

INDIAN BRIDGE WORLD: Quarterly.

Vol. P1. February 1941.



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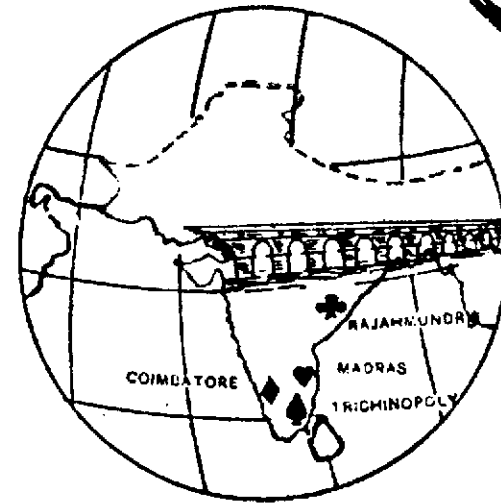
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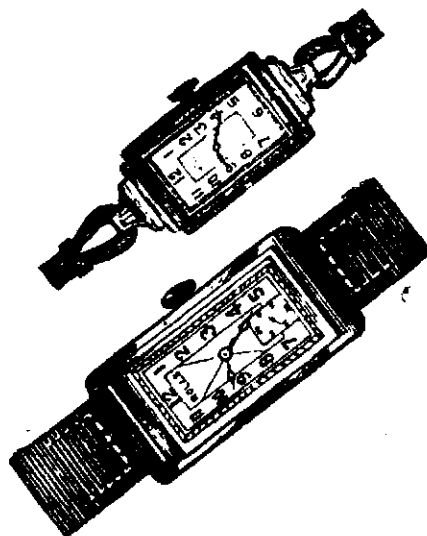
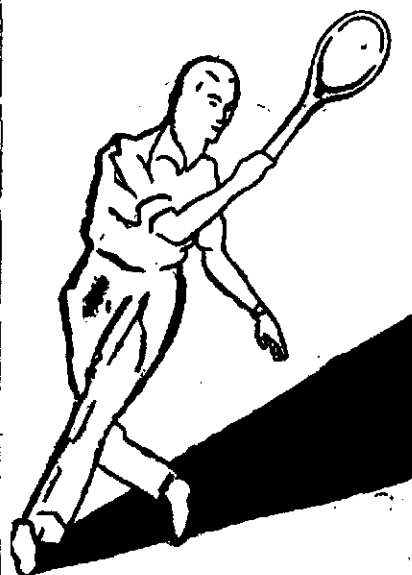


Vol. 2
Part I

February 1941
I Quarter

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THE INDIAN BRIDGE WORLD

(Formerly known as the Deccan Bridge Magazine)

(Being the Official Organ of the South Indian Bridge Association)

PUBLISHED EVERY QUARTER

VOL. II

FEBRUARY 1941

I QUARTER

PART I

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ANNUAL	RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION	SINGLE COPY
Rs. 2.- for Members of the Association (including the Assn. Subscription)	(Including Postage)	As. 8.- in India 10 d. elsewhere

Printed and Published by Rev. Fr. A. Susai Regis, Superintendent, St. Joseph's Industrial School Press, Cantt., Trichinopoly for the South Indian Bridge Association. **Central Office**, Madras United Club, Park Town, Madras. **Editorial Office**, The City Club, Trichinopoly. **Tournament Office**, The Cosmopolitan Club, Coimbatore. Reprinting of Contents in any form without permission is not allowed. Advertising rates may be had upon application to the Business Editor, City Club, Trichinopoly.

CONTENTS

FEBRUARY 1941—(I QUARTER)

BRIDGE RATIONALE: <i>By Dr. Musafar Karamchand</i> . . .	3
THE MATHEMATICS OF DUPLICATE: <i>By C. R. Srinivasan</i> . . .	7
PLAN YOUR PLAY: <i>By S. Rajam Ayyar</i>	10
I CUT IN TOO!: <i>By An apprentice of Devakotta</i>	14
SOME INTERESTING DEALS FROM THE CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL: <i>By M. S. Krishnasami</i>	16
THE LIBRA SYSTEM: <i>By T. Essex</i>	20
FROM THE EDITORIAL CHAIR:	24
TODDLERS' CORNER.	26
WHAT'S IN A NAME?: <i>By J. S. A. Raju</i>	28
READERS' FORUM.	29
NEWS AND NOTES	33
HOW DO YOU BID AND PLAY?	40
BOOK REVIEW	41
ANSWERS TO PROBLEMS.	44



The Editor's Committee do not necessarily agree with the views and remarks expressed by the contributors.—Ed.

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BRIDGE RATIONALE

By Dr. Musafar Karamchand

CONTRACT Bridge is the most fascinating card game so far invented by the ingenuity of man. The credit for it goes to an American, Harold S. Vanderbilt. The ever-changing combinations of cards, calling for a fresh approach to new problems, are at once a challenge and an artistic delight. They stir, lift, and vitalise the unsuspected latent instinct of challenge of even a prosaic, lackadaisical and humdrum individual. A new light bursts on his gaze and a new seeing is lent to him. The slow mooning person in him fades away, the pride of life kindles and lights up his drab world, and he is galvanised into a wakeful, alert, enfranchised entity.

The lowering of temperatures in our lives, to which we are periodically subject, is most effectively combated by the coruscations and scintillations of variegated cards, their harmonious blend of dissonances, and their infinite variety, redolent at one time of the horse play of Trinculo and Stephano, and at another of the dulcet softness of Miranda

and Ferdinand or the deep musings of Hamlet or the lightning flittings of Ariel. The moral worth of a man cannot be judged by a better touchstone than the laws and proprieties of Contract Bridge. His very soul is laid bare for your histological inspection.

Contract Bridge imparts an education which is of great civic and social value and implies a conduct which goes far to fashion a gentleman. Among other things, you learn alertness by pouncing on undercalls, calls out of turn, leads from the wrong hand, and revokes; firmness by enforcing penalties, even when the smiling transgressor happens to be a dulcet daughter of Eve built on the lines of Cleopatra; exactness by calling the true value of the hand in order to convey correct information to your partner; team work by ready quiescence when you receive no response from him; patience by passing times out of number when you are out of luck; sportsmanship by submitting to penalties with cheerful surrender; resignation and charity

by calmly looking on when your partner is murdering a hand; and docility by a mute surrender to the tart tongue or complaining looks of a long-suffering wife sick of the chronic late return of her husband from the club on the stock plea of the last rubber taking unconscionably long.

An average man cannot live all day with a living care on his shoulders. He might lubricate it with hard work and likewise by alcohol but Bridge among congenial companions offers the most effective antidote. Such men have not the remotest conception of the instructional aspect of Bridge and are only dimly aware of the existence of the rules and proprieties. The majority of players belong to this category. There is another type who, a victim of ravenous egotism and omnivorous vanity, has a high conceit of his personal prowess and mental repertoire and is tempted into the Bridge arena with bright visions of easy money from dunderheads. Luckily for the sound craftsman, every club has some such men of substance, who, in spite of a long array of academic degrees and striking success in their own line, abundantly lack card sense and inevitably assume the role

THE INDIAN BRIDGE WORLD

of paymasters of the local Bridge Stipendiaries! Then there is the proselytising monomaniac of a John the Baptist thundering anathemas and preparing the flock for the advent of the Bridge Messiah, Ely Culbertson! I have known players, prosperous burghers with Pickwickian kindness and equatorial rotundity, forgetting self-interest in instructional fervour and pointing out the mistakes of their chronic Bridge victims to the detriment of their own personal revenues. That silence is golden is of literal applicability here, but alas! science has not yet discovered an appliance for keeping a woman's or a Bridge pedant's tongue from wagging. Like the dog's tail, it has solved the problem of perpetual motion. As a matter of sober fact, these post-mortems do nobody any good. Verbal parsimony is infinitely preferable to public dragooning of heresy and ineptitude. Some critics mince, mouth, and chew their words throughout the evening and poison the atmosphere. Is it to be wondered at if the proverbial worm turns and treats his tormentor to a burst of scorching, blasting and withering vituperation! A good player should be as frugal of words as a modern young

FEBRUARY 1941

lady of fashion is of clothes, for discussion, which normally generates more heat than light, if allowed to strain coolness and congeniality, and will make good Bridge an utter impossibility.

Contract Bridge, if played with scrupulous attention to conventions, is a fool-proof game but human mind being an elusive quantity, it is not possible to discipline most players into a uniform system of bidding any more than it is possible to make mankind conform to any specific set of morals or manners. An undisciplined player runs off at a tangent and testifies to his genesis by making assinine or bovine calls. Wags characterise these indiscretions with the euphemistic sobriquet of research bids whereas matter-of-fact people use blistering terms to describe them. Prosaic pharisees accuse the loose bidders of chronic improvidence whereas it is their own firm conviction that confusion arises from the culpable indifference of snug mediocrities to the daringly coloristic creations of men of poetry and vision. Alas! for the rarity of connoisseurship, these inglorious, certainly not mute, Culbertsons would have found an early Bridge grave but for a liberal indemnification by the

suffrages of worthies similarly illustrious.

These lines are intended for the youthful lover of Bridge and not for archaeological fossils. Bridge youth has nothing whatsoever to do with physical youth. My esteemed friend, Ramasami Ayyangar, a man of great charm and polish, is definitely youthful from the Bridge standpoint as, in spite of his fifty years and more, he has a remarkably receptive mind open to every Bridge suggestion and experience. Even the drudgery of the soulless incometax appeals and assessments has not subdued the bright boy in him. On the contrary, a distressing divorce between Bridge and physical youth is plainly observable in another friend of mine, who, though a fresh recruit to the army of Bridge and not yet in his thirties, has already developed such a high conceit of his abilities, as to be proof against any improvement.

Bridge youth is quite different from physical youth just as card sense is quite different from intellectual brilliance. The Indian Civil Service is celebrated for its integrity, efficiency, initiative, and superb braininess. Yet I have met, and to my cost partnered, a number of Civilians who were drive'ling idiots at Bridge.

For several evenings, I played Bridge with a Senior Wrangler and pitied Providence for so badly divorcing card sense from mathematical eminence. Most professors are so infatuated with the superiority of their own brains that the saturation point in their Bridge career is soon reached and they early solidify into milch cows. Doctors make excellent company. They have a number of innocent tales to retail and some of them provide the humorous element at the table by being limits in absentmindedness. For instance, the brilliant surgeon, R. Venkata Rao, is physically present at the table and mentally busy thinking of his operations and patients. When a declarer, he would suddenly touch earth at the ninth trick and inquire of the dummy as to what the trumps were! Such persons are seldom guilty of touching others' pockets and ordinarily provide three opponents for their partner. Still they are the salt of the earth and I would much rather be a permanent partner of a delightful man like Dr. R. Venkata Rao than of a grumbling, growling, volcanic martinet that I myself am reputed to be. Generally speaking, lawyers are the best exponents of the game in our country. Some

of them, like my friend S. L. Prakasha Rao, combine great skill with an occasional disregard of caution and in a militant mood of defensive aggressiveness would go down 2,000 on a call of 4 hearts doubled but finish off the rubber with a loss of only 4 points. But they only offset players like my friend, Mr. A. N. Other, who, blissfully innocent of his impeccable solidity in the possession of 4 aces and a king would not double a 3 no-trumps call for fear of a suit bid by the opponents and the consequential loss of honours premium! He represents a microscopic minority of self-satisfied unimaginative men, who mulishly follow rules of their own manufacture and as unerringly as a compass to the north, or a Tamil Brahmin to a gazetted post, or a Scotchman to a bottle of whisky, do the right thing at the wrong moment. It is far easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for these Philistines to enter the kingdom of Culbertson. They could be easily managed at cricket on the divine line of the Justice umpire who, when appealed to for 'leg before wicket' against a political rival of his, shouted: "Out, the damned Congress man!" Alas! Bridge is far more moral than cricket.

THE MATHEMATICS OF DUPLICATE

By C. R. Srinivasan

THE crucial difference between rubber bridge and duplicate play is that at duplicate each deal is a separate entity and bears no relation to any previous or subsequent deals. The resultant effect is that the mathematics of scoring apply far more rigidly to duplicate than to rubber Bridge. Theoretically, of course, there is not much difference. The mathematics of rubber Bridge have all been carefully worked out—the exact value of the first game, the part score etc. have all been calculated. But all these calculations are based on probabilities, on luck evening itself out—as in the long run it must. We may know that if we keep on going down 300 to save the first game and 500 to save the rubber, we must show a profit in the long run, but this consoles us but little when we have done it too often in any particular rubber and still failed to win it.

Bidding at rubber Bridge is, and must be, influenced by something more than mere

mathematics. When the luck is dead against you, when you are playing with a weak partner against a strong opposition, it is obviously unsatisfactory to go on accepting penalties that in theory show an invisible profit. Similarly, if you are playing with a good partner against weak opponents it may be worth while to accept a penalty showing a theoretical loss in the hope that in the next deal your extra margin of skill will get it back with interest.

But at duplicate none of this applies. The mathematical values of each deal are rigidly fixed, and your only objective is to score more or lose less points than your opponents in the other room. Thus if opponents can make "4 spades vulnerable" scoring 620 points, it is worth your while to go down 3 doubled not vulnerable (500 points) to stop them. It is not worth your while to go 4 down doubled (700 points). There is no arguing with these figures. They are fixed and

immutable and govern every move that is made.

It is therefore, obvious that the first duty of a duplicate player is to familiarise himself with the mathematics of scoring. "The bids are measured with tricks but paid for in points. Points are therefore, the stakes for which he plays and the final intention of bidding strategy and methods."

The bid which, when compared with other possible bids around the table, is more likely to win the most points is the best final bid. If a contract of five diamonds can more probably be made than a contract of three no-trump, the former is the better bid. To risk a safe game in a minor suit for the sake of picking up a few extra points at a shaky no-trump is poor strategy, though a rather common failing. The reverse is also true; not to risk a loss of 100 points or so in order to shoot at the game worth five times as much, although in a less safe contract, is equally poor strategy.

The player first determines the best bid available in the combined hands, be it even a part score bid. His second step is to compare the points he expects to score at his

own bid with the estimated points for which he can penalise the opponents; or the points the opponents can score at their best bid as against the points for which they can penalise him. The best final bid, therefore, may range anywhere from a slam to a voluntary penalty, when by so doing the opponents are prevented from scoring more points at their own bid. In short, a player must know how much every bid, or every play that he makes, stands to gain or lose in figures. Only then can he calculate the odds on or against the success of any particular move and refrain from making that move unless the odds are on his side.

To take a simple example. You are not vulnerable and you have reached a contract of 3 spades. It seems to you that the game will depend upon a finesse—an even chance. Should you bid it?

Let us look at the mathematics of it, remembering that in Duplicate contest part scores are doubled.

If you bid 4S and make it, you score +420 points.

If you bid 4S and go one down, you score -50 points.

If you bid 3S and just make it, you score +180 points.

In other words, you are gambling 180+50 to get 420—very poor odds. Assume such a hand occurs twice in a match. You bid game both times and opponents in both cases stop with 3 spades. It is a fair assumption that you will make the contract once and fail once. You score 420 once and lose once scoring 370 on balance. The opponents score 210 and 180 or a total of 390, thereby gaining 20 points on the whole. It is, therefore, doubtful if it is advantageous to bid a non-vulnerable game on a finesse. In practice, however, one still bids a non-vulnerable game on a finesse because it is generally not possible to gauge a hand quite so accurately in advance and when the dummy goes down, there may be an alternative play or the defence may slip. But one should certainly not bid it on anything worse than an even chance.

The mathematics of a vulnerable game is totally different as it is worth about 600 points. The scoring of the last example worked out when vulnerable is as follows: 4 spades bid twice, once made and once 1 down your score = 620 minus 100 or +520. 3 spades bid twice, once made four and once three, by opponents. Their score = 210 plus 180 or +390. That yields a net profit of +130.

These calculations, however, do not include the possibility of being doubled in the game contract. If it seems to you that a double is likely, you do not bid either a vulnerable or a non-vulnerable game on anything less than even odds.

There are many other factors, apart from mathematics, that influence play at duplicate. Nevertheless, it is always to mathematics that a player must turn for his difficult decisions.

* * * * *

North: One spade.

South: Two clubs.

North: Two spades.

South: Three clubs.

North: Three spades.

South: Four clubs.

North: (Fed up) Seven no trumps. What will you do now?

PLAN YOUR PLAY

By S. Rajam Ayyar

YOU would not, of course, deny that it is necessary to pause, ponder and plan your play as soon as the dummy is laid down. But do you always do so? Is your thinking clear and your reasoning precise? Read these articles so as to get the habit and the instinct to *pause, ponder and plan* your play.

Hand No. 1.

North		South	
♠ A K J 10 8 5		♠ 9 7 4	
♥ A K 10 7 6		♥ 8	
♦ 7		♦ Q 10 9 8	
♣ A		♣ J 10 9 7 2	
N	E	S	W
2 ♠	Pass	2 N. T.	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	5 ♠	Pass
6 ♠	Double	Pass	Pass
Redouble	Pass	Pass	Pass

East leads Clubs 8, dummy covers it with Jack, West overtakes it with the Queen and declarer's Ace wins the trick. Can you fulfill the contract? You can, with proper planning and careful play. You can see that, even if Hearts should break 5-4-3-1, there are two losers, one in Diamond and one in Spades (East would not have doubled

without at least Queen to three in Spades). Now to plan the play: It is evident from the opening lead that East has not got Clubs K. South's Clubs 10 and 9 can catch Clubs K and also establish one winner. So to get to dummy, play Hearts Ace. East plays the duce and west follows with the Queen. The Queen cannot be lone; if so, East could have doubled Three Hearts bid. Anyway you hope that the Queen is not a singleton, as otherwise the contract cannot be made. All the same you play Spades Ace to draw the singleton trump West may have, to ensure only one trick set, should West possess a singleton Heart. West drops the 8. Play Hearts 6 and ruff with 7 in the dummy. West drops the Jack. Play Clubs 10. West covers with the King and you ruff (if not covered, discard the lone Diamond in your hand). Play Hearts 7 and ruff with Spades 9 in the dummy. Play Clubs 9 from the dummy and discard the losing Diamond. Even if East

should ruff it, he would get the only trick in trumps, which he would anyway get. If West did not cover Clubs 10 with K and you discarded the lone Diamond, you play Diamond instead of Clubs 9.

Hand No. 2.

North		South	
♠ K x		♠ A Q x x	
♥ 10 7 6		♥ Q 9 4	
♦ K 10 3		♦ A x x	
♣ A x x x x		♣ K x x	
N	E	S	W
X	X	1 C	1 H
2 C	Pass	2 N. T.	Pass
3 N. T.	Pass	Pass	Pass

West leads hearts 3. You take the trick with hearts 9. You can readily see that West has not got six hearts. He holds in all probability only five. He may have four and if so, there is nothing to worry about at all. You have to plan the play against West holding five hearts.

You can establish Clubs only after conceding one trick. Whoever may take that trick, East or West, four tricks in Hearts are immediately gathered and you are one trick set. You should, therefore, try to develop four tricks in Spades, or three tricks in either Clubs or diamonds. This could be achieved only by resorting to Squeeze play. You have no suit of your own to run

straight. So you solicit your opponent, West, to squeeze his partner, East, by leading hearts Queen. By the time the last heart is played, if East has four Spades or more, which is very likely, he is reduced to four cards in spades and four cards in both the minors. You discard one Club and one diamond and dummy discards two Clubs. Whichever suit West plays, Clubs or diamonds, you take the trick in your hand and play two rounds in the minor suit in which East has made two discards. You are then able to see that East has four spades and two cards in both the minors. If West plays Clubs and East had already discarded two Clubs and does not follow the first Club lead, it is evident that West has three Clubs, and two spades and three diamonds or *vice versa*. East after the second round of Clubs is reduced to four spades and two diamonds. Run three rounds of spades. East is reduced to one spade and two diamonds. If West does not follow the third Spade, he will be reduced to three diamonds or two diamonds and one Club. Dummy discards Clubs or diamonds as West discards diamonds or Clubs. If he follows the third Spade, dummy discards

the last club. The three diamonds in dummy are good. If West follows the first lead of clubs by West after two earlier discards in the same suit, play as above but discard a diamond from the dummy on the third round of Spades. If West leads from a suit in which East had made only one discard, take the trick in your hand and play two rounds in the other minor suit. The same count of cards you can get, and adjust the discard from dummy on the third round of the spades and play as above. If East should discard a spade on any one of the heart leads, you discard a spade as well. If West should then lead spades, you run three rounds of spades. You then hold two and three in the minor suits, likewise East. On the third spade, dummy discards from the suit in which you hold three cards. East cannot hold three cards in both the minors. If instead of spade, West leads one of the minor suits, you take the trick in your hand or in dummy as the suit is the one in which you hold a doubleton or three cards. Thereafter play as above. This play is adopted in the hope that East will not discard from a four-card spade suit, and it will fail only if East has false-

carded against your anticipation.

Hand No. 3

North	South
♠ A K 7 6	♠ Q 3
♥ A 10 3	♥ 7 5 4
♦ J 5 3	♦ A K 9
♣ K Q 10	♣ A J 9 7 3

Against a six No-trump contract by South, West opens hearts K. As North has hearts 10, West has led from K-Q-J sequence. You have eleven sure tricks. The saving trick can be had only by squeeze play, throw-in and finesse being out of question. Now to plan the squeeze play: At N plus 1 cards on the table, you should not have more than N minus 1 losers, N representing sure losers. If you play the tricks straight, you are left with sure losers after the tenth trick and, therefore, the squeeze mechanism will fail. You should concede one trick at the earliest opportunity, and the suit in which you can afford to lose a trick is hearts. Hence duck the first hearts lead. West follows with hearts queen. Dummy's ace takes the trick. The one unseen trick should be gleaned from either hearts, diamonds or spades. Hearts jack and four spades are busy cards with West, if West has four cards in spades; hearts jack and three diamonds, if

he has queen to three or 10 to three in diamonds. East's four spades, if he has four, and three diamonds, if he has queen to three or 10 to three, are his busy cards.

Play five rounds of clubs. West follows the third round and discards two spades on the 4th and 5th rounds. East discards two hearts and one diamond on the 3rd, 4th and 5th rounds. Dummy holds four spades, hearts 10 and diamond jack. East holds four spades and two diamonds. West holds hearts jack, one spade and four diamonds or two spades and three diamonds. Play three rounds of spades, discarding the last heart from your hand. East is reduced to one spade and two diamonds and West to two diamonds and hearts jack. The three diamonds in your hand are, therefore, good. If West does not discard any spade on the 4th and 5th rounds of clubs, it is evident that he has four spades. You, therefore, throw a spade on the 5th round of clubs, having discarded a diamond on the 4th round.

Play diamond ace and three rounds of spades. You have diamonds K and 9, having discarded a heart on the third round of spades. West is left with one spade and hearts jack. If West had shed either diamond queen or 10, you finesse diamonds in between K and 9. On the diamond ace, dummy should drop the jack. This is the crucial play in the game. Otherwise you cannot finesse with jack in the dummy. If East has held both diamond queen and 10 squeeze play will not avail. Only a double finesse will bring the contract home. The exact holding of spades and diamonds by East and West is purely a matter of conjecture. The probabilities would have it that the missing honor cards are evenly distributed.

Interchange hearts 10 and 4. Squeeze play will not avail. To frustrate squeeze position East should play a very careful game. He should reduce his holdings to the same number of cards in each suit as North retains. Otherwise squeeze will work itself out.

* * * * *

Dub: Are we vulnerable, partner?

Touchy Partner: You are—in the head

I CUT IN TOO!

By An apprentice of Devakotta

THE game of Bridge, I mean Contract Bridge, is an intoxicant to the beginner that inebriates so much as to cause sleepless and dreamy nights. The beautiful Clubs, the sparkling Diamonds, the sweet Hearts and the magnificent Spades (thank God, the No-trump has no symbol) all spin and sail before the mind's eye. Quite often does one behold a slam-hand and rouse himself and others with a shout of '7 No-trumps.' With time, however, the intoxicating element in Bridge wears off and thence it is a tonic.

Let me now narrate as to how and with what earnestness I learned that lovely game. The first two months saw me an eternal dummy, and no man's partner, sitting right through the 16 deals at some table, a duration of at least 2½ hours. I would choose a hero for the day and sit by him sharing or trying to share his grief and joy with the progress of the play; except on occasions when I would be subtly given the hint to leave his side on the superstitious ground that he

might get 'cards'. When in a different mood, 'cards' coming to him, I would be his mascot and beckoned closer to him. Poor man, he would forget he was playing 'duplicate', wherein the chances of luck were eliminated. But,—a moment—perhaps he was not at all foolish in having sought the aid of luck; for, I used to hear more often than not that it was either plus or minus at both tables.

So fascinating was this game to me that I would not mind getting my hero a pinch of snuff half-a-dozen times from the farthest table, not without acquiring the displeasure of the lender. At the end of every deal there would be the customary discussion, technically known as the postmortem and it was only then that I hoped to learn something of the game. My hero, whenever he was defeated in the contract, would begin, as is habitual with most of the players, 'the contract could not possibly have been made' I would listen with the utmost care and feel

satisfied at having learnt something. But the opponent would never leave the matter uncontested and my little knowledge would evaporate with his loud arguments. I would then sympathise with my hero, the vanquished both in the 'murder' and the 'postmortem'. Whenever the catastrophe of "cut-out" arose, my hero would coolly eliminate the chance of his being cut-out by asking me, nay, by ordering me to exercise my right of cutting as a member, though not as a player, and he was sure that I will be favoured with the beginner's luck. I usually happened to cut in; if my hero was cut-out, I would resign in his favour; and if he had cut-in, anybody among the unfortunates might take my chance. Alas, how easily I could earn the right of playing; and yet I could not exercise the right; I had not learnt the game.

In a short time, I had learnt most of the technical terms and a little of the fundamentals. I was a full-blown kibitzer and a budding player. At the end of two months, I thought I had learnt the game, but others had a different opinion. I realised that the others were right when I was some six-thousand and

odd points minus. It so happened that my inclusion that day could avert three from being cut-out. My inclusion having been suggested, I was saved from the threatening insult of being left out, by the rashness of a certain player condescending to take me as partner. There could never have been a more patient gentleman, a man who never abused me nor gave expression to his own foolishness in partnering me.

The above incident brought about an abrupt end to my hero-worship, but left me with a greater desire to learn the game. For a full week, I never visited the card tables to the relief of all the players. Reader, did you not think I had killed my desire to learn Bridge? No, I was learning it.

I have learnt it now. The first day of the next week, ignoring the stifled protests, I exercised my right and luckily cut-in (luckily, because I am no longer a beginner and luck ought to have forsaken me by now). A player of a forgiving nature partnered me and we opposed a very weak team. (Well, some day I would wreak my vengeance for this insult. Am I a beginner?). The very first deal was a test, a slam try. My partner Asked

(Contd. on page 28.)

SOME INTERESTING DEALS FROM THE CHRISTMAS CARNIVAL

By M. S. Krishnasami

QEDATE and restrained bidding was a noticeable feature of the final Progressive event in the Association's Christmas Carnival, at Madras. The monotony of un-enterprising bidding and play had been enlivened, of course, by a few instances of 'kite-flying' and a couple of 'psychic' bids. There were also some light opening bids and lighter overcalls. But following the tradition established in the "Sudder Gardens" last year, the bidding was, on the whole, quite conservative. In another direction, however, the Progressive Union School provided a very agreeable contrast to the Sudder Gardens and the players, who expected an all-night vigil, should have been very much surprised.

In the first deal of the evening, East-West could have opened their innings with a game contract in Hearts. But the score-sheets show that only six out of the thirteen East-West pairs reached game. Here is the deal:

		♠ 10, 9, 7, 5			
		♥ A, 9			
		♦ 5, 2			
		♣ K, Q, J, 8, 5			
♠ 4, 3	♥ K, Q, 10, 3, 2	N	♠ A, K, Q, 8, 6	♥ 7, 6, 5, 4	E
♦ A, 9, 8, 4	♣ 9, 3	W	♦ K, 3	♣ 7, 2	S
		♠ J, 2			
		♥ J, 8			
		♦ Q, J, 10, 7, 6			
		♣ A, 10, 6, 4			

Vulnerable—Neither side
Dealer—North

The bidding, according to me, ought to have proceeded thus:—

N	E	S	W
—	1 ♠	—	2 ♥
—	3 ♥	—	4 ♥

North has a poor hand to think of opening, and if East should immediately support West's Hearts, a game cannot be missed. It is rather surprising that many Norths have actually opened with 1 C on the holding, showing a bold front. The opening bid of North had anyway deterred many of their opponents from reaching a game contract. But three defensive tricks for North-South cannot be missed and yet our General Secretary, Mr. K. R. Sundaram was

allowed to make 11 tricks in Hearts by generous opponents and so secure a top in this deal. There were two instances of egoistic bidding, in each of which East went on rebidding his Spade suit to land himself in an ultimate contract of 3 S and 4 S respectively. 3 S was just made and 4 S was set one trick and a game gone—not West surely. 4 C by North was a good sacrifice (it was set only 2 tricks) made at one or two tables, but hardly justifiable. Three East-West pairs, who stopped at 3 H, have made only 9 tricks each (Is this not Contract?)

The second deal must have caused a good deal of worry to the players. Rather a weak fourth hand opening of 1 H and a final contract of 2 H or 3 H, if West should over-call with 2 S, is the utmost possibility.

		♠ A, Q, 5			
		♥ Q, 10, 9, 7, 6, 4			
		♦ Q, 5			
		♣ A, 3			
♠ K, J, 10, 7, 6	♥ J, 2	N	♠ 9, 2	♥ K, 3	E
♦ K, J, 10	♣ J, 5, 2	W	♦ A, 9, 6, 3	♣ K, 9, 8, 7, 4	S
		♠ 8, 4, 3			
		♥ A, 8, 5			
		♦ 8, 7, 4, 2			
		♣ Q, 10, 6			

Vulnerable—North-South
Dealer—East.

3 H by North could be made if declarer plans his play

properly. After a Spade call from West and the opening lead of S 9 from East to declarer's A-Q, he should see that he has to lose one trick in Spade, one at least in trumps and three in the minor suits. To make the contract, he has to establish the Club Queen, if possible before the Heart Ace is taken out and so provide for the discard of the losing Spade. Planned and played thus, the contract is safe.

5 out of 13 Wests seem to have thought that they had sufficient strength for opening 1 S. The importance of Honour values and count of playing tricks, so often stressed in these pages, does not seem to have deterred these optimists. In three tables the bidding died at 2 H, the Norths making 8 tricks in one and 10 in the other! I have given up trying to solve how 10 were made. Two others who had reached 3H, had obviously not planned their play (probably they were worried about the trump situation) and were set one trick. Messrs. K. Easwaran and partner of Madras, however, obliged their opponents and put them on top by bidding 4H and going down 1 trick doubled.

Easy to bid and make, was the seventh deal and 4S (or 4H) for North-South was a contract on ice.

		♠ A, Q, 8	
		♥ A, K, J, 9, 5	
		♦ 10, 5	
		♣ 7, 5, 3	
♠ J, 5	N	♠ 9, 6, 4	
♥ 6, 3, 2		♥ 10, 8, 7	
♦ A, Q, 8, 7,	W	♦ K, 9, 4	
♣ 9	E	♣ A, 10, 8, 4	
		♠ K, 10, 7, 3, 2	
		♥ Q, 4	
		♦ J	
		♣ K, Q, J, 6, 2	

Vulnerable—Both sides
Dealer—South

The bidding should have proceeded:

S	W	N	E
—	—	1 H	—
2 C	—	2 H	—
2 S	—	4 S	—

2C, instead of 1S, over partner's 1H is desirable as it reveals greater strength than a mere 'one over one' call. We find that on this deal two good pairs have sadly missed the boat. Mr. G. N. Jayaraman and partner of Gobi have stopped at three hearts, the fault chiefly resting with North who would not support partner's Spades and that too after partner had called both his suits. Holding two vital tops in Spades in his hands, how he expected his partner to go on bidding is a mystery. Mr. S. S. Vasan, of the other pair, opened with a psychic diamond. His partner called

THE INDIAN BRIDGE WORLD

1S and West promptly called Vasan's bluff with a 2D bid and Vasan's 2H was promptly dropped by his partner. Psychics do not always pay! Many Souths, here too, have opened with 1S and after this opening we can hardly blame Mr. A. K. Kumaraswami of Coimbatore for his 6S contract, which was 2 set. And he would have made it too but for a Club lead and return.

Deal 10 places the players in an intriguing situation.

		♠ J, 9	
		♥ A, Q	
		♦ 8, 6, 4	
		♣ Q, J, 9, 5, 4, 3	
♠ A, 10, 8, 5, 2	N	♠ K, Q, 7, 4	
♥ J, 5, 4		♥ 10, 9, 6	
♦ J, 7, 5	W	♦ K, 10, 9, 3	
♣ A, 7	E	♣ 10, 3	
		♠ 6, 3	
		♥ K, 8, 7, 3, 2	
		♦ A, Q, 2	
		♣ K, 8, 6	

Vulnerable—Both sides
Dealer—East

There is a game for North-South in 4H. A weak second hand opening and a defensive over-call in Spades by West and another raise in Spades by East make a game contract look too difficult and we could hardly blame any North-South for failing to reach game, on the generally poor holding. 4C or 4H could be made and many stopped with 3C and the Wests whose over-calls were allowed to stand have gone down. The rule of 2

and 3 (that you should be within two tricks of your contract when vulnerable and within three when not vulnerable) is very sound in its origin, and these defensive over-calls show that this rule is generally disregarded.

The sixteenth deal is an illustration of the old adage, "All that glitters is not gold".

		♠ —	
		♥ A, Q, 8, 5, 2	
		♦ 8, 7, 5	
		♣ Q, J, 9, 8, 2	
♠ K, Q, 10, 9,	N	♠ 8, 6	
♥ 4, 3, 2		♥ 10, 7, 4, 3	
♦ J, 9, 6	W	♦ 6, 4	
♣ 10, 2	E	♣ A, 10, 7,	
♣ 6	S	♣ 4, 3	
		♠ A, J, 7, 5	
		♥ K	
		♦ A, K, Q, J, 9, 3	
		♣ K, 3	

Vulnerable—East-West
Dealer—West

It is rather hard for most Souths to resist the temptation of a small slam in diamonds on this deal with such a glittering hand. A Club lead from West and an immediate return, however, makes six impossible. 5D or 5C is cold, but Dr. Shastri from Trichinopoly has gone 1 down on a 5D contract. It must have been rather difficult to manage! 9 out of 13 tables have gone 1 down on six diamonds and one lone egotist from Devakotta had, as North, reached six hearts to be 1 down also. Only two tables

stopped with 5D and made it, while in a third table 3NT was bid and 11 tricks were made. But neither of these got the deserved top because somebody somewhere was allowed to make 6D. Messers J. Subbuswami and partner were the culprits this time.

The next slam hand was in the 22nd deal.

		♠ J, 10, 6, 5, 3	
		♥ 10, 8, 2	
		♦ 9, 7	
		♣ J, 8, 5	
♠ A, 9, 7	N	♠ K, Q, 8	
♥ A, K, 6		♥ 9, 7, 5	
♦ K, 6, 5, 3	W	♦ A, 4	
♣ 9, 4, 2	E	♣ A, K, Q,	
		♠ 4, 2	
		♥ Q, J, 4, 3,	
		♦ Q, J, 10, 8, 2	
		♣ 7, 3	

Vulnerable—East-West
Dealer—East

A small slam in clubs or even No-trumps could be very easily reached, but with 4 honours in clubs, the slam in clubs is more profitable. 9 pairs bid the small slam all right while two stopped in 3 NT—and two others, Messers K. R. Sundararajan of Gobi and T. Sundararajan of Devakotta over-reached themselves to bid 7 C. There is no squeeze to be worked in the hand and the inevitable result followed. One of them seems to have thought that a *pseudo-squeeze* might be successful, but I should like to see him work it out in actual play.

THE LIBRA SYSTEM

(Contd. from the last issue)

By T. Essex

Opening bid of three hearts

THE final case of an opening bid of more than one is unique in the fact that it is at the high level of three. This bid is one of three hearts, giving the inference that the honour strength is 6 as well as the fact that the type of hand is of the unbalanced kind. The responses are logical. Even with less than a trick, the partner should bid 3 no-trumps, just to keep the bid alive, if his hand is balanced, but 3 spades if it is otherwise. With 1 honour trick the responses are 4 clubs with even distribution but 4 hearts if the distribution is uneven. This response points to small slam possibilities. Finally, if the rest of the honour tricks, viz. 2, are in the supporting hand, accounting for the whole 8 tricks normally possible, a grand slam is pretty certain to result in play. The responder should reply with 4 diamonds with suits equally divided and with 4 spades with the alternative distribution. The responses above

laid down may seem, at first blush, very puzzling. I am afraid that the reader may even say that, without a system of memory training, such as Mr. Pelman's, it would be a Herculean Task to memorise them all. He may even suspect me of being *non compos mentis*. But I assure him that I am quite all there. In a moment I shall show him that there is method in my madness. With one or two exceptions, the bids made always denote a precise strength of honour tricks. All that the responder has to do is to add up his tricks to those of his partner and make the proper response. To illustrate, 1 club always means $2\frac{1}{2}$ honour tricks in the opener's hand; one heart also shows $2\frac{1}{2}$ honour tricks, one diamond or one spade indicates $3\frac{1}{2}$. One no-trump shows a tenure of 4 quick tricks; so does a bid of 2 hearts. A 2 club or 2 spade opening discloses 5 honour tricks, two no-trumps in a response also indicates 5 honour tricks, except in some cases of a response to an

opening bid of 2 hearts, 2 clubs or 2 spades. It will be seen later in the chapter on freak hands, that 2 no-trump, as an opening bid, has a special significance. A 2 diamond, 3 club, or 3 heart response points to an honour holding of 6 tricks in the combined hands calling for a game. 3 diamonds or 3 spades, when bid, are little slam forces, accounting for 7 honour tricks in all; lastly, 4 clubs or 4 hearts beckon to a grand slam, as 8 quick tricks are there in the allies' hands. All this is easy to remember. Now let me deal with the few exceptions. The first two occur when a response is made to a bid of 1 diamond or 1 spade, responder holding $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 trick. In these two cases, the total honour strength may be either 4 or $4\frac{1}{2}$. This should not worry us in the least, as the extra half trick is the safety margin and should not be rounded off to the next higher integer. But it will be seen later that, when either player has not informed his partner of such extra half tricks, he can, and, in fact, must, bring it into the reckoning in arriving at the final contract. Illustrations of this will be seen in the comments on the bidding of the hands in Part II of this book.

The next exception is peculiar. This is not in the value of the bid but in the nature of the distribution. When opener bids 2 spades, and partner has less than 1 honour trick in support, he must nevertheless keep the bid alive. He must bid 2 no trumps, even if his distribution is uneven. This is an exception rather to the rule that the responder also shows balanced distribution by bids in clubs, diamonds, or as here, no-trumps.

The last exception or rather series of exceptions is in the unique case of an opening bid of 3 hearts, with an honour strength of 6. Here the responses have special values. 3 no-trumps means less than 1 trick in support. This is a bid to keep the auction alive. 3 spades, usually meaning 7 tricks in all, here means only 6; while 4 clubs or 4 hearts, usually denoting a combined holding of 8 tricks, here indicate only 7 of them; while responses of 4 diamonds and 4 spades in this case, show a total strength of 8 tricks, and are grand slam forces.

The case of an opening bid of 3 hearts (6 tricks with unbalanced distribution) is rare; statisticians tell us that the frequency of one hand holding as many as 6 to 8

honour tricks is only 2%, and it should not be difficult to make the proper inferences in this bidding situation.

To assist the reader in remembering some of the responses, I shall give one or two mnemonics. The heart bids are as follows:—

1 heart	...	2½
2 hearts	...	4
3 hearts	...	6
4 hearts	...	8

Omitting fractions, it will be seen that the tricks are the even numbers or multiples of 2. Coming to spades, we see that 1 spade means 3½, 2 spades 5, 3 spades 7. These are the odd numbers 3, 5, and 7, omitting fractions. In diamonds, 2 of them mean 6, 3 of them denote 7 and 4 of them 8,—6, 7, 8 in order of consecutive numbers. Similarly, 2 clubs and 3 clubs mean respectively 5 tricks and 6 of them, 3 diamonds or 3 spades mean 7 and point to little slam, while 4 clubs or 4 hearts point in the grand slam direction in all cases except in response to the 3 heart opening, as explained above. 1 no-trump always means 4 tricks and 2 no-trumps in response 5 of them, the latter with the exception of some cases of responses to a 2 heart opening. Two no-trumps as an opener shows a

freak hand with at least six hearts.

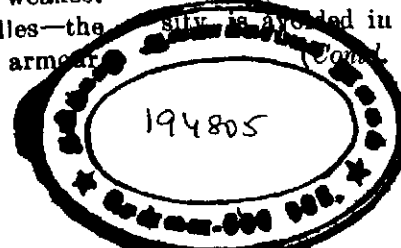
We have thus far dealt with cases where the dealer started the ball rolling and third in hand responded; or second in hand opened the bidding and his partner, fourth hand, made the responses, with no interfering bid in either case. In the next chapter we shall deal with situations where the opponent just after the opener has intervened with an overcall, or a double.

Interfering Bids

If dealer opened the bidding, or, if he passed, second or third in order did so, the hand next after the opener has various courses open to him according to the nature of the opening bid. At the outset, I may state, as a general principle, that, if the intervener's hand shows similar honour strength and parallel distribution to opener's he indicates this situation by a double. This is a simple rule and easily memorised and appeals to common sense. If, on the other hand, the butter-in has either honour strength or distribution different from the opener's, he makes the appropriate bid suitable to the strength held and the nature of the distribution, according to the table of responses. Let us, for a few

moments, try and distinguish the double mentioned a little while back from the so-called "informatory" doubles of existing systems. In a sense, our double may also be justly termed informatory, in that it informs the table that the doubler has a certain amount of honour strength and a particular type of hand-pattern. But here the resemblance ends. The present day informatory double may show strength of variable amount, but gives no information as to the distribution of the suits. The rule in this system is so framed as to conform to the fundamental idea underlying it, viz., that the bids in the first round should show fairly precisely the honour strength held as well as the nature of the distribution at one stroke. Taking a concrete instance from existing systems, the double of one of a suit may show a holding of 3 or more quick tricks, but not how many exactly; nor does it show anything of the hand-pattern. It generally shows support for suits other than the one doubled. Even here, there is an element of uncertainty. The doubler may have real strength in the suit he has doubled, or that may be his weakest suit—his heel of Achilles—the vulnerable chink in his armour.

This point can be settled only in the later bidding. The doubler may, later on, support his partner's suit, remembering, however, that partner was forced to bid it, or may switch to no-trumps or a different suit of his own or he may even overcall in the very suit he has previously doubled, this last showing that he is willing to play the hand in the adversary's suit. If such an overcall in a suit occurs immediately after the previous bid of the suit by the right hand opponent, it is again open to more than one interpretation. It may mean that the overcaller has no loser in that suit or has the Ace or void of that suit or even a singleton, (I have seen some Trichy players using such overcalls to indicate that they have strong support for partner's suit but not even third round control in the suit doubled), or it may be taken that that is also his best suit. If this kind of overcall in adversary's suit occurs after partner has bid another suit, it signifies an asking bid, inquiring of partner whether he holds first or second round control of that suit and any aces. All such vagueness, haziness, mistiness, or nebulousness is avoided in our system. (Contd. on page 27.)



THE NEW YEAR

There were two Bridge associations then in existence. Both were infantile bodies, buoyed up with the initial enthusiasm of their respective sponsors, and the possibilities of un-healthy rivalry between the two were a bet- cloud on the Bridge horizon. Fortunately, however, neither body had then developed any longstand- ing tradi- tions of its own to bar the way to unity.



In the place of two young Separatist bodies, struggling to find their feet, the amalgamation brought into existence one strong, all-embracing and authoritative Association. The results were immediately apparent. Our membership increased by leaps and bounds and we have now hoisted the fourth century in our membership board. Our financial position again is extraordinarily sound, for a body that has now been in existence for less than a year. Our Magazine has also taken a great part in raising the standard of the game in our area. And we are now firmly established as a premier Bridge journal. Our progress has further been strikingly apparent in the Championship tournaments that have concluded just now. From about 150 entries in the first Championship tournaments conducted by the then Deccan Bridge League, the entries jumped to nearly 300 in the last Championship tournaments,

25

If something has been done in 1940, very much more remains to be achieved in 1941. There are still hundreds of players and scores of clubs that are not on our membership list. The aims and objects of the Association can be realised only to the extent that all the Bridge players and, more particularly, the Bridge-playing clubs throughout the Province come into our fold. We want an intensive drive with a live-wire secretary of the Membership Committee to secure the necessary results in this direction. We want again valuable trophies to create a background of tradition to the various tournaments conducted and sponsored by us. We want, above all, the necessary endowments and donations to give us a permanent habitation, in keeping with the status of the game and the status of the membership, so as to ensure the permanence of our efforts. We further want very many more players and students of the game to actively lend their assistance to the magazine through contributing articles, news and suggestions. It is through the pooling together of different ideas that a substantial improvement can be effected in the standard of the game and new systems, best suited to the genius of our country, evolved. The conduct of the Championship tournaments leaves again a good deal to be desired. The addition of merely one more zone in 1940 was disappointing. The regrettable absence of a large number of zone-winners in the final rounds has to be avoided in the future either through adding an incentive to their presence or through adding a deterrent to their absence. The necessary arrangements not having been made in good time, the entire burden of running the tournaments had ultimately fallen on the Central Office, which appears to have been obliged to continue the hurriedly-drafted rules of 1939 with all their defects. The matches in the preliminary rounds had further to be rushed through in a manner that threw a great strain on most players. We hope that in future the division of labour and privilege conceived at the time of the amalgamation would be more effectively practised, and the tournament committee play their proper part, for the greater success of the various tournaments.

The year 1941 has opened well. The hearty co-operation and the active assistance of our members and subscribers are, however, necessary if the end of the year is to see the Association entrenched on still firmer ground and our magazine secure an even worthier place in the Bridge World.



TODDLERS' CORNER

Defenders' leads.

Your partner's suit.—If your partner had bid, lead the highest of his suit. If you have four or more therein, however, then lead the fourth best. Holding an unbid suit headed by A K, lead the King and then your partner's suit. Your partner will then know how to get back into your hand, when necessary.

Top card sequences.—Top card sequences ordinarily constitute the best lead. Holding A K x, lead King. But with A K only, lead Ace and then King. Your partner will then know that you can ruff the third round. Other good leadable sequences are three card sequences headed by an honour (K Q J, Q J 10, J 10 9 etc.) or two touching honours with a card one step lower down (K Q 10, Q J 9, or J 10 8). In all these cases, lead the top of the sequence.

Middle sequences.—Intermediate or middle sequences are sometimes good to lead from. These are A J 10 8, A 10 9 7, K J 10 9, K 10 9 2, Q 10 9 2 etc. In these combinations,

the highest card is disregarded and the top of the sequence is led.

Leading through strength. Lead through the strong suit in dummy, i.e. make dummy play second hand with its strong suits. In leading up to dummy, lead up to dummy's weakness, i.e. make declarer play second hand with his strong suits.

Singletons and doubletons.—Even in a suit bid, do not lead a singleton unless you have reasons to expect your partner to hold some top cards in that suit or to have an early stopper in trumps. Otherwise, your lead sets up the suit for the declarer and enables him to discard his losing cards therein. Never lead a doubleton unless you have even stronger reasons to think that your partner has got some top cards in that suit or a very early stopper in trumps. In most cases, it turns out to be a rotten lead. Never lead away from a singleton or doubleton, when you have a long string of trumps.

Some bad leads.—Top of nothing was considered a good lead. It is not. A fourth card in a suit where you hold a Q or a J 9 is even better. Never lead away from A Q, but wait for the suit to be led. Avoid leading away from a King, unless in a No-Trump contract, where you hope to establish the suit.

The worst lead.—Easily the worst lead that a defender can make is to lead a suit which declarer can trump in one hand and discard a losing card in the other.

Some good negative leads.—It is often advisable to make

declarer trump in his own hand. It is also generally good to lead to a positive trick in Dummy rather than open a new suit.

Keep your eyes open.—Keep your eyes open and watch your partner's discards. His unnatural discard of a high card, particularly if it is followed by a small card, indicates strength in the suit and asks you to continue the suit or play the suit at the earliest opportunity. His discards from the lowest card upwards indicate weakness and should discourage you from continuing or playing the suit.

THE LIBRA SYSTEM *(Continued from page 23.)*

If the intervener after the first bid has a balanced hand with 4 honour tricks, his natural bid is 1 no-trump. Players accustomed to existing systems of bidding should not mistake the significance of this no-trump. In these systems, a no-trump bid over a suit bid by opponents necessarily shows at least one stopper in such suit. In our system, in the first round of the bidding, there can be no such inference. As a matter of fact, the opener's bid in the first round shows only the bidder's honour strength and the nature of the division of the suits. No one is aware of the denomination of his best suit. No question, therefore, can possibly arise as to a stopper in the adverse suit, when the suit itself is unknown. The final contract to be arrived at by either set of adversaries

has not been determined yet, and can be so determined only in the second or later rounds of the bidding. One important caution is here needed. If a player bids a major suit and the opponent has similar strength but balanced distribution, he cannot double but must bid the same number of no-trumps as obviously, 1 club cannot overcall 1 heart, nor 1 diamond overcall 1 spade; as, further, 1 no-trump is not enough to overcall 2 hearts nor 2 clubs to overcall 2 spades. This last situation is very rare as it implies a total honour trick holding of 10 tricks by the table, a phenomenon occurring as infrequently as the apparitions of Halley's Comet. Such overcalls have a clear meaning and are not likely to mislead the partner.

WHAT'S IN A NAME!

By J. S. A. Raju

THE following bidding is an amusing example of Bridge phraseology prevalent in a certain Club in South India.

In a moffussil club, I had half-an-hour to while away and entered the Bridge room. There was a quiet table proceeding in the corner, and the players looked a serious and sedate lot. I thought I would watch the game and obtaining their permission, took a seat in a detached corner.

West had just dealt, and the bidding proceeded as follows:—

West : 1 Colonel.

North : Heart-ache

East : Redouble

South : Tarts

West : 2(hesitation) no bids

North : Three dies

East : No...double

South : Three Noes

West : Make them

North : Your look out, Partner.

East : Whose lead?

The entire taboo of conventional phraseology was startling. I could, with more imagination than intelligence, decode most of the calls. The opening bid of "One Colonel", however, was puzzling and I asked for elucidation. It appeared that there had been a Colonel, who frequented the tables a few years ago but was always an unlucky "No-bidder". The initial bid of "One Colonel" to indicate a no-bid owed its origin to his luckless career.

I left the table and descended hastily to the Billiard room and watched the game there. In Billiards, at least, one merely sees, and not hear, the game.

I CUT IN TOO!

(Contd. from page 15.)

me in Clubs with suppressed laughter waiting for my response to give full vent to his laughter and to give full advertisement to what he expected my response to be—a stupid one. He had to gulp down his laughter at my correct response and looked greatly surprised. A Grand slam was bid, though after considerable

hesitation, and duly made. The three pairs of surprised and inquiring eyes at my table and some more from adjacent tables seemed to add insult to injury. At the end of that deal, to save myself the task of explaining, I tossed over the table "Contract Bidding Made Easy" by Mr. A. M. R. David and kept mum.

READERS' FORUM

The Hospet Deal:

Here is the deal, played at Hospet, forwarded to us by Mr. S. M. K. Sastry, who wanted to know how a slam could be arrived at, with both sides vulnerable and with no intervening bid.

W (dealer)		E	
♠ xx	♥ A, Q, J, 10 x	♠ A x x x	♥ K
♦ K, Q, xx	♣ A 10	♦ A, J, x	♣ K, J, x x x

Mr. V. T. Subbiah Mudaliar writes as follows:—"The hands illustrated by Mr. S. M. K. Sastry in the November issue of the Indian Bridge world can be bid as follows, to arrive logically at a slam.

West	East
1 H	2 N. T.
3 D	4 D
4 S?	4 N. T.
6 D	Pass

West's opening bid is proper. East does not possess enough strength for a jump suit take-out or raise, but has much more than what is required for a simple take-out of 2 clubs. He has to prefer 2 No-trumps. West must visualise these and see whether by calling a second suit, East could be encouraged, and accordingly has to make a call of 3 diamonds. His cards warrant it. It is obvious to East that West does not like No-Trumps, but is prepared to go up on conditions and he has willy-nilly to make a call of 4 diamonds. West now sees two losers in spades, one in clubs, and possibly one in hearts and one in diamonds. He starts exploring with an Asking bid of 4 spades, which gets a response of 4 No-trumps. There is still, for West, one loser in clubs, one in spades and possibly one in hearts. West starts thinking; East's original 2 No-trump response

could not have been made on the Aces of spades and diamonds only; all Kings but that of diamonds have to be accounted for; East must have one of these, and very possibly two, and if the latter 6 diamonds is cold. He accordingly bids 6 diamonds at a slight risk; but when was slam bid without risks? The question may be asked whether players analyse their hands and bidding so thoroughly. I dare not answer.

As it is, 7 hearts could be made if hearts and Clubs break evenly. There is only one method of bidding it. Snatch the partner's cards and have a good look, if others do not in the meanwhile think of the asylum for you!"

Mr. G. V. Sreekanta Iyer of Hospet writes as follows:—

I was the person who held East's hand and the bidding that actually took place is shown below:

West	East
1 H	2 C
2 D	2 S
3 H	3 N. T.

We made 6 N. T. and hence the question in the Magazine.

I suggest the following bidding with my explanation for the same:

West	East
1 H	2 C
2 H	2 S (Reverse by the responder showing 2½ Honours Tricks).
3 D(*)	3 N. T. (showing a fit in Diamonds)
4 H(@)	4 N. T.
5 N. T.	6 H or N. T.

(*) shows strength (@) Shows a strong rebiddable suit in Hearts, having only one loser in the suit.

Dr. T. V. S. Shastri writes as follows:—In order to reach a slam, the bidding in my opinion ought to proceed as follows:—

West	East
1 H	2 C
3 H	3 N. T.
4 D	4 N. T.
6 H	Pass.

The Editorial Committee has, by a close vote, decided that the correct bidding should be as follows:—

West	East
1 H	2 C
3 H	4 N. T.
5 N. T.	6 H

We can see that, in spite of the arguments advanced by Mr. Subbiah Mudaliar, 2 clubs is a more constructive bid than 2 No-trumps, particularly since the hand is an unbalanced one with a singleton, though in the declarer's suit. The next bid by West would necessarily be the key bid that decides the subsequent course of bidding. We would ourselves suggest 2 diamonds, that would immediately elicit a response of 4. N. T. and ultimately land the contract in 6 diamonds. We frankly confess that we do not see any sufficient strength in West's hand as a whole or in the particular suit (hearts) that would call for a jump rebid in hearts. But the Committee has decided that this bid is the correct one and the Committee cannot be wrong.

"A day's bag" recalled.

Mr. S. Rajam Iyer writes:—The readers may remember that in the following deal, Deal No. 7 under the caption "A day's bag" in the November Number, the writer has suggested how the Grand Slam could be reached.

North	South
♠ A K 9	♠ Q J 8 5
♥ 7 6 3	♥ A
♦ K Q J 9 7 6 3	♦ A 10 4
♣	♣ K J 8 7 5

THE INDIAN BRIDGE WORLD

South	West	North	East
1 C	Pass	2 D	Pass
3 D	Pass	4 H?	Pass
4 N. T.?	Pass	5 C?	Pass
5 N. T.?	Pass	7 D	

As observed by the Editor, 5 N. T. response disclosed clubs king, but the suit location of the two aces disclosed by the 4 N. T. bid has not been clarified. The two aces may be in heart and club, or heart and diamond or club and diamond with hearts king. So bidding 7 D after 5 N. T. response is at the best a daring gamble.

In my opinion, Grand Slam could be best reached by the following sequence of bids so as to be certain of the contract:—

South	West	North	East
1 C	Pass	2 D	Pass
2 S (1)*	Pass	3 D (2)*	Pass
4 D (3)*	Pass	4 H (4)*	Pass
4 NT (5)*	Pass	5 H (6)*	Pass
7 D			

(1)*:—After a forcing single jump suit take-out by the partner, declarer should show a second biddable suit, if he has one.

How valuable this bid is will be presently seen.

(2)*:—Shows a strong rebiddable suit (Note the suit is a minor).

(3)*:—Shows good trump support with the assurance that the game can be played in diamonds.

(4)*:—Asking bid.

(5)*:—Shows two aces and the second round control in the asked suit or two Aces, one of which is in the asked suit itself.

(6)*:—Repeat asking bid to clarify the 4 N. T. response. Shrewd logical inferences from the bidding situation and clear vision as to where you would be landed by the various alternative responses are needed. You can-

not bid 5 H as a matter of course, without reasoning out on the following lines. From the sequence of bidding, it is evident that partner has five clubs and four spades. I have ace and king in spades. So partner must have at least queen-jack to four. Partner has supported diamonds at the four-level, overstepping the three no-trump game contract. He should, therefore, have at least three cards in diamonds. He has, therefore, singleton heart, if not a void. Partner has either hearts ace and diamond ace, or hearts ace and clubs ace or clubs ace and diamond ace with second round control in hearts. If partner has the last set of cards, he signs off in 6 diamonds. I am not afraid to play the contract at 6 diamonds, the only loser being in hearts, as I know that this suit is singleton with partner. If partner should hold hearts ace and clubs ace, he will bid 6 clubs. I bid 6 diamonds, there being only one diamond loser; if he holds hearts ace and diamond king, he will bid 7 diamonds. I am all the time praying only for such a response. The 7 diamonds contract is lay-down since Partner's hearts ace is singleton. I need only one ruff in hearts and the third heart can be discarded on the fourth winning card in spades with partner. There are no other losers. Now you will realise the importance of the 2 S response to 2 D. It is twice blessed. It tells your partner for one thing that his spade loser can be taken care of by you; again that you have singleton heart—the two points on which your partner needs information to reach a grand slam contract and which could not be conveyed to him in any other way. Even a small slam could not logically be reached unless declarer can be told that you have singleton in heart."

Progressive or Regressive

"Leo" writes as follows:— "Contract is essentially a game of skill, though, in ordinary Rubber Bridge, the element of luck or chance, so far as the cards held are concerned, enters considerably into the scheme of things. Another factor, as Dr. Wade has pointed out, is that good cards tend to run mainly in one direction on certain days. This is, to a certain extent, balanced by the provision, in the rules for the Open Pairs Tourney that any side has the right to demand a cut for seats at the end of each rubber. I would go further and enact that, unless the players agree to stay where they are, their orientation should compulsorily change at the end of each rubber.

As regards Duplicate fours, this is admittedly a much fairer test of skill than the open pairs. Even here, the element of chance may be further eliminated in some ways. For example, each half of a team now plays only one half of the other. It is possible to so arrange matters that each half plays with both the halves of its opponents. Moreover, it is better that, in each round of a tournament, all the pairs of tables play the same deals.

Now I come to the Progressive pairs, which is the main subject of my remarks. Participants in this type of competition would, I dare say, have noticed many defects therein, which make it comparatively unpopular. In the first place, the element of chance preponderates. For instance, doubling and redoubling affect the result to a highly unfair degree, though the final contracts may be the same. Doubles and redoubles should not be prohibited though this is done in certain American tournaments. But there

should be a limit to the score on a particular deal. For example, some directors lay down that, when a less-than-slam contract is made, the maximum that can be scored is 1000 points, if declarer is vulnerable, and 800 if he is not so. Similarly, when such a contract is defeated, the limits are 900 and 600 according as defenders are vulnerable or otherwise. I would suggest that these limits may be observed in tournaments under the auspices of our Association. When a slam contract is either made or defeated, there is usually no limit; but even here I would suggest a suitable maximum score.

When a deal is thrown out, both pairs get bottom score for such deal as decided in our recent annual tournament. This works unfairly. Cautious players who do not consider the cards worth a bid should not get less credit than others who bid and are defeated. It would be fairer to give non-bidders scores between those who make a positive score and those who are defeated in their contract.

There are other features which make Progressive unpopular. Though there is a time limit and penalties are prescribed for exceeding it, these are not, as a matter of fact, enforced. The play becomes tedious to the nth degree. Some effective remedy for unconscionably slow player is indicated. It is advisable that all the tables should play the same Board at the same time. The bidding and results of a particular deal leak out somehow or other. I do not say that this happens wilfully, but the point is that it is impossible to obviate this. The suggestion I have made will set right matters. No doubt

it involves the provision of a much larger number of decks of cards but the advantage is well worth the expense.

There is no remedy against wilful over-bidding or doubling or re-doubling except the extreme one of ostracism. I regret to say that this form of ungentlemanly conduct is not quite absent from our tournaments. Directors are requested to carefully note the offenders and disqualify them from subsequent tournaments. My suggestions, if given effect to, will make the tournament more popular and really "Progressive" in another sense, and not "Regressive" as now."

Yes, there is still a good deal of improvement possible in the various contests. The idea of each pair in a team-of-four playing both the pairs of the opposing team, by turn, appears to be a very good one and would be well worth trying. The manner in which Progressive tournaments are conducted now-a-days can be improved upon in quite a number of directions. But no amount of "limits" can effectively shut out irresponsibility or collusion. A strict scrutiny of the results and stringent action would, in course of time, eliminate any undesirables. A preliminary round that would eliminate irresponsible and indifferent players would further render the results in the final round definitely more satisfactory. It is appalling that time limits are not yet strictly enforced in some tournaments. We are confident that with the gaining of greater experience, the Tournament Committee would take all the necessary acts to render the various tournaments agreeable to the participants and at the same time more satisfactory in the results that they yield.

NEWS AND NOTES

The World Bridge Olympic 1941.

It is time that organisers in the various centres think about writing to America. We feel bound to send out this S. O. S. so that dormant directors may be roused to activity. The usual Trichinopoly director missed the boat last year (1940) and so deprived many enthusiasts in the Southern districts from enjoying the event.

We may inform the uninitiated that this is an event organised in New York, the Mecca of Bridge fans. 16 prepared deals are to be played at various centres all over the world on a given day and at a given time and the results are submitted to the American organisers for adjudication. Pairs are fixed by them beforehand and the pairs who secure the maximum pairs in each country are presented with handsome cups and the highest scorers in each centre small mementoes. The educative value of this event cannot be adequately stressed and it is not without its humorous aspect as well. Some who think that they have reached the pinnacle of Bridge learning will get a shock when the results are announced. It is, on the whole, an event too important to be missed. Look out, Madras! South India is a vast country and must be able to secure a large number of centres. For particulars, write at once by air mail to: The World Bridge Olympic Committee, Park Central Hotel, New York, U. S. A.

The 1933 Club, Kumbakonam.

As part of the Club Day celebrations of the above club, an invitation pairs progressive tournament in Contract was held on Sunday, the 23rd November 1940. After a sumptuous dinner, the event commenced at 2 P.M. with five tables. Most of the players being new to duplicate play, there was, of course, a good deal of excitement and interest. The ultimate winners were Messrs. S. Y. Krishnaswami, I.C.S. and M. S. Sivaraman, I.C.S. (North-South) and Mrs. and Dr. Jothipandyan of Tanjore (East-West). Many district and local officials took part. Mr. A. M. R. David, who played the unusual role of a tournament director, spoke a few words on Bridge and distributed the prizes to the winners, after the portraits of Mr. S. Y. Krishnaswami and his own were unveiled. A fine music party in the night served to soothe the frayed nerves of the participants in the tournament.

A Devakotta event.

To introduce Mr. J. S. A. Raju, Incometax Officer, Karaikudi, to progressive duplicate play, a progressive tournament was held by the Devakotta United Club on Sunday, 5th January 1941 with five tables. Messrs. C. Srinivasan and A. Sundararajan (East-West) and Messrs M. G. Subramania Iyer and M. D. Parthasarathy (North-South) were the winners. Mr. Raju presented handsome prizes to the successful pairs.

The last Christmas Carnival.

To a great extent, the championship tournaments this year followed the precedent set up by the former Deccan Bridge League at Trichinopoly in 1939. The idea of qualifying rounds at various zone centres (so convenient to players and so rich in the possibility of discovering latent talent in the districts), was further extended this year. But one cannot help feeling that the addition of but one new centre this year, Calicut, in-adequately expresses the growing popularity of Contract Bridge. It was also disappointing that after playing the zone matches, the eligible players from Calicut and some from Madura and Trichinopoly were unable to take part in the final rounds at Madras.

The Madras Zone:—This zone, which sent such a poor quota in 1939, rose to the occasion this year and produced a large number of entries. 19 teams-of-four, 34 pairs in 17 tables for the Pairs Progressive and 49 teams for the Open Pairs, is a record of which any zone may be proud. When the entries are on such a large scale, who bothers about the quality! Here are the results:—

<i>Team-of-four :</i>	Winners :	The Thyagarayanagar Social Club.
	Runners-up :	Mr. B. Lakkappa Rai's team.
<i>Open Pairs :</i>	Winners :	Messrs Sadāsiva Rao & Krishna- swami (Vellore)
	Runners-up :	Messrs Gokuldas and Damodaran (Madras)
<i>Pairs Progressive :</i>	Winners :	Messrs M. K. Srinivasan and A. K. Thirumalai (North-South)
		Messrs A. Narasimha Iyer and Palaniappa Chettiar (East-West)

The Coimbatore Zone: 10 teams-of-four, 22 pairs and 23 pairs for the Progressive and Open pairs events respectively are not bad for a moffusil centre. But, even so, we are not satisfied. This centre can certainly better this record, for there is unlimited talent available. We have not, till the time of going to the press, been favoured with a detailed account of the games in this zone and only the results are available.

<i>Team-of-four :</i>	Winners :	The Gobi reading room.
	Runners up :	The Coimbatore Cosmopolitan Club 'B'
<i>Open Pairs :</i>	Winners :	Messrs V. S. Sankaran and C. Krishnaswami
	Runners up :	Messrs Rajam Iyer and Varada- rajan (Tiruppur)
<i>Pairs Progressive :</i>	Winners :	Mrs. Narasaiyah and Mr. Lakshmi- rasimhalu (North-South)
		Messrs Rajam Iyer and Varada- rajan (Tiruppur) (East-West).

The Trichinopoly Zone: Trichinopoly produced only a modest number of entries, viz. 8 for the team-of-four, 18 Progressive and 15 Open pairs. Excepting for a contingent from Ariyalur led by Mr. R. Ganapathi Iyer, there were no out-station participants in this zone. But the usual players were all there, including our Business Editor, who, though ill, played his Open Pairs finals in bed and gave up only at the end of 10 deals. The events proceeded in a methodical manner as was only to be expected with a person of energy and experience like Mr. S. V. Narayanan, as the Zone Secretary. The successful players were:—

<i>Team-of-four :</i>	Winners :	The Trichinopoly Union Club
	Runners up :	Mr. V. Subramanian's team.
<i>Open Pairs :</i>	Winners :	Messrs K. Rajagopalachari and Arunachalam Chettiar
	Runners up :	Arcot House 'C'
<i>Pairs Progressive :</i>	Winners :	Messrs Mylappan and Sahadevan (North-South)
		Arcot House 'A' (East-West)

The Madura Zone: Two from Srivilliputtur, two from Devakotta, one from Tinnevely and one from Madura were the six teams for the team-of-four event. Madura, the second biggest city in the province, could produce only one team! What is wrong, we wonder!! This is, anyway, better than last year when we had only two entries. There were 12 teams for the Open Pairs and 14 for the Progressive. Madura Zone is progressing. The arrangements left in the hands of Dr. N. Rajagopalan, Health Officer, Madura, by Mrs. Coorey, who unfortunately happened to be ill, were excellent and there was an 'at home' feeling in the minds of every one of the guests, many of whom were taking part in a tournament of this kind for the first time. The events were played in very good atmosphere and only in the Pairs Progressive event was the want of a non-playing tournament director keenly felt. 9 P.M. to 2 A.M. in the night and that after a heavy dinner is not conducive to bright bridge, and even without whiskies there were some 'Devil may

care' bids. The "infants" from Srivilliputhur did well for a start and the proverbial luck of Mr. A. Srinivasachariar stood him in good stead here also, the deal where he bid 7 no-trumps to go 13 down (!!!) having had to to be scrapped. Here are the results:

<i>Team-of-four :</i>	Winners :	The Devakotta United Club
	Runners up :	Mr. M. S. Krishnaswami's team (Devakotta)
<i>Open Pairs :</i>	Winners :	Messers M. S. Krishnaswami and C. Srinivasan
	Runners up :	Dr. N. Rajagopalan and Mr. P. Thiagarajan
<i>Pairs Progressive :</i>	Winners :	Sir P. T. Rajan and Mr. S. Kuttalingam Pillai (North—South)
		Dr. M. S. Krishnaswami and Mr. C. Srinivasan (East—West)

The Calicut Zone: In this new zone, there were just 4 entries for the team-of-four event and 8 pairs for the Pairs Progressive. The players probably did not think it worth-while to compete in the open pairs, since the results therein would be largely dependant on the run of cards and very little on skill (and quite right too!).

Team-of-four : Winners : Chalapuram ' A '
Runners-up : The Calicut Cosmopolitan Club.
Pairs Progressive : Winners : Mr. N. K. Kalyanaraman and Rev.
A. B. Das (North-South)
Dr. T. C. John and C. V. Narayana-
swami (East-West)

The Finals at Madras (By J. Subbusami)

The typists were busy; the Association stationery was blackened with ink; the zone secretaries worked hard; and the general secretary was frantic with anxiety. Nevertheless, the final rounds could not be started on the 28th of December as scheduled; and the whole tournament had to be pushed off to a day later. The delay of even a day in one zone cannot but cause some inconvenience to the rest of the players who had already arrived at Madras, and the General Secretary and such of the Tournament committee members who happened to be there had to put on their best smile, and pour oil (or shall we say Coffee!) on the troubled waters.

Though starting a day late, the tournament rounds were played correctly and according to the revised schedule. One or two of the canny players, who had quite an 'experience' at the "Suddar Gardens" last Easter, had made elaborate arrangements for staying the night at

the Progressive Union School on the 29th December for the Progressive Pairs event, including a cot, night-cap and hot-water bottle. But they were disappointed. The seven-minute playing time was rigidly enforced, all discussions and talking were politely checked and the 26 deals were finished in three hours. And the wise ones did not know what to do with themselves for the rest of the night!

The tournament atmosphere was there right enough. The over-worked tournament staff were rushing about carrying duplicate boards and score-sheets and trying their best not to collide with each other. But many familiar faces were missing. The zone rounds this year were probably full of 'upsets', to borrow an expression from the turf. The Arcot House was not there; Mr. Srinivasan and his merry men were absent; and even Dr. Sastri, with rare humour, was heard to remark that, as the pair above him in rank was unable to come, his committee had nominated him to represent the Zone in the Pairs Progressive!

The team-of-four from Devakottah showed fine team work and opportunism which stood them in good stead. Playing against the Gobi team, it was only their wisdom in the selection of a suit containing four honours, in two vital part-score deals which pulled them through. This ought to bring to the forefront the question whether 'Honour premium-points' should not be disregarded in the computation of match points, even though they may swell the aggregate score. In the final match, Devakottah met Sri S. S. Vasan's team, which could not pass beyond the semi-finals in the zone matches this year. While at one table the Devakottah captain and M. N. Krishnamurthy showed good form and made a 'grand slam' in Diamonds, and thus made amends for one or two missed game contracts, Vedantam and Soundararajan sat and held the bridge for 6 hours against Sris. Vasan and Ramasamy who were playing N-S, when the cards were running in that direction, and saw to it that the lead was only 600 points in favour of the Madras team. One can only stand back and say, 'well done, Devakottah'.

The Individual Championship run on the night of the 30th was remarkable in many ways. Thanks to the Central tournament Committee not sending detailed instructions nor the progression slips for this event, there was, at one time, even an uncertainty as to the holding of this event itself. Sris. Rajam Iyer, Varadarajan and Doraiswamy wrestled with this problem of progression of players for nearly three hours in the office-room, and still could see no light. A kind providence placed the 'Blue Book' of Thorne's in their hands, and after a further toil of two hours a system was worked out for 32 players. The tournament secretary then

commandeered all the players available, and the event started. As there was no time for giving progression slips to each player, it was decided to read out the respective new places to the players at the end of each deal. The result was very amusing. As many did not understand the system and had not the patience to wait for and obey instructions, each progression resembled a tea-fight and a 'musical-chairs' rolled into one. The tournament staff apart from moving trays, were kept busy with settling nice points such as who ran to the chair first, and escorting 'lost souls,' wandering forlornly about the hall, to their proper seats.

One or two of the players, who had been 'pressed' into this event, re-acted by taking vengeance on their partners. They sat with the snifle of a siren and when the new partner remarked 'I have been doing well so far' smiled balefully, and lured him on to his destruction. The air was full of the anguished cries of such sheep led to the slaughter.

The results, in general, show not only that the game is growing in popularity, but also that Madras, for a comparatively young centre, is coming up rapidly. The Runners-up in the team-of-four, the E. W. Champions in Progressive Pairs, the Runners-up in Open Pairs, and the Champion and runner-up in the Individual contest, is not a bad show at all.

The grateful thanks of the Association are due to Sri S. S. Vasan for his Challenge Cup for the best N—S. pair, and to Sri M. K. Srinivasan for his kind permission in allowing the 'Sri-Krishna Cup' to be presented to the best E—W. pair.

The Championships concluded on the 31st afternoon with a pleasant 'tea' given by Sri S. S. Vasan to the competitors and guests. Dr. Sir K. V. Reddi Nayudu Garu presided and kindly gave away the prizes, after a humorous speech on the advantages of healthy mental relaxation. Sir P. T. Rajan proposed the thanks to the tournament officials. Mr. J. A. Pinto proposed the thanks to the President.

The Champions for the Year

Team-of-four: (Sir T. Sadasivier Challenge Cup)
The Devakotta United Club, represented by Messers T. Sundararajan, M. N. Krishnamoorthy, T. Vedantam and T.R. Sundararajan.

Open Pairs: (The Burke-Johnson Shield)
Messers K. R. Sundararajan, and A. R. Somasundaram of Gobichettipalayam.

Progressive Pairs: (S. S. Vasan Challenge Cup for North—South)
Messers J. G. Gnanadurai and Mylappan of Trichinopoly

(Srinivasan's Challenge Cup for East—West)
Messers Akkur Narasimbachariar and B. Lak-kappa Rai

Individual Championship: Mr. T. M. Kasturi of Madras.

An Example—Not a precept.

Our Association has secured one more life member in the person of Dr. T. V. S. Sastri of Trichinopoly, who writes that he has paid the life membership subscription from Bridge winnings, saying "let the money got from Bridge go to strengthen the Bridge Association." We hope that this example will be followed by other Bridge enthusiasts, who play for stakes.

Master Solvers' Tournament

In the last issue, we referred to the "Master Solvers' Tournament" started by Mr. S. Rajam Iyer, Advocate Tirupur, our present problems Editor, under the heading "Tirupur Innovation." This tournament was initiated by Mr. Rajam Iyer in June 1940. The American Bridge World gives in each monthly number 8 problems in Contract Bridge. Copies of the problems are sent out to the competitors by post. Each competitor has simply to send his answers to the problems to Mr. Rajam Iyer by post on a post-card. (Copies of the answers received are lodged with the Secretary of the Tournament Committee of the Association at Coimbatore.) The correct answers are those given in the American Bridge World itself. The competitor who secures the highest number of credits for the seven months (June to December) will be awarded "The Master Solvers' Tournament Cup" under the auspices of the Association. Arrangements will be made for the presentation of the Cup on the "World Bridge Olympic Day" at the centre nearest to the winner.

The tournament will be conducted in 1941 also on the same lines. It is very educative in bidding and we do hope that there will be more entrants this year. All Bridge players, who are members of the Association, can compete in this tournament from any place. An entrance fee of 1-8-0 is payable for the year 1941 along with the answers for January problems merely to cover postage and printing or typing charges. Competitors from the same place may form into groups and indent for only one copy of the problems; in such cases the entrance fee is payable only per group and not individually. Competitors should answer the problems for all the twelve months. Competitor or competitors securing 65% or more credits will be awarded special Cups. All intending competitors are requested to write to Mr. S. Rajam Iyer before the end of February for copies of January problems since the January number of the American Bridge World is expected in India in the last week of February.

HOW DO YOU BID AND PLAY?

(For Answers see Page 43.)

(A) The bidding has proceeded:—

North	East	South	West
2 ♠	Pass	2 N.T.	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	?	

You, South, hold:

♠ 9 3, ♥ J 9 7 5 3, ♦ 7 6 5 4, ♣ Q 3.

What do you bid?

(B) The bidding has proceeded:—

North	East	South	West
1 ♠	Pass	1 N.T.	Pass
?			

You, North, hold:

♠ K 10 8 7, ♥ Q 10 8 7, ♦ A K 8,
♣ A K.

What do you bid?

(C) Both sides vulnerable and the bidding has proceeded:—

North	East	South	West
1 ♠	?		

You, East, hold:

♠ A J 10 8, ♥ Q 3, ♦ A 10 3,
♣ K 8 3 2.

What do you bid?

(D) North-South not vulnerable and not on score, East-West vulnerable and 60 on score. The bidding has proceeded:—

North	East	South	West
1 ♠	2 ♥	?	

You, South, hold:

♠ J 3 2, ♥ K 10 9 7, ♦ J 8 5, ♣ K Q 7.

What do you bid?

(E) The bidding has proceeded:—

North	South
1 ♠	?

You, South, hold:

♠ 7 5 3 2, ♥ A J 2, ♦ A 3 2, ♣ A 4 2.

What do you bid?

(F) As against Four-Spades contract by South, West leads trump. Here are the two hands. What would you immediately play and why?

North	South
♠ A 8 6 5 4	♠ K Q 8 7
♥ K 7	♥ A 6 5 4
♦ J 6 5	♦ A 3
♣ Q 5 3	♣ J 7 6

(G) In problem (F) substitute 10 and 9 for 5 and 4 of Hearts with South. What would you immediately play and why?

(H) As against Seven No-Trump contract by South, West leads Hearts 2. Here are the two hands. East plays the 9 and you take with the Ace. In what sequence would you play the suits and why? For what distribution with East and West will the contract fail?

North	South
♠ A K Q 10	♠ J 7 6
♥ K Q 7 6	♥ A 5
♦ A 7 6	♦ K Q 8 5
♣ R 7	♣ A 8 6 5

BOOK REVIEW

"The Strange lives of one man"

An autobiography by Ely Culbertson. (Faber and Faber Ltd., 24, Russell Square, London) 15 S. Net.

THE book is well styled "The Strange lives of one man." It is full of thrilling interest to all who are not only interested in the great Bridge Expert but also to all who like to read a life full of adventures and romantic situations.

He begins with a beautiful picture of Cossack life and their quaint customs and manners in Imperial Russia. His parent's romantic love story, the course of which, like all courses of true love, did not run smooth; his American father's Lochinwar-like abduction of his Cossack mother; his grand-father's Cossack ruggedness and his characteristic end; all give pictures of Cossack life which any lover of Romance would enjoy reading.

His coming into the world after the sad end of his two sisters and the survival of the brother Eugene and the consequent change in his mother's character are described well. The choice of his name, Ely—Ilya, the wise and strategically clever—has proved to be very apt. The Bridge simile regarding the hereditary influences on the formation of his character is a powerful depiction, best understood by Bridge players only. It "was not a prosaic 5. 3. 3. 2. nor a morbid 4. 4. 4. 1. but a powerful though unbalanced 7. 4. 1. 1.—", seven from his Scotch-American father, four from his Cossack mother and the one—one from the bizarre assemblage of ancestors he inherited.

The American father's keen observation of "mud on the boots" which reveals hidden oil-fields and his ability to make as much of it as possible, his first acquaintance with MURDER, his childhood's theft and the humiliation inflicted on him, had all, like tiny seeds sown on his plastic mind, grown into big trees later in life. Some more early impressions are aptly described as "Time-Bombs". During boyhood, the fact that greater demands were made of him acted as a goad, in his as on many other cases, to enable him to bring out the best in him and to fortify the pride pattern in his composition and chain him to the wheels of ambition.

The premature sex indiscretions, candidly revealed, may not be of any value, except perhaps to open the eyes of the Miss Mayo type of people to the fact that perhaps India is not the country with the worst customs in the world, and for the lesson learnt from the father never to reprove partners in cards or in life so long as he himself might have forestalled their errors. Physical love is vividly described as "A rainbow chain which starts in the depths of the soul, rings through the mysterious sinuosities of the mind, is vivified by the imagination and ends in the flesh." Through Nadya whom he loved, he was led to take

part in the Russian Revolution. Nadya's sudden end, the deliberate immolation of the early revolutionaries, the reactionary terrorism of the Black Hundred, the calm cool courage of Ureniev, the revolutionary leader and the failure of the first revolution all are romantic interest. His incarceration in a Russian jail and his association with Ureniev and others had a great influence on him and his escape from the cossack escort is proof of the strategy of Ely—Ilyusha!

The present world situation, which reminds us of the dreadful days of 1914, is vividly portrayed by his brief picture of Europe then—"No nation could retain possessions without inviting aggression from others, nor could it remain long indigent without planning aggression on others and there were at least one hundred million Europeans too many in this world." But though his brother Eugene took active part in the war, he did not. His adventures as a pretender cripple, as a hobo getting free rides on the footboards and underneath freight cars, his getting mixed up with the Russian and Mexican revolutions, his life as a super sophisticate in Paris, all form interesting reading to anyone. The Cataclysmic changes in Russia, startlingly revealed in the lives of his own relatives and especially his aunt Glafira whose life of luxury ended in her successful struggle to be elected as a member of the washerwoman's Guild, his long courtship, happy marriage and sad divorce are all vividly described.

The widely different and often conflicting impulses, pursuits and views, that go to make up a man's nature are quaintly described as a Board of Directors' meeting of the Seven Elys—In Corpore. The book is also full of wise observations, epigrammatic pronouncements and sprightly repartees. To mention a few examples, the following may be cited—"A woman dresses for the man she wishes to please and for the women she wishes to displease." "Perhaps all that really matters in life is to stage a show and make a graceful exit." When Mrs. Culbertson, once delighted with him, asked him "What does Ely, the husband want of me in return?" It was Ely, the Bridge enthusiast who replied "Two little players to make a team-of-four." And they are a team-of-four now!

The chapter on mass psychology is worth reading, especially the following observations in it. "The mass mind is made by many group leaders." "A single individual, however great, can accomplish but little; behind every great man there stands inevitably, a sect, a school, a class or an army." "Truthfulness and sincerity are essential qualities, since the mass mind is bent upon FEELING". The knowledge of mass mind psychology and the use he made of it proved of immense benefit in the building of his career.

And now let me go on to what our readers really want. His phenomenal Bridge career starts by his having had to take to cards as he had no other means of raising money. He took to Bridge with the full conviction that he could make it pay and he set about equipping himself to do it successfully. While he had his own theories in Bridge, the root cause of his success in the game was the scientific analysis of the mistakes he made in bidding and in play and his systematic elimination of repetition of the same.

How he met his favourite partner and wife, the humility with which he began to write about Bridge, for the brilliance of which the kudos went to others, and his subsequent blazing into an arrogant assurance

of his own team's ability to win tournaments and matches against renowned players form interesting reading and show his consummate skill in the art of securing popular esteem. The psychic—almost at times Superstitious—Nature, which he inherited from his cossack mother and the determination to succeed along steady and methodical ways, which was his father's legacy to him, made him not only to achieve success, but even to feel assured of it before he plunged in. His sanguine assurance of victory in the match with England on the eve of his departure from America was only equalled by his certainty of success of the Blue book. The feverish haste with which he had to rush about dictating that book, its phenomenal success, and the topsy-turvy method of its publication, since the publisher was paid a Royalty by the author, finally the Gold book are all books whose success as well as publication were thought out long before, along with the methods which would ensure success. How well the summaries of the books, whose popularity was predicted by the husband, but was made possible by the efforts of the wife, served to establish the Culbertson family in comfortable affluence is also a clear proof of the self-confidence with which he went about his march on the road to success.

Ely Culbertson himself attributes his success in Bridge to three ideas of his—idea of a system, idea of probabilities and idea of mass psychology. An analytical study of deals and plays and bids, after they were played, helped to guide his future play and eliminate the element of chance to the utmost possible limit. We cannot close this review of an interesting autobiography of the great Bridge Celebrity without quoting what he says about contract bridge. "Contract Bridge is an antidote for the poison of vicious gambling. It teaches youngsters the intellectual factor of skill and it develops their sense of probabilities, their powers of concentration and their sportsmanship."

Such is the amazing story of the life of the enigmatic figure of Ely Culbertson, who pyramided a pack of cards into a world-wide romance. His real story is outside Bridge, in jails in Russia and Mexico as a revolutionary, in the jungles of Canada and California as a hobo, in Spain as an anarchist and in Paris as a sophisticate. This story is then intertwined with the love story of an American girl Jo, who married Ely, their struggles in poverty and misery, their happiness and triumph and their final defeat in divorce. The name "*Strange lives of one man*" is indeed apt!

T. V. S. SHASTRI.

* * * * *

Bridge Fiend.—"One club."

Waiter (rushing in hurriedly).—They have phoned that your aunt is dead, Sir.

B. F. (unperturbed)—Well, in the circumstances, "One Spade."

ANSWERS TO PROBLEMS (on page 40)

(A) **Four Hearts.** Your hand is better played in Spades rather than in No-Trumps. By bidding four hearts you definitely shut out the three No-Trump contract. Having already emphasised the weakness of the hand, you show, *En Passant*, a five card suit in hearts. Your partner with the knowledge that you have a five card length in hearts, but weak in values, may prefer either hearts or spades. If played in spades, you may possibly contribute two tricks. With two of the three top honors in hearts and a three card suit with your partner, the hands may be better played in hearts rather than in Spades.

(B) **Three Hearts.** Game should be reached with this hand. The question is whether the contract should be played in no-trumps or in one or the other of the major suits. The three-no-trump is ever available to you. Over three hearts, if partner bids three no-trumps, you pass; if he bids three spades, you bid three No-Trumps; if he bids four hearts, you pass. Partner cannot support the second bid suit without four cards. Then the game is certainly better played in hearts.

(C) **Pass.** This is a tempting hand to bid one no-trump or to double. But the latter has the danger of eliciting a response in hearts from your

partner at the two level with a poor hand, in which case you will be helpless. Again, if your partner is weak, one No-Trump contract may be doubled by South to extract heavy penalty. Not only can your hand withstand an opening lead of hearts, but would also be squeezed out miserably to the point of reducing the trick taking values in the other suits. A waiting pass enables you to ascertain the relative strength of the hands before the bidding comes to you next. If the remaining about $2\frac{1}{2}$ honors are evenly distributed between South and West, South would keep the bidding alive. If he bids one No-Trump, your partner will certainly pass. Even if North should drop his partner's one No-Trump response, there is a 50% chance of setting the contract by one trick rather than your making one No-Trump with about 4 to $4\frac{1}{2}$ honors in your partnership hands. If South should make a strength showing bid at the two level, you will get a chance to double when they reach a higher level of bidding. If South passes, your partner would reopen the bidding with about two honor tricks; in which case, you can bid two No-Trumps or even Three. Should North interfere with the bidding after a positive bid by your partner, you can double for a handsome luc-

rative penalty. If both South and West pass the opening bid, North must have a very powerful hand, against which any bid of yours would be knived. On the other hand, even with such terrific strength, North is not likely to keep the contract with all the honor strength being massed in the two hands and yourself being below him. For any contingency, therefore, pass is the only prudent bid.

(D) **Double.** That West has a near bust or at best $\frac{1}{2}$ honor is patent from your holding and the bids by North and East. East can at the most have three honors, ace and queen of hearts, ace of clubs and diamond king. You may possibly make game in no-trump or spades, if North has added values. On the other hand, against the two hearts contract by the Opponents, you are sure of two tricks in hearts and two tricks in clubs; your partner will contribute at least three tricks, (two in spades and one in diamond or one in spade and two in diamonds), if not four or more. The penalty you extract is more profitable than a game to your side. If your partner has a minimum hand, game is rather problematical to your side; even then the opponents' contract can be set at least one trick, at all events, again to your advantage.

(E) **Two No-Trumps:** The natural desire to bid Two clubs

as a tentative or stalling bid should be suppressed. If your partner bids three clubs having a biddable suit himself or with good and sufficient support, taking your two clubs bid as normal, you will be in a quandry. You cannot safely bid three no-trumps, because your partner may have 5-4-3-1 distribution. If you bid three spades over three clubs, partner may raise to four even with 5-4-3-2 distribution. The hand will then be good for three no-trumps and not four spades, as the trick value of your hand with spades as Trumps is about three and a half only. Over partners, three spades, bid three no-trumps; pass three no-trump; bid three spades after any other suit bid. Hearts jack in your hand is the deciding card for the two no-trump bid. Substitute any lower ranking card, two clubs is the only possible response.

(F) **The trick should be taken by South and he should at once lead clubs 6 or 7.** You have one loser in diamond and, therefore, you should confine losers in clubs to two. If you lead clubs at any later stage of the game three tricks would be lost. But there is a chance of your winning a trick in club if you lead it immediately after you take the first trick. You lead clubs at the second trick from your hand in the hope of exploiting West's natural and well-founded fear, if he has the clubs king, that you lead from a doubleton headed by the

ace and that you try to steal two tricks if he does not cover with the king. East should not be given an opportunity to disclose that he holds clubs ace by suit-preference-signal-discard. Hence the necessity for leading clubs immediately, even without playing the second round of trumps. For aught you know, East may have singleton trump and on the second lead of trumps may give the signal you do not want.

(G) Play immediately hearts king and then ace to see if either of the opponents has queen-jack to three. If so, you ruff the third heart in dummy and your fourth heart is good for discarding one loser in clubs from dummy. In problem (F) you had no chance of developing the fourth heart for a winner, as in this case. If the queen or jack does not drop on the second lead of hearts, you then resort to club lead, as in problem (F).

(H) You run the four spades to see what discards are made by one or both of the opponents. You then play three rounds of diamonds. If it breaks, you lay down the hand; if not you play hearts king. Now the hands are reduced to four cards. You see from the hearts lead

by west that he has four cards in that suit. If East has four diamonds, at the end of the ninth trick, he is reduced to three clubs and one diamond. West is reduced to two hearts and two clubs. On your play of hearts queen for the tenth trick, East should discard either diamonds or clubs. If he discards diamonds, you discard a club; and vice versa. West must necessarily discard club, because he has to retain hearts, which if discarded, would develop dummy's last heart to a master card. The rest is easily run. If it is known, as the third round of diamonds would reveal, that West has four diamonds as well as 4 hearts, the contract cannot be fulfilled. This is the only distribution that will defeat the contract. In this case, East retains three clubs and West one card in each of the three suits, clubs, diamonds and hearts. Dummy is left with clubs King and 7 and hearts 7. You may play clubs king and follow with the second club. On the second club, West discards the last heart. If you play clubs 7 from dummy taking it with the ace and repeat another club, West discards the last diamond on the second club.

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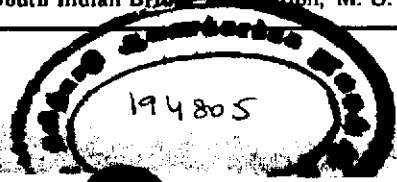
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