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**Pirate Bridge, New Card Game, Is
Taking Fashionable Clubmen by Storm**

By ANNIE BLANCHE SHELBY.

As is more or less generally known, a new card game is looming up in the card-playing horizon. Whether it is destined to gain the ascendancy over auction remains to be seen.

Its promoters and those who are sponsoring it, as well as a number of other more or less prominent players, and the vast army of irresponsible players to whom novelty appeals, affirm that it will. Others, including many of the soundest and best players in the country, are equally confident that it will not. Still others, among them many who recall their strenuous objections to bridge when bridge first appeared, and there was talk it would supersede whist, and, at a later period, to auction, when bridge in its turn was threatened by auction, and how in each case they finally took up the gauntlet loyally in favor of the newer game, are more conservative in the expression of an opinion and merely say "they do not know."

The new game is called "Pirate Bridge." Why so called I do not know, unless perhaps the peculiar tactics employed in bidding, and in a player's effort to intercept some other player and appropriate to himself as partner a player who has been previously appropriated by some one else, may be said to be of a nature more or less piratical.

MEMBER OF THE GREAT WHIST FAMILY.

Pirate is built upon auction lines and is therefore a member of the great whist family. As such, as well as because of the prominence of its sponsors, and the stir it is creating in scientific card circles, it is deserving of more than passing attention. Games may come and games may go, but such games only will live as are founded to a greater or less degree upon the basic principles of whist. Some variant of whist will undoubtedly continue to be played until the end of time, or so long as cards remain in vogue and retain their power to educate and divert.

The inherent idea of pirate, the controlling motive of which is to do away with some of the more objectionable features of auction, originated, it seems, with Aleister Crowley, a well-known English writer, and explorer, and a former devotee of auction. After developing his idea as far as he could by himself, he finally took into his confidence Frank Crowninshield, the editor of "Vanity Fair," and himself a card player of no mean ability. R. F. Foster, known to card players the world over was later called in consultation, with the result that he further experimented upon and developed the game, prepared a code of official laws governing irregularities, etc., introduced it into several of the leading clubs, and, when the time seemed ripe, launched it upon the card playing world.

SOME OBJECTIONS TO AUCTION OVERCOME.

Among the chief objections advanced against auction which pirate claims to overcome, or at least reduce to a minimum, are, in the words of Mr. Foster, "misfit hands and uncongenial partners" and "long drawn out rubbers."

Pirate, like auction, is a bidding game. There is no fixed partnership, a partnership remains in force for the current deal only. The first bid of the hand is made on a player's own account, though as the bidding proceeds it becomes more or less subject to inference from previous bids and acceptances.

A bid to be valid must be accepted; that is to say, some player at the table who thinks his hand well suited to the bid and desires the particular bidder as his partner, indicated it in his proper turn by the use of the words "I accept." This method of forming a partnership is supposed to eliminate "misfit hands," as presumably such hands only play together as are well adapted to each other. Naturally, there should be few if any "long drawn out rubbers."

While it is undeniably true that in auction the hand you might wish your partner to hold is often held by an adversary, this is by no means always the case, and besides in this very fact lies one of auction's greatest charms. Most players relish a difficult contest, a real battle. There is a certain zest and exhilaration attendant upon the winning of a game which is closely contested—upon the pivotal trick, the winning or losing of which means victory or defeat—which must necessarily be missing when the hands are thoroughly suited to each other and the cards, to a greater or less extent, play themselves. The promoters of the game tell us, however, that this is not so,

that reality and subtlety and finesse of the highest order are required in the successful play of the game.

RULES FOR BIDDERS.

No player can make a higher bid until the one previously made has been accepted. If all players pass the hand is thrown up and, as in auction, the deal passes to the player next in turn to deal. A bid which is not accepted becomes void and the next right to bid passes to the player to the left of the unsuccessful bidder. When a bid is accepted each player in turn to the left may call a higher bid or pass. This right applies as well to the player whose bid has been accepted. When a bid of higher value is made and not accepted the bid reverts automatically to the last accepted bidder. It will happen not infrequently that a player who originally made a bid will end by becoming the acceptor of a bid.

As in auction, a double reopens the bidding. No double can be made until a bid has been accepted; in other words, until a partnership has been formed. The player who has been doubled or his partner the acceptor of his bid are allowed to redouble. The remaining player at the table becomes the partner of the doubling player. If this player thinks the double will prove a failure or for some reason is not satisfied with the enforced partnership, he may in his turn make a higher bid, which if accepted renders the double void. If not accepted and there is no higher bid the double remains in force. As a matter of fact there is little doubling in pirate it being generally to one's best interests to endeavor to secure as partner one of the two players whom he might otherwise double.

When the preliminaries are finally settled and partnerships established the player to the left of the successful bidder leads to the first trick, unless this player happens to be the acceptor, when the player to his left becomes the leader. Thereupon the acceptor of the bid, who now becomes a dummy, places his cards, as in auction, face upwards upon the table and the declarer plays the two hands.

WHOLE TECHNIQUE DEVELOPED.

A decidedly original feature of the game is that your partner may be the player to your right, the one sitting opposite you, or the one to your left. Then instead of the two partners always playing alternately as in all other variants of whist, it will often

happen that the one will play directly after the other. To the dyed-in-the-wool whist player this would seem a decided objection to the game, tending to rob it of many of the finer points of whist play, as finesse, leading through strength, up to weakness etc. Here again, however, arguments are advanced to the contrary. Because of the varying positions of the players, these very plays, it is claimed, take on added interest, and, in the words of Mr. Crowley, "the whole technique of the play of the cards at once becomes a great deal more diversified, unexpected and subtle." Whether this is in reality so, time and a thorough knowledge only of the game will fully demonstrate.

Values are the same as in auction, save that there is a 50 point bonus for game and an additional 50 points for rubber. Individual scores are kept, special scorecards being used. Save for the rubber bonus, the acceptor gets the same score as the declarer, but his score, trick score and all, is recorded in the honor score, or above the line. For instance: The bidder makes good as "three no trumps." He holds three aces and the acceptor one. He therefore scores 30 points in his trick score and 90 (the sum of 40 for honours and 50 for game) in his honor score. The acceptor scores the entire 120 in his honor score.

It will thus be seen that the acceptor of a bid can not win the game and that, since the rubber game, which, by the way, one player only can win, should be the aim of all players, it is decidedly to one's advantage to become an accepted bidder rather than accept some other player's bid and then aid him in his effort toward winning the rubber.

This is but a brief outline of the game, but it will serve to give an idea of its origin and underlying principles.