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AUCTION BRIDGE ANALYZED

BY WYNNE FERGUSON.

Author of the Authoritative Book: "Auction Bridge for 1924."

WHEN SHOULD DEALER'S PARTNER TAKE OUR LATTER'S NO TRUMP BID? WYNNE FERGUSON ANSWERS THIS QUESTION IN TO-DAY'S ARTICLE.

There is still one point in auction that is undecided, one on which the experts disagree and that is: When should the partner of the dealer take out the latter's no trump bid with a bid of two hearts or two spades? As one of my fellow authors has said: "It is the thorniest question of latter day bidding." Every writer on the game seems to have a different opinion so that it is not surprising that the average player has difficulty in deciding what to do in this situation.

The writer has frequently stated that in his opinion, partner should take out freely with any five card heart or spade suit. Of course with any greater strength, the take out is obligatory; for example, with six or more hearts or spades, all writers agree that a take out is obligatory.

If players, however, agree with one another to take out with any five card major suit, they will seldom come to grief. If the original no trump bidder cannot help the major suit bid, he should either bid two no trump or show his own suit, if he has one; otherwise, he should pass and let his partner struggle along with the major suit bid.

The object of all bidding is to find a bid that will go game and the best way to accomplish this purpose is to show a five card major suit whenever possible. Experience has shown that a hand that will go game at no trump will nearly always go game if hearts or spades are trumps and there is a five card major suit in either hand.

On the other hand, there are many hands that will score game in hearts or spades that are not game hands in no trump. For these rather evident reasons, the writer advocates free take outs of partner's no trump with any five card major suit. From then on it is up to the original no trump bidder to use his judgment as to whether he should try for game at the major suit or go on with his no trump.

CRITICISM OF INFORMATORY DOUBLE.

An English writer who doesn't believe in the American Informatory doubles says that one way to settle the question of a take out of partner's no trump, is to adopt the following convention: "When the take out is from weakness, say: 'I bid two hearts' and when from strength, say: 'I make it two hearts.'" This is, of course, the English idea of humor and a more or less severe criticism of the Informatory double. In England they don't approve of the double nor do they consider it a fair convention. Needless to say, we will continue to believe in the Informatory double and not adopt the English suggestion as to the take out.

AN EXAMPLE.

The following is a good illustration of the value of the take out with a hand that most of the authorities would pass.

h-J 8 6 3 2
c-J 3 2
d-K 8 4
s-K 8

h-K Q 5
c-K Q 8
d-A 5 2
s-Q 10 9 4

h-A 10 4
c-A 10 5 4
d-Q 10 9 3
s-A 7

h-9 7
c-9 7 6
d-7 6
s-J 6 5 3 2

A B
Z

No score: Z dealt and bid one no trump and A passed. If Y bids two hearts, Y Z will score game but if he passes, A will open his spades and Y Z will only score one or two odd at no trump. It is a good example of the value of a free take out.

PROBLEM

h-9 8 3
c-A Q 7 6
d-Q J 9 7 6
s-A

A B
Z

No score: Z dealt and bid one spade. What should A now bid with the foregoing hand? A has the choice of one of three bids: (1) an Informatory double of one spade; (2) a bid of two diamonds; (3) a bid of one no trump. It seems to the writer that an Informatory double with this hand is bad practice. It is too strong a hand to play at a minor suit and not strong enough to play at hearts. For the same reason, the two diamond bid should not be made. It takes a great deal of strength in partner's hand to make game in diamonds but very little to make game possible in no trump. The no trump bid seems the best bid with this hand for it offers the best chance for game.

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THE TOWN WATCHMAN

The Kingston township council is going to take the whole body of rate-payers of the municipality into its confidence in order to solve its financial difficulties.

Wolfe Island will be getting jealous of the notoriety that Kingston township is gaining.

If Kingston's present hotels were "dressed up" a little more, we might not hear so much about the need of a new hostelry.

It is still a mystery why the Ontario government chose the city buildings for its liquor dispensary. This subject would create a live debate for the Christian Endeavor societies.

No doubt here will be some forgetful ones among us who will neglect to put their clocks an hour ahead tonight, and walk into church service Sunday an hour late. They say that the father of daylight-saving in Kingston did that very thing the first year summer time was in effect here.

The church unionists and the anti-gave Ottawa a great waking up this week. The senators they say actually took to cover.

There are people now engaged fighting for their church who never before gave it more than a passing thought.

The quiet preacher is the most effective after all. A congregation will listen more attentively to the pulpit teacher than the boisterous preacher.

Some time ago a noted preacher occupied a Kingston evangelical pulpit. One who heard him was asked what about the service impressed himself most, and he replied: "The portion of the prayer about the dead." Probably few noticed the reference, but it was most touching. There is nothing in a service so impressive as when a reference is made to the great multitude who have "passed on."

On Easter Sunday morning a very impressive incident occurred in a Presbyterian church. The holy communion was being celebrated and as the elements were being served, and the minister stood with bowed head, the bell of the Roman Catholic cathedral softly sounded, indicating that the Host was being elevated before the bowed congregation of the other church. To those who understood, it was a solemn moment.

The Watchman utilized his time before the service and during the offertory in a certain church of scanning the hymnal, and found that outside of Kipling's "Recessional," probably not one other hymn written during the past fifty years was included in the book, which was of recent revision too. It would appear that this age is neither producing great hymn nor musical writers.

THE LITTLE HOUSE AND I.
Idea: M. Thomas in New York Times.
So many pleasant hours we've spent together,
The little house and I, in summer weather,
Each spring my feet the city pavements spurned
And to this haven gratefully returned.
Its airy rooms, unfinished, with brown beams,
Have often been the birthplace of my dreams.
Each spring this little cottage by the wood,
In front of which a giant poplar stood,
Coaxed out the woodbine that climbed everywhere
About the porch, so that it might be fair
And gracious in its every curve and line
To greet these city-weary eyes of mine.
But now we have been rudely torn apart,
And at the thought of it the quick tears start.
This year strange people enter at its door,
Unwanted footsteps echo on its floor,
And alien hands are putting quite to rout
Familiar things and changing them about.
I passed the little house the other day
And oh! it looked so pitiful, some way
The woodbine all uprooted, not a trace
Of it was left to lend the cottage grace;
The poplar tall, that shaded the front yard,
And, many seasons, over me stood guard,
Had been cut down. With nothing to adorn
The place looked strangely naked and forlorn.
So many years we've been friends, tried and true—
I wonder if the house doesn't miss me, too?

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