



A VAUDEVILLE EMPRESS AND HER COURT—IN NEW YORK

HERE you see the twice-a-day Empress of North America—Nora Bayes by name—surrounded by her circle of valiant musical comedy mandarins and grand opera samurai, and by a noble retinue of Dillingham plum-blossoms, Selwyn Geisha girls, W. A. Brady lotus-petals, K. and E. night-blooming chrysanthemums, and Shubert kimono demonstrators. At first glance this looks a little like old-home week at Yantine's, but a closer inspection shows it to be a Chinese-Japanese garden-party, given by Her Imperial Highness, Nora Bayes, at her New York Winter Palace, on the corner of West End Avenue and Cherry Blossom Street. It was really a wonderful party! Chinese costumes, Oriental cooks, Chinese birds' nests, Japanese waiters, Shinto music, and Chinese chop suey. In fact, every blessed thing at the party was Mongolian—except the vintage champagne. It was probably the first fancy dress

festival ever held in New York at which the guests all remained ladies and gentlemen right up to the carriage calls. Among the honorable warriors, shown here, in the upper balcony, are: Jack Hazzard (the smiling figure in the centre, in the Ming dynasty dressing-gown), then Raymond Hitchcock, and then Signor de Segurolo—the samurai clasping the Brevoort House souvenir fan. In the central tier, or diamond horseshoe, we observe, reading from left to right—just as in the Piping Rock society pictures—Louise Dresser, Ethel Barrymore, H. I. H. Nora Bayes, Marjorie Wood, Louise Drew and Anna Fittiu. Occupying the informal orchestra seats are: Margaret Mayo, Rae Selwyn, Rozsika Dolly, Florence Nash, Yansci Dolly, Mary Nash (the beautiful young lotus petal who is here depicted in the act of holding her own hand), and Edgar Selwyn (in a pongee wrapper by Wana Maki).

## THE ORIGIN OF THE GAME OF PIRATE BRIDGE

By ALEISTER CROWLEY

THERE are six major drawbacks to Auction Bridge. Here they are: 1. Mismatched partners. You get a fiend for a partner and can't shake him off. 2. Mismatched hands. The two good heart hands never seem to come together. The good spade partners are opposed to each other, etc., etc. 3. The frequency with which bids are set. In actual practice only nine bids out of thirteen are successful at auction. 4. The fact that you are liable all through a rubber, for your partner's mistakes. 5. The bickering, fault-finding, nagging, and exhibitions of bad temper. 6. It is not a good game for the gambling type of player, as only two people can win—or lose—and they must always win or lose like amounts.

Last summer, during odd days, I worked at this sixfold problem—at the attempt to eliminate these six great drawbacks. I was alone, in camp, and had to puzzle it all out with three dummies before me,—but I worked hard at it, and suddenly the great idea dawned upon me: Choose your own partner!

Well, I developed that simple Great Idea and came to New York with the results of it. I went straight to the office of Vanity Fair, and, lo, great was my reward! The editor and I tried out a few hands at double dummy. He liked the game at once, and summoned to our

aid that noted authority on every game from Scat to Poker, Mr. R. F. Foster. Mr. Foster also liked the game, and has worked at the theory of it pretty steadily ever since. He has introduced it to certain of the leading card clubs, and has even crystallized my crude idea into a pamphlet of official rules.

Luckily for the readers of Vanity Fair, it will be he who is to explain, month by month, to its card-loving subscribers the best way to combine pleasure with profit at Pirate Bridge. I must not encroach upon his province of scientific explanations, but I should like to point out six major advantages of the game of Pirate:

*First:* You can—if you are clever—avoid tying yourself up with a tedious or idiotic partner.

*Second:* The hands which will work best together tend to come together as partners.

*Third:* Fewer final bids are set back, thus shortening the duration—and bother—of every rubber.

*Fourth:* Every player is playing for himself. Four individual scores are kept, all independent.

*Fifth:* It does away with a lot of bickering and quarreling. You may feel inclined to blame some-

one for "accepting" you, when the hand goes wrong; but you are not tied to him for a rubber.

*Sixth:* It is a first-rate game for the man who fancies his own individual play, and has many of the best elements of poker.

LET me draw a picture! In auction, I bid a heart, but only with fear and trembling, because my partner may not have any hearts at all. In the new game of Pirate I can bid two hearts and feel more or less certain that either the man—no matter where he sits—with the hearts or the man with the aces and kings, is going to accept me as a partner and so save me from ignominy and ruin. After a bid has been accepted, and a partnership thus established, the next player can make a higher bid, when anybody can accept that bid and so establish a new partnership, and so on indefinitely.

But, more delightful than anything else, is the change in the actual play introduced by the fact that partners are not always playing across the table. One's dummy may be exposed across the table, or at one's immediate right or left. Finessing, and "leading through," become much more interesting and important when two partners are sitting next to each other. The whole technique of the play of the cards at once becomes a great deal more diversified, unexpected and subtle.

ON the opposite page will be found the first of a series of six informative articles by R. F. Foster, on "Pirate Bridge," the innovation which already promises to supersede the game of auction as now generally played.