SOME NEW BOOKS.

The Russian Court Before the Revolution.

The progress of a great war is a powerful impetus to a study of the history and geography of the contending countries. No one can fairly comprehend the present struggle in Europe without some knowledge of the earlier conflicts in which France and Prussia and Austria and Russia have been engaged; and we must look up the geography of Scandinavia to know where the battle of Jutland was fought and the topography of Mesopotamia and the valley of the Tigris if we would understand Gen. Maude's expedition resulting in the capture of Bagdad.

In a similar way it is necessary to ascertain the conditions which have prevailed in Russia since the declaration of war by Germany in 1914 to appreciate the problems which have arisen there as the result of the recent revolution. A serviceable contribution to this end has been made by the anonymous author of *Russian Court Memoirs*, 1914-16, With Some Account of Court, Political and Social Life in Petrograd (E. P. Dutton & Co.), who is evidently a native resident of the Russian capital entertaining the most friendly sentiments toward England and the cause of the Entente Allies.

The point of view of the writer of this entertaining volume of historical and society gossip is made clear by the following paragraph:

"In looking back over the last two centuries one notices the growing hatred inspired by the Germans, which like a red thread can be traced through all these years. The German is looked upon by the Russian as the foe who has usurped all that is best in this country. The most important positions at court have been given to Germans; Germans take a prominent part in trade; every profession or industry is filled with Germans. For years the Russians have silently resented this. These long years of repression have at last given vent to an outburst of the most violent antagonism against the hated Teutons. This explains the extreme popularity of the present war among the middle classes and the people, for the *Niemets* (the Russian word for German) is not only the country's enemy but the private foe of every Russian."

Our anonymous author, whose initials, by the way, are B. W., thinks it is time that English people should know Russia as she really is without any attempt to magnify her defects or embellish her good qualities. He is not averse to progress and frankly acknowledges the necessity of some reforms; but it is plain enough that if he were writing to-day he would not have sanctioned a republican form of government for Russia. "The British Constitution, with a King who reigns but does not rule, could not be adopted in Russia, and any attempt to make her republican would be almost suicidal, for it is opposed to the genius of her people." As to this we shall see later. On the return of the Root mission we shall be able to judge more confidently as to the prospects of republicanism in Russia.

In the chapter relating to the Czar and his family we are told at the outset that Nicholas II. is not only a monarch but also a gentleman. This is followed, however, by the statement that he did not receive the education which the sovereign of so vast an empire should have received, and hence many of the qualities which he undoubtedly possesses have been left dormant. Precisely how this fact has been ascertained is not clear. He was not personally attached to any of his Ministers and looked upon them as unavoidable evils. He is described on the one hand as distrustful and suspicious and on the other as unfailing in patience and courtesy. "His private life was that of a rich country gentleman rather than that of the Czar of All the Russias." The imperial family were accustomed to spend a part of every spring and autumn at Livadia in the Crimea, where they had a beautiful residence, and in the summer they usually took a yachting cruise in the Gulf of Finland.

The mother of the deposed Czar, known during his reign as the Dowager Empress Marie Dagmar, is a Danish princess, the sister of Queen Alexandra, consort of Edward VII., King of England. At one time these royal sisters were regarded as the most beautiful princesses in Europe. The writer of the present notice can verify this estimate of their rare beauty, for he saw them sitting side by side in the royal box at the Covent Garden Opera in London one night when Patti sang. Alexandra was light and Dagmar was dark; Alexandra was decked with jewels while Dagmar wore none; both were so lovely that it was hard to choose between them. They followed the music of the opera, as did their husbands, with manifest interest; and all were especially enthusiastic in applauding Patti, when, upon the seventh or eighth recall, she sang "Home, Sweet Home." Their vivacious reception of this simple melody amused C. A. Dana very much indeed.

Dagmar became very popular in Russia. Our anonymous author, writing before the recent revolution, says of her: "The Dowager Empress is one of those happy creatures at whose birth a benevolent fairy presided. Without giving herself the least trouble, she commands love, admiration and popularity. From the first day she set foot on the Russian soil the Princess Dagmar gained the hearts of all her future subjects. Her beautiful eyes, her lovely smile and wonderful charm of manner were the principal causes of her immense popularity. When she smiles she seems to single one out of the crowd, and each separate individual appropriates her smile as personally intended." The morals of the court while her husband, Alexander III., was on the throne were very strict: sleeveless dresses were not allowed to be worn, nor would the Empress ever consent to receive a lady wearing a tight fitting skirt opening up the front. When Nicholas II., her son, was Czarewitch he undertook a voyage around the world. Just before his departure the Empress learned that the commander of the squadron was living with a woman who was not his wife. She compelled him to marry the woman before the squadron left Cronstadt, declaring that she would never consent to confide the safety of her son to a man who was confessedly leading an immoral life.

The high character and popularity of the Dowager Empress, however, did not bring happiness to her son, for there never has been any real friendship between her and his wife, the now deposed Empress, Alexandra Feodorovna, daughter of the Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt, and formerly known as the Princess Alixe. Her German origin and predilections did much to arouse Russian prejudice against the Empress, and this was greatly intensified of late years by her subjection to the extraordinary influence of the pro-German monk Rasputin, who was murdered while the present book was in type. Rasputin was a staretz. A staretz is "generally a simple peasant who, having attained middle age, endeavors to give himself a venerable aspect by growing his hair and beard in flowing manes. Such men make wandering their calling, making continual pilgrimages from one monastery to another, sometimes extending their journeys to Mount Athos and the Holy Land." They are revered as saintly and ascetic characters in the households which they visit and where they recount their tales of miraculous adventure, invoking superstitious fears and apprehensions, particularly among the women of the peasantry. It is strange that an Empress should become the victim of an impostor of this class. Rasputin convinced her that the welfare of her son depended upon his presence near the Prince, and as matter of fact the health of the heir to the throne did suffer notably on several occasions when Rasputin was sent to Siberia for a while. All trustworthy accounts indicate that Rasputin was much worse than the "dreadful old reprobate" that our author calls him. He seems undoubtedly to have been a treasonable agent of the German Government, striving to undo Russia by undermining the fidelity of those upon the throne itself.

The condition of things revealed by this volume leads strongly to the conclusion that Russia would speedily have negotiated a separate peace with Germany if the Czar had not been deposed by the recent revolution. German influence was paramount in the imperial court and everywhere that courtiers and favorites of the Czar could exert power. Whatever Germany most wanted they were eager to bring about, and Germany has lately desired nothing so much as Russia's withdrawal from the great war so as to relieve the Teutonic allies from pressure on the east and enable them to strengthen their forces on the west.

The extent to which German domination has been maintained in the dominions of the Czar, even since the outbreak of the present war, is well illustrated by the details furnished in this book. The Emperor has been surrounded by Germans, who have held the powerful as well as highly ornamental offices connected with the imperial court. For twenty years the first place among the courtiers has been occupied by Count Fredericks, the German Minister of the imperial household. "I should like to be promoted to be a German" has been the sarcastic aspiration of Russian officers desirous of preferment at the hands of the Czar. Other personages of distinction at court have borne such names as Benckendorff, Korff, Meyendorf, Von Grünwald and similar appellations which betray their German origin. Gen. von Grünwald, Master of the Horse, has publicly asserted that all the accounts of German atrocities in Belgium and elsewhere were exaggerated, and at an imperial luncheon questioned the truthfulness of the complaint of the Dowager Empress (Dagmar) that she had been ill treated when passing through Berlin on her way home just after the war broke out! Baron Theophil Meyendorf, Adjutant General to the Czar, owed his position solely to the high rank of his German family in the Baltic provinces. "He is married to a Countess Schouvalov, and they are the most devoted couple imaginable, without giving rise to the least ridicule. They have had thirteen children. After they had their eleventh child it was a standing joke among their friends that they must complete the dozen. The twelfth baby was expected, but to everybody's consternation twins were born!"

In sketching with a free hand the conditions which prevailed in the imperial court at Petrograd during the first two years of the war the conservative author of this volume was inspired by a forlorn hope that the Romanoff dynasty might still prove capable of reigning over a free Russia. This, however, was not to be. The monarch was even weaker than his apologists supposed. Germany was powerful to harm him as long as he retained the crown, but powerless to help him when the monarchy was assailed. Thanks to her malign and sinister influence he found himself without followers, and to-day the Czar and his superstitious consort are almost forgotten prisoners of state "somewhere in Russia."

Swinburne Letters.

The offence most frequently committed by compilers of collections of letters written by men of genius and fame is less commonly that which they profess to dread, of violating the writers' privacy, than that of which they apparently make no account, of failing to measure the readers' intelligence and good taste. In the "personal recollections" of *Algernon Charles Swinburne* (Putnams), by his cousin, Mrs. Disney Leith, will be found an example of such compilation at its best. The "personal recollections" are brief; the greater part of the book, twenty-one twenty-fifths, is made up of short letters and extracts from long ones. The fractional calculation, which might arouse suspicion because of the size of enumerator and denominator, is explained by the simple fact of a happy accident of pagination, in that there are just 250 pages of text type, and of these an exact forty are editorial. It shall not be said that this notice lays claim to any extraordinary skill in the mathematics of literature.

Swinburne in 1893 wrote to his mother, who had praised his prose, "It is so much harder to write than verse that I am proportionately elated" by commendation of it. He wrote charming letters, vivacious, but not slipshod; matterful, but not pretentious. They are full of interesting references, descriptions and personal sentiments; and of light that runs through various gradations intermediate between a firefly glow of humor and the startling lightning flash of some lines at page 129.

In the early '70s he writes:

> I have nothing more to tell you except of a very flattering petition conveyed to me in pressing terms from the conductors of a French journal for a poem (French of course) from my hand. As I like being recognized as a French poet as well as an English, I am writing them one on some music of Wagner's. I hope they won't mind the musician being a German.

The British poet who in the early '70s (!) wrote a French poem on German music for a French magazine adds that while he "hates" the Germans "otherwise," he has to say that the one thing they can do, music, they do so well that no other people "even comes second."

Many letters sing Hugo's praises as the greatest poet of the time, the greatest French poet of all time. In 1882 Swinburne dined at Hugo's home. The Frenchman greeted the Briton as a son. Entering the 80s, Hugo "walked upright and firm without a stick. His white hair is as thick as his dark eyebrows, and his eyes are as bright and clear as a little child's." After dinner he drank his visitor's health and made a nice little speech, "of which," says Swinburne, "though I sat just opposite him, my accursed deafness prevented my hearing a single word."

To his sister he wrote about two letters received from Lord Lytton, "worth many reviews." A suggestive mensuration, for in the same letter he says: "The printed reviews have pitched into me so violently that the head of Moxon's firm refuses to fulfil his agreement to sell any more copies or make me any compensation. So I suppose I shall have to go elsewhere."

He tells how disturbed he has been by the offer of a seat in Parliament. The "honor" did not upset him, but the appeal of a friend did. The friend told him that if he believed what he said and wrote he ought to sacrifice his time and comfort to his country. Friends simply will not let us be happy and useful in our own way. Swinburne decided he could serve his country best outside of Parliament.

Remembering his own lack of academic distinction, he found it "delicious" to recall that "*the* Newman," the Cardinal, did not shine in the class list, and that his "immeasurably inferior brother" did. Jowett, he says, once described Prof. F. Newman to him, "in his most incisive and thinnest voice"—which could be as scratchy as the pens he habitually used—as "a good man—who is always in the wrong." I would not say *always*, Swinburne notes drily, but—— His comment on the Cardinal's writings compresses the essence of a critical volume into a few easy sentences. The criticism turns on the "perfect sincerity, the purity of purpose, the earnest simplicity and devotion"—and the exquisite writing and subtle reasoning—in "a book so much more than atheistic that one wants an extra, or ultra, epithet to define the tendency of its teaching."

Morley reviewed Swinburne, and the poet wrote a note of acknowledgment. Morley replied: "The shabby and beggarly scrap on your great tragedy deserves no thanks from you; it is a poor performance—but I was stringently limited for space." And the poet was magnanimous enough to excuse his critic, in view of this explanation, for not having done "what I thought I should have done in his place."

In 1883, after a visit to the Gaskells, Swinburne went to call on Mrs. "Barry Cornwall" Procter. Being a year or so further from 80, he says, than when last he had seen her, she was "naturally" more bright, active, witty and amusing than before. She walked like a schoolgirl and had the eyes of a hawk. "She talks of Charles Lamb and his sister, Coleridge and Wordsworth, till one feels as if one might and ought to call on them, or at least leave cards for them on the next landing." Keats and Shelley she had missed knowing—perhaps because they were too young. After her death Swinburne spoke of her as the most brilliantly witty woman he had ever met.

Mrs. Leith arranges the letters not chronologically—many of them are undated or dated only vaguely, without the year—but, rather loosely, by subject. After the letter about Mrs. Procter come several in which the poet expresses, unaffectedly and impressively, his grief over the deaths of Hugo, William Morris, Tennyson and Mrs. Lynn Linton. Of Morris he said: "[His death] is like the loss of a noble and glorious child whose quaint charm of character made us half forget the unique genius of the poet and the extraordinary energy of the man." It closed a friendship of forty years, a long time for two poets to stay friends.

In contrast to the good things about these people is a paragraph on Carlyle. He is "disgusted" by "the sour arrogance, egotism and malevolence" of Carlyle's "Reminiscences." But he can understand and excuse the ugliness of the book when he learns that most of it was written at Mentone: "No temper, no character, could be expected to remain tolerable under the influence of that baleful hole—much less those of a dyspeptic, half heartbroken, childless and recent widower past 80." He was happy, remembering that one of the two things Carlyle most hated was poetry. Poor old Tammas of Ecclefechan, Sage of Chelsea!

Now, in 1889, Swinburne plumps down in the midst of a series of wonderfully fine letters on his delight in the beauties and mysteries of the sea, an "anecdote," as he calls it, which is either too silly for words or else a simple, penetrating flash into the depths of the man's character:

> I was coming out of Shoreham when two young ladies, who, if one had been standing on the other's shoulders, might have reached a little higher than my knee, stopped me on the highway and refused to let me pass. I could not but stoop humbly and ask what I was wanted for. "Happ'ny," said one precious pet. "But I've only got pennies," said I. A penny would do, to divide between them, I was given to understand. But I gave each a penny—and a kiss. So far, you will say, the story is not worth telling.
>
> But when I was walking briskly on I heard a sharp patter of little feet behind me, and stopped and saw those tiny chicks trotting as hard as they could to catch me up. What was it now? I asked, laughing. "Want to kiss you," said the (very slightly) taller one. I needn't say whether or not I squatted down and opened my arms, and first one and then the other put her bits of arms up to my neck and kissed me so affectionately that I felt once more how much too good little children are to us, and then went trotting back to Shoreham.

As to the manner of the telling, it has to be remembered that Mr. Swinburne was writing a letter, and wouldn't have told the "anecdote" anywhere else. The love of children that shines here appears frequently in the letters. It and the uncalculated reflections of religious sentiment are amazingly revelatory.

Two things are to be said about this truly notable collection of letters: that they betray no confidences and travel under no false pretences, and that the letters are so good to read that they make the compiler's forty pages of introduction seem worth going back to, with expectation of finding them more rewarding than their place at the front of the book makes them. The fact is that the letters are peculiarly of a nature which disarms the commentator. They travel best alone.

POEMS WORTH READING.

The Nation's Prayer.

We pray Thee for a stouter heart,
The heart of nobler man;
The time has come to do our part;
Almighty God, we can!

In thunder up and down the world
War murderously rolls;
Oh, let Old Glory, wide unfurled,
Now quicken human souls!
A lust for universal power
Has raised its hydra head
To waste our blood from hour to hour
Till fate shall strike it dead.

The soldier never bore a cause
So sacred and so vast;
He's making clear the only laws
That fix true peace at last.
The highest human destiny
Since history began
Is beckoning: ahead we see
The Brotherhood of Man!

Life's fruitfulness was larger than
A selfish race could stand;
Oh, help us build a holy ban
Upholding each free land!
The hope of all to all outstrip
Has been too highly prized;
A great, exalted partnership
May keep us civilized.

We were not giv'n a mind to lie,
To envy, filch and kill;
We're meant to love the earth and sky
And bear mankind good will.
This righteous war, it had to be;
To make us see, Lord, God!
It had to be, to make Man free,
And lift him from a clod.

We summon now a stouter heart,
And bid all fears be still;
The time has come to do our part;
Almighty God, we will!

ALFRED HOVEY BALLARD.

Ballade of Classics Declassé.

(Written in respectful but pessimistic sympathy with the recent attempt at Princeton to revivify the moribund.)

Gone, deep browed Homer's wide domain,
And burning Sappho sings no more;
While Aristophanes is fain
In cherus batrachian to bore;
Jowett suffices for the store
Socratic, Plato should purvey;
Stilled is the rich Pindaric roar—
The classics now are declassé.

The blushful grape has ceased to reign,
That Massic by which Horace swore;
Catullus's field gods are slain;
Lucretius is forgotten lore;
No mellow measures Maronic pour
Pellucid, holding magic sway;
Sad chestnuts, Pliny's storied hoar—
The classics now are declassé.

Old fashioned folk express disdain,
Cast physics to the canines, sore,
Along with chemistry, its twain;
Show modern pedagogues the door.
But all the thickest thews of Thor
Cannot restore the palmy day
When "ponies" pranced, a serried corps—
The classics now are declassé.

Minors, who find the ancient ore
No longer promises to pay,
Best bathe in vivisection's gore—
The classics now are declassé.

MAURICE MORRIS.

Porcelains.

From Poetry: A Magazine of Verse.

There are porcelains a plenty wrought by skill,
Hard as jade, sweet toned as a bell,
In a hundred shapes that tradesfolk sell:
Wine cups, rice bowls, lanterns, plates,
Teapots, snuff bottles, vases with mates.
There are porcelains a plenty wrought by skill.

There are porcelains made by no man's will—
Miracles, they, of the kiln and fire,
Outwitting dreams, outrunning desire;
Fashioned when genii blew the coals;
Decreed for the reverence of men's souls.
There are porcelains made by no man's will.

LEON SHARMAN.

Some Men.

From the Arkansas Gazette.

Some men
Work on
Perpetual motion
Machines,
And some men
Try to lift
Themselves
By their bootstraps,
And some men
Argue with women,
And I can't see
Where there is
Much choice
Between the three.

We Serve.

From the Wilmington Star.

Not by cheers alone or the flattering vaunt of speeches
Is the strength of a nation shown in the strain of the crucial hour,
But by trust in a righteous cause and a glorious love that reaches
Deep down to a people's soul with its searching and poignant power.
So the flags that float on the breeze have a tarnished and tawdry splendor
If they are not raised aloft by hands that are leal and true,
And the best of our loyal might is the faith that we gladly render,
Not the words that our tongues may speak, but the tangible deeds we do.

All that our fathers dreamed of, all that they ever sought for
When they shivered at Valley Forge and battled at Bunker Hill,
Is again at stake in the world—a guerdon that must be fought for;
It is ours to hold and defend with all our strength and will;
And if we would keep our banners proudly and freely flying
We must gird ourselves as others have girded themselves of old,
And prove by the fact of service, living or bravely dying,
That the torch our fathers carried has never grown dim or cold.

Not by cheers alone, or waving of flags and singing
Is a nation's spirit shown, but only when brain and nerve
Are trained to the instant need—and the nation's call is bringing
Her bravest children forth—crying, "We serve! We serve!"

BERTON BRALEY.

A Weather Jingle.

From the Atlanta Constitution.

Here's the melting music
Across the cotton row;
"Devil's in the weather
When the wind don't blow!
Pull yerself together,
Far away from snow;
Devil's in the weather
When the wind won't blow!"

To-day.

From the Buffalo Evening News.

Keep on livin' jist terday—
Doan hunt fer enny sorrow;
Have all yer troubles yisterday
An' all yer fun termorrow.

The Story Old.

From the Atlanta Constitution.

List to the story known of old,
Told when the world was young;
Life's ministry of dream and hope,
The strain by poets sung.

Breathe soft the secret Helen knew,
In Troas' classic throng;
The story piped in Ilion's walls,
The sweet Orphean song—

The symbol blown from days of Runs,
To hearts the potent word;
Man's climax to his highest hopes,
The sweetest cadence heard.

This is the lure that Life unfolds
From Earth's archaic past;
The message Hope would fain indite;
The one thing that shall last!

This is the mystic force that moulds
Our hopes, and doubts, and fears—
All else is dream and mystery,
The drift of tragic years!

OSSIAN D. GORMAN.

Conservation.

She was the demon of crochet:
Sox, sweaters, gloves the veriest play

For her ecstatic needle; speed
Was her keynote, a headlong greed

That craved each second to her task.
She even had been known to ask

On running out of her own hank
Neighbors their back hair to outyank.

And once, no wastage to allow,
She knit her convoluted brow.

STANLEY K. WILSON.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Did the Allies announce peace terms in answer to the German peace offer last December, and if so what were the terms? W. C. S.

The German Government, on December 12, 1916, offered to make peace and proposed a conference. The Allies refused to enter into conference unless Germany outlined her terms. Germany refused to do this, thus confirming the Allies' belief that the peace offer was the bait on a carefully set trap.

The German offer had been communicated to the Allies through the United States, Spain, Switzerland and the Netherlands. On December 30, 1916, the Allies made a joint reply. In this they first took exception to Germany's profession of victory and her attempt to place the responsibility of the war on the Allies. They demanded reparations for the outrages inflicted by Germany against both belligerents and neutrals, and said:

"No peace is possible so long as they [the Allies] have not secured reparation of violated rights and liberties, recognition of the principle of nationalities and of the free existence of small states; so long as they have not brought about a settlement calculated to end, once and for all, forces which have so long threatened the nations, and to afford the only effective guarantees for the future security of the world."

In view of the sham nature of the German offer the Allies hold it improper to discuss specific terms of a possible peace, since if Germany really desired peace it was open to her to suggest terms; but the Allies' note did make specific mention of the case of Belgium, for which they required "legitimate reparation, guarantees and safeguards for the future."

Who was it said "We are blind to our own faults, but prone to blame others for the absence of our particular virtues" (or words to that effect)? A. B.

What position did Gen. Robert E. Lee hold under the United States Government at the outbreak of the civil war? H.

Lee was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel of the Second Regiment of Cavalry and assigned to duty on the Texas frontier in 1855. He remained there until near the beginning of the civil war except for an interval in 1859, when he was recalled to Washington and placed in command of the force sent against John Brown at Harper's Ferry. On April 20, 1861, three days after the formal secession of Virginia, Lee resigned his commission in the army. Two days before he had refused Lincoln's offer to give him the command of the army of the United States.

Which is the larger dam, the Ashokan or the one at Kensico Lake? A.

By the Ashokan dam we take it you mean the Olive Bridge dam.

"Kensico dam will be a much larger masonry structure than the corresponding portion of the Olive Bridge dam * * * It will have a maximum height of about 170 feet above the present river bed, but will extend 130 feet further to solid ledge rock, which will make it at the maximum about 300 feet high, or about 50 feet higher than the Olive Bridge dam. It will be about 1,830 feet long, or nearly twice the length of the masonry portion of the Olive Bridge dam."

The excerpt is from "The Catskill Water Supply of New York City," by Lazarus White, division engineer of the Board of Water Supply, published by John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1913.

In describing the wealth of some great peer one of the Victorian novelists wrote: "Nay, it was whispered that when some miles of rents had fallen in on his London streets and been renewed even the civil list of the King would be less than the private income of his subject."

I thought this was in Thackeray's description of the Marquis of Steyne, but I do not find it there. Neither can I find it said of Disraeli's Lord Monmouth in "Coningsby," so I am stumped. Can some reader recall it? R. H. T.

Is there a city ordinance compelling owners or agents to supply heat from October 15 to April 15? S. W. H.

No.

When the rates of fare for carrying passengers are named in the law or charter of the railroad company given by the Legislature and such charter has never been amended as to rates has the Public Service Commission the authority to decrease or increase rates so fixed? Have the courts ever made a decision covering this question and in what case? J. J. F.

The inquiry was referred to the Public Service Commission for the First District, State of New York, and a reply from the secretary of the commission, James B. Walker, says:

"I have your letter of June 28, 1917, with regard to the question of the authority of the Public Service Commission to decrease or increase rates where a rate has been fixed by law or charter of the railroad company. I may refer you to several decisions in this State as to the power of the commission in this matter, although the decisions do not cover all instances which might possibly arise. The answer to the question is dependent upon the several provisions of the law applicable to different situations. In People ex rel. Ulster and Delaware Railroad Company versus Public Service Commission for the Second District, 171 A. D. 607, affirmed on prevailing opinion of the lower court, 218 N. Y. 643, it was held that the commission had authority to authorize an increase in railroad mileage ticket rates in excess of two cents per mile as fixed by section 60 of the railroad law. In People ex rel. New York and Ulster Traction Company versus Public Service Commission for the Second District, 175 A. D. 869, it was held that the Public Service Commission had authority to increase the maximum fare to be charged by street surface railroad companies between two points beyond the rate which was fixed by a franchise granted by local authorities. In People ex rel. Bridge Operating Company versus Public Service Commission for the First District, 153 A. D. 129, it was held that the commission had authority to reduce the maximum rate fixed by an agreement with the Bridge Commission under which the company was permitted to operate across the Williamsburg Bridge."

What are the differences among the following prepared varieties of Indian corn—hulled corn, samp, hominy? N. G.

Corn hulled by beating by hand in a wooden mortar or hulled by machinery is called hominy and samp. In the North samp is the whole decorticated kernel and hominy is the broken or coarsely ground or cracked or crushed kernel, a distinction not made at the South. "Hulled corn" is corn from which the hull or pericarp of the kernel has been removed by the use of lye and which has then been soaked thoroughly and boiled until tender.

We offer this differentiation subject to correction, if any be necessary, by readers more fully informed than we.

DOUBLING TACTICS AT ROYAL AUCTION

An Exception to Fourth's Rule of Taking Out Doubled No Trump.

By R. F. FOSTER.

Among royal auction players there are many who imagine that if the second hand doubles a bid of one no trump the fourth hand is bound to declare his longest suit even if it is only four cards to the nine.

But there is a very important exception to this rule, and that is when the fourth hand has enough in his own cards, together with the strength shown by the double, to defeat the no trumper for more than could be made by playing a suit bid against it. In such cases he should let the double stand.

The rule for this is very simple. If it requires eight values to justify an original no trump bid and fourteen values to double, then in cases in which the fourth hand has eight values and three suits stopped he should let the double stand and see what the dealer and his partner are going to do about it.

When the second hand doubles a suit bid and the third hand is not very strong in any one suit he passes the buck. It will be time enough to say something after the fourth hand answers the double. The same principle applies to the fourth hand when the second hand doubles a no trumper, provided the cards in the fourth hand are up to standard in both strength and distribution.

In these days of light no trumpers by the best players, and still lighter ones by the average player, the possibilities of penalties are invariably greater than the hope of gain from a suit bid if the fourth hand is strong.

Several situations may develop when the fourth hand lets the double stand. The dealer may pull himself out or his partner may rescue him. Then the second hand may bid over the dealer, or double again; or the fourth hand may bid or double.

Here are two interesting examples of how differently a hand may be bid up when there is a second hand double and the fourth hand is up to standard to let it stand.

Y: ♡ 9 7 3; ♣ 8 5 3 2; ♢ K 10 2; ♠ 7 4 2
A: ♡ A J 8 4; ♣ 7; ♢ A Q 9 7 3; ♠ K 9 6
B: ♡ K 6 2; ♣ K Q J; ♢ J 8 5; ♠ 10 8 5 3
Z: ♡ Q 10 5; ♣ A 10 9 6 4; ♢ 6 4; ♠ A Q J

Z dealt and bid no trump. A doubled and Y passed. B refused to take out the double with his longest suit as it was only four spades to the ten and he could probably win three or four tricks himself against a no trumper. Had the double been let alone Z would have been set for 400.

As it was Z pulled himself out with two clubs and A bid two diamonds, which encouraged B to bid two no trumps. On this contract B made three odd and the game, with aces easy.

Had A passed the two club bid B would have doubled and A would have been the one to go two no trumps. Had the doubled club been allowed to stand Z would have been set for two tricks only.

Had A been left to play the hand at diamonds he could not have gone game as he must lose a trump trick to Y and two black aces to Z. The manner in which A could avoid losing two spade tricks is instructive as showing the importance of looking ahead before rushing off to lead the trumps.

Against a diamond contract Y would lead the top of his partner's suit, clubs. Z would win with the ace and at once establish a second spade trick by playing ace and then queen. Now if A leads the trump he loses a spade trick no matter which hand holds the king of diamonds.

His play would be to lead a small heart, play one of B's top clubs and discard the spade nine. Now he can lead the small diamond, avoiding the common error of leading a jack to an ace queen suit when one has not the ten. The finesse of the queen loses to Y's king, but it is too late to make a spade trick for Z.

The student should observe that if the king of trumps was in Z's hand, three to the ten with Y, the lead of the jack would lose a trick as the king would cover and make the ten good. If the jack were not led the king would be caught on the second round and the jack would kill the ten.

No matter what Y led after winning the trump trick B can be put into the lead with the jack of trumps if Y does not lead a club. If Y leads a spade A trumps, leads ace and small trumps and makes the top spade and club, discarding his doubtful jack of hearts, although Z should be marked with the queen if his no trumper had three suits stopped. If Y led the trump at the sixth trick A would have to finesse the hearts.

The interesting part of this hand would be the outcome of B's bid of two spades, as an answer to A's double. All he can make is three odd, with simple honors against him. Z would open with the ace of clubs and on finding dummy with no more would lead through the diamonds, after which he must make two tricks in trumps.

There are, therefore, four results possible on this hand. Letting the no trump double stand Z would lose 400. Playing it at two clubs he would lose 212. Letting A play it at diamonds he would lose 42. Letting B play it at spades he would lose only 9. Therefore the worst bid B could make would be to answer A's double with his four card suit.

Here is an example of letting the double stand in which the dealer was unfortunate in his partner's selection of a rescue.

Y: ♡ 8; ♣ J 10 7 2; ♢ 8 7 6 3 2; ♠ 7 5 3
A: ♡ K Q 7 5; ♣ 8 3; ♢ A Q 10 9; ♠ A 8 4
B: ♡ A 10 9 4; ♣ K 9 6 4; ♢ 5; ♠ K J 6 2
Z: ♡ J 6 5 2; ♣ A Q 5; ♢ K J 4; ♠ Q 10 9

Z dealt and bid no trump. A doubled, Y passed and B let the double stand. Z pulled himself out with two hearts and again A doubled. This drove Y to three diamonds, which was also doubled by A and went down for three tricks and simple honors.

If B takes out the double with two spades, bidding the higher of two equal number suits first, he will have to play the hand very well to win the game, but he can do it. He would have to exhaust the trumps and ruff out the diamonds with his last trump so as to establish the ten for A, but he must lose two clubs and the queen of spades, because Z would never lead the clubs even after winning the second or third round of trumps.

If B takes out the double with the spades he would never get a chance to bid the hearts. If he takes out with two hearts he can win the game if he plays the hand well and might even make five odd. The play is instructive.

Z would lead a small trump as the best opening from his hand. Winning the first trick with the nine, B would play the ace and on finding Y with no more would lead a diamond, finesse the queen and return the ace, discarding a club.

A third round of diamonds would be trumped, establishing the ten for A. Now the trump leads would be resumed, A winning two rounds and exhausting Z. The ten of diamonds would give B another club discard. Now comes the end game, which is where most of the tricks are won or lost.

The ace of spades from A, then the king from B and a third round of spades would throw Z in with the queen, forcing him to lead clubs up to B's guarded king. The interesting point is that if B exhausts Z's trumps before ruffing out the diamond he cannot even win the game on the hand.

If the doubled no trump is let alone A will lead a small heart, and after making four tricks in that suit he will probably lead a small spade. B will take this with the king and come through with the diamond, A continuing for three rounds so as to establish the suit.

This would put Z to a guess, and he would have either to lead away from his queen ten of spades, losing both of them, or to lead the clubs and make B's king good. He would be set for 400 and 30 aces whichever he did.

But if B goes two no trumps in answer to A's double, instead of naming either of his four card suits, the result will be the same as if Z played the hand so far as winning tricks is concerned, A and B getting ten of them and scoring them as four odd, worth 10 points each, instead of 100 each.

The various possible results on this hand show a loss of 420 for Z if he is left in with his doubled no trumper. If he takes himself out and Y denies his suit Z loses 314 on the diamond contract. If B takes him out of the double with two hearts the most Z can lose is 72 if B plays the hand well. If B takes him out with two spades Z will lose only 64.

In both these examples it must be admitted that the original no trump bid is legitimate, that A has the strength on which the average player would double and that B has the most to gain by letting the double stand.

The lesson to be drawn from the examination of a large number of hands of this character has convinced me that if the second hand has a legitimate double and the fourth hand has eight values and three suits stopped, which is true of B's cards in both the foregoing examples, he should let the double stand.

Then if there is any rescuing to be done by the dealer or his partner it will be time enough to bid a suit, double the rescue or go to more no trumps.

SCHOOL FOR CARD PLAYERS.

Auction Bridge. E. S. C. says: No score; the dealer bids no trump, second hand passing. Third hand holds five spades to the ten without a trick anywhere. Should he bid two spades or leave his partner alone?

If his partner is a player who bids no trump only when he is prepared for a takeout he should bid two spades. There are some authorities that do not indorse the so-called weak take out because it conflicts with certain conventions that they advocate. Others believe the fourth hand will always ask for a lead if third hand is very weak, which is leaving your opponents to play your game for you. The unanswerable argument is that five trumps are good for three tricks on the average, whereas five small spades with a bust hand are good for nothing at all at no trump. By increasing the contract one trick you increase the trick taking power three tricks.

A. R. P. says: The dealer bids no trump, with a game against him. Second hand says three diamonds. Third hand holds five spades to the king queen jack; four hearts to the queen ten; three diamonds to the ten nine and one small club. Should he bid three spades or pass?

As it is quite possible that diamonds may be the dealer's one weak suit there are no penalties in sight if the bid is passed. As third hand cannot bid three no trumps he must show his strong suit and leave the rest to his partner's judgment. If the dealer is short in spades he must have a great suit of clubs or a secondary heart bid with five of that suit.

T. M. says: If the bid is no trump fourth hand bids a suit, asking for a lead, and the no trumper doubles, should the partner go back to no trumps if he holds ace and king of the declared suit, no small ones, or should he let the double stand?

Much depends on the rest of the hand. If he has any five card suit, that would be the safer bid, as one of his stoppers must be lost on the very first trick at no trump, and nine tricks in a row would be necessary to go game.

Pirate M. C. V. says: A spade bid is made on the right of a player who holds three aces and two queens but has only two small spades. Should she accept the spade on the side strength, or bid more spades after some one else accepts?

Bidding more spades after refusing to accept looks like an attempt to preempt the play of the hand. Why not wait until the stopper in spades is located and then bid no trump to indicate that the spade suit is the only weakness in the hand? In the meantime some other illuminating bid may have been made.

H. B. L. says: Z bids a heart, accepted by A, and Y bids a spade, also accepted by A. When Y passes B holds six clubs to the ace king queen and four diamonds to the ace jack ten. How is he to indicate this holding? A says he should have bid three clubs.

Why not no trumps? The only danger would be that A's spade stopper might be caught by leading through it, but if A sees that danger he will not accept more than once. The odd at no trumps looks like a certainty unless Y can make seven spade tricks.

Poker. H. M. says: Only one man stays and calls the opener of a jack, asking what he has. Opener says he has triplets. The caller says, "I have three jacks," whereupon the opener throws his cards into the deadwood and the caller takes the pot. Bystanders saw that the caller had only two small pairs, while the opener had three sevens. The caller insists that he won anyhow, because the opener did not show his openers. Can the opener get his money back?

When the opener was called, his duty was to lay his hand face up on the table. Talk does not go in poker, and if any player chooses to take another's word for what is against him, without asking to see the cards, that is his own affair. Having thrown up his hand and admitted he was beaten, he has no claim on the pot.

Euchre. P. T. A. says: In a five hand game A turns up the joker and names hearts. All pass, and A decides to play it. Who leads?

The player to the left of the maker of the trump, if the game is straight euchre, which is not stated.

PROBLEMS FOR "SUN" READERS TO SOLVE

Revised List of Winners in the Last Series of End Games at Checkers.

Bridge problem No. 436 was designed to impress upon the student of tactics the importance of forcing an adversary to discard before you have to discard yourself when a certain number of discards from your own hand or dummy are inevitable. Here is the distribution:

Y: ♡ 7; ♣ ----; ♢ K J 8; ♠ 10
A: ♡ 5 3; ♣ 2; ♢ A 9; ♠ -----
B: ♡ 4; ♣ -----; ♢ Q 10 7; ♠ 6
Z: ♡ 6 2; ♣ 3; ♢ -----; ♠ 8 4

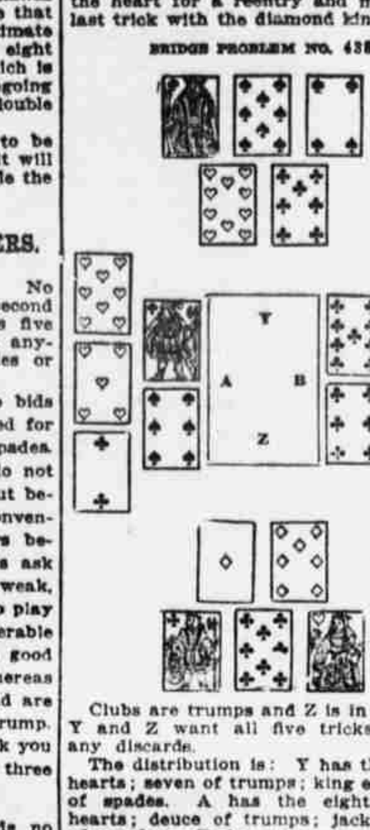
Clubs are trumps and Z is in the lead. Y and Z want all five tricks against any defence.

It looks as if A or B must make a diamond trick, but this can be prevented by discarding that suit from Y's hand until A is forced to unguard the hearts or give up the winning diamond. The problem is to keep the lead in Z's hand until this situation is reached.

Z leads the trump upon which Y discards the winning spade. This allows Z to lead two rounds of spades, upon the first of which Y discards a diamond, regardless of A's discard.

On the second round of spades, if A lets go a heart, Y throws away the winning heart so that Z shall make both six and deuce. If A discards the ace of diamonds, so as to stop the hearts, Y discards another diamond, keeping the heart for a reentry and makes the last trick with the diamond king.

BRIDGE PROBLEM NO. 438.



Clubs are trumps and Z is in the lead. Y and Z want all five tricks against any discards.

The distribution is: Y has the ten of hearts; seven of trumps; king eight four of spades. A has the eight five of hearts; deuce of trumps; jack and six of spades. B has the nine six of trumps; queen six three of diamonds. Z has the queen of hearts; jack eight of trumps; ace and seven of diamonds.

CHECKER ENDINGS.

The revised honor list for the last series of ten problems, giving credit for No. 429 to those who found either of the solutions outlined by H. E. Bourne and Edward Mulrooney, follows:

White membership cards in THE SUN Checker Club, for having solved all ten problems from No. 421 to 430 inclusive: A. J. B., H. E. Bourne, C. E. Corliss, Fausto Dalumi, E. J. Graf, James Hyland, Edward Mulrooney and John Ryan.

Red cards, for those who missed one problem only: Owen Fox, Thomas Fox, C. L. Grimes, Elijah P. Landry, Mary Lee and J. H. Noremac.

Blue cards, for those who missed two problems out of the ten: Samuel Gonotsky, Winthrop D. Lane and P. J. McGarry. For the first time since the club was organized there are no winners of green cards.

No one having covered Nareik's $5, the money has been returned to him. Now he wants to bet that No. 432 cannot be done. Fausto Dalumi will please rise. There will be some fun with one of the variations of this problem when the honor list competition is resumed and some new prizes are put up by THE SUN.

In answer to several inquiries, names of solvers are not published during the suspension of the honor list, but questions or criticisms on the various problems will receive prompt attention if addressed to this department.

Those entitled to membership cards in THE SUN Checker Club should send their full name and address.

The position shown in problem No. 436 is doubly deceptive, because it looks like a drawn game, and then again it looks as if it could be forced into a first position win, while in fact it is neither.

The distribution is: Black men on 3 and 20. White man on 31, king on 6. White to play and win. Here are the moves that solve:

White		Black
31—27	A	3—8
6—10		8—11
27—23		20—24
23—19		11—15
10—14		

If black prefers 3—7 for his first move we get this:

White	Black
27—23	20—24
6—2	7—11
23—19	

If black plays 7—10, white answers with 23—18.

There are a number of these end games in which a draw might be conceded by the beginner, but which are actually wins for one side or the other. On the other hand, there are a number of apparently lost games which can be drawn by correct play. Here is an example:

PROBLEM NO. 438. CHECKERS.

BLACK.

WHITE.

Black to play and draw.

There are two kings against two men and the kings have the advantage of the move, yet black can draw the game. The ending is peculiarly instructive.