . . . 'Slam' is at once lucidly logical and convincingly clear."

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO.,
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C. ;
NEW YORK, AND BOMBAY.

PLYMOUTH
WILLIAM BRENDON AND SON, LTD.
PRINTERS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 020 567 546 2